

# **THE HOLOCAUST** **IN PERSPECTIVE**



**EDITH RECHTER LEVY**

**West Virginia Holocaust Education Commission**

November 21, 2001

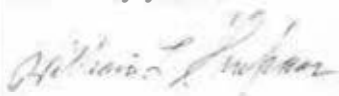
**ASSOCIATION  
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To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to write in support of the Holocaust curriculum developed by Dr. Levy. It is both wide enough in historical scope and detailed enough in describing the events of the Holocaust to provide a fine understanding of this tragic period in human history.

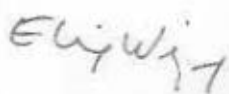
I am sure that both the teachers and their students who follow this curriculum will have a deeper understanding of the world in which we live.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. William L. Shulman

Dr. Levy has taken what others would deem a formidable task and done a superb job creating a thorough and thoughtful curriculum for students in the intermediate grades. It is perceptive and sophisticated without being beyond their reach.



Elie Wiesel



Simon Wiesenthal said: "Hope lives when people remember." you have prepared an excellent curriculum, which is educationally sound and age appropriate.

This history of the Holocaust is told accurately, with honesty and with sensitivity. You indeed fulfill our obligation "to tell our children and our children's children everything our eyes have seen."



SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER  
Museum of Tolerance

Adaire J. Klein

***THE HOLOCAUST***  
*IN PERSPECTIVE*

# THE HOLOCAUST IN PERSPECTIVE

By  
Dr. Edith Rechter Levy, Chairperson  
West Virginia Holocaust Education Commission

With contributions by the following  
Members of the  
West Virginia Holocaust Education Council

John Armstrong  
Theresa MacAbee  
Nora Sheets  
Patricia Vincent

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# **COVER ART – Hiding**

**Charcoal and pencil**

**By**

**Zac Meyers**

**First Prize Winner – 2001 Arts and Writing Contest  
Middle School/Junior High Division**

# **Dedicated to the Future**

**In Memory**

**Of My Father and All Those  
who so cruelly perished**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the following individuals and organizations who have extended their support and/or cooperation.

A special “thank you” goes to my dear longtime friend Elie Wiesel, Nobel Laureate, whose support and encouragement over the years have kept me going on my self-assigned task of Holocaust remembrance and education. With gratitude for his review of, and his kind words for the curriculum; and to Adaire Klein of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for just about the same reasons.

With apologies for any unintentional omission, my gratitude goes to all those who have graciously given permission to reproduce text and/or photos, among them: David J. Hogan, Editor and Chief of *The Holocaust Chronicle*; Betty Merty, author; Dr. William L. Shulman, Director AHO, NY; Carol Lister, ADL, NY; Henry Mayer, Chief Archivist, USHMM, Washington D.C.; The Simon Wiesenthal Center, LA; Rositta Kenigsberg, Executive Director, Florida Task Force on Holocaust Education; my son Rabbi David J. Levy, Israel.

Thank you to the teachers, members of the WV Holocaust Education Council; John Armstrong, Terry MacAbbe, Nora Sheets and Patricia Vincent, for their contributions, their time spent in meetings, their suggestions and advice, which helped me to create an age-sensitive text that will best serve and hold the interest of the contemporary younger student.

To my trusted assistant Joan Caridi, for her review of the text and her questions as a layman with no background knowledge on the Holocaust. This helped me realize the need to explain certain topics, whose comprehension I had taken for granted because of my personal life experiences as a survivor.

To my computer ‘whiz’ Lindsay Colen, without whom the addition of the many visual aids would have been impossible due to my lack of computer expertise, and for the friendship that developed between us during these months of close cooperation.

Last but not least, a special thank you goes to my husband, Marcus E. Levy, for his unfaltering support over the many months, and his lifelong efforts to comprehend and nurture the wounded soul of the survivor.

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**USHMM**, Washington, D.C. Henry Mayer, Chief archivist, pp. 67(top right), 68(right and left), 69(top left, bottom right), 72(from a fundraising pamphlet).

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## FOREWORD.

### A MESSAGE TO THE STUDENTS

You are about to embark on the study of a period of recent history, called the Holocaust. The greatest part of the Holocaust occurred in the midst of World War II, but it was not a true part of the war effort itself. A war opposes two enemy armies, the Holocaust was an attack by a powerful nation against defenseless civilians, simply because these civilians belonged to a particular ethnic population.

Two factors played a major role in allowing the Holocaust to happen. First and foremost was the culmination of centuries of old prejudices, resurrected and magnified by Hitler and his followers. The second factor included modern bureaucracy and the advanced industrial technology needed to carry out genocidal mass murder in the most effective way.

Because of *who* they were, six million human beings were killed by a variety of means. Old and young; mothers and fathers; grandmothers and grandfathers; uncles and aunts; nieces, nephews and cousins; children like yourself were shot; gassed, burned, sometimes alive, or starved to death. They had done nothing to deserve that fate; They did not belong to one or the other side of the armed conflict, they were not in the path of warring forces. Their only crime was that they happened to have been born into a certain family. That, by itself, became an automatic death sentence.

In this manner, six million died. Close to one and a half million were children. Entire families, entire villages were wiped out. Why did this happen? How could it have happened in civilized Europe? Why did no one put a stop to it until it was nearly too late? This is what we are going to explore when we study the Holocaust.

It may seem to you that this happened a long time ago, but in reality, it did not. In fact you or your parents may know of some people still alive today who were caught up in the events of that terrible period. You may have grandparents who participated in the US war effort or may have liberated some of the camps.

Because it happened not so long ago, it has become very important to study this recent period of history, to discover why it happened and the events that helped create conditions which brought about these unimaginable consequences, so that we may prevent such horrors from ever happening again.

From the Holocaust we can learn not only the terrible things human beings can do to one another, but also the levels of heroism to which we can rise. We will see and begin to understand how things can begin small, and incrementally grow to inhuman proportions, if allowed to do so by the silence of others. We will learn to discern between statements and the motivations that lie behind the words. We will discover how to question and become aware of the importance of thinking for oneself and not to follow any leader blindly, charismatic though s/he may be.

In this manner we will begin to realize that the Holocaust is not just a study of the past but an important path towards your own future, a future in which none among us will be singled out to become a victim or a persecutor.

You may find this course different from most of your other studies in several ways. Its main concern and goal lies *not* in tests or grades. Its aim is much loftier: To arouse your interest and your level of awareness, to entice you to do research on your own and to motivate you to become a partner in a better future. To complement the statements of the text, we have added a reading section in the back of the book, under the title of "*Complementary reading.*" There you will find more details regarding specific events, personal survivor testimony and something extra, not in any other school textbook. You will find some of my true personal stories of the time.

Because the most important part of Holocaust history is awareness and understanding, you will be encouraged to participate in discussion groups, to analyze your own feelings and attitudes, to find out how it is possible to change under pressure from others and why its is important to be able to think independently. It is as if we are going to unravel some horrible mystery novel. Yet this was no novel, no mystery, and the horror was real. It is a tale without a happy ending, just a warning for the future. I would like to conclude with a quote from an anonymous source:

*"As the Holocaust emphatically reminds us that ours is an imperfect world..., so too it provides an imperative for efforts to create a better world and to insure a future that is brighter than the past. In remembrance of the Holocaust lies a part of modern man's salvation."*

With my best wishes for your future.



From a child of that time  
To the Youth of today  
For a better tomorrow.

Edith Rechter Levy, Ed. D.

# The Holocaust in Perspective.

## Section I: INTRODUCTION.

It is critical that a study of the Holocaust begin with an understanding of definitions.

### DEFINING THE TERM “HOLOCAUST”:

The term *Holocaust* refers to a state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation (killing) of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Six million Jews, one and a half million of them children, were murdered. Millions of others suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny, because they either opposed the regime or did not fit the mold of the Nazi idea of the perfect human.

**The term holocaust, without a capital “h” has a different meaning than the word Holocaust. While the Holocaust refers to the state-sponsored persecution and annihilation of European Jews by Nazi Germany, the definition of the term “holocaust” is: complete destruction by fire or burning, or any widespread destruction. Source: *Days of Remembrance: A Department of Defense Guide for Annual Commemorative Observances (Second edition.)***

Define Terms with Precision. The Department of Defense and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum explain the specific terminology:

To learn from history, we must record its events as accurately and as specifically as possible. We must use words with precision.

With the passage of time, the word, “holocaust” has been used in many contexts, and has been given many meanings. For the purpose of recalling the Holocaust...we must remember what this event was, within the context of history. To do that, it is equally important to identify what it is not.

#### **The Holocaust is *not* a term for:**

- all the evils of the world
- any tragedy of great magnitude, or widespread death and destruction
- all wars or all world wars
- all the terrors in World War II—or all the many civilian deaths associated with that war, in cities throughout Europe.

*Though not all victims  
were Jews, all Jews  
were victims.*

ELIE WIESEL





## **Chapter I**

# **Background to the Catastrophe**



## Definition of Terms; CHAPTER 1.

**Antisemitism** - Modified from the term “Anti-Semitism” which was coined in 1879 to designate the then-current anti-Jewish campaigns in Europe. Antisemitism is the corrected term denoting all forms of hostility, opposition or hatred toward the Jews throughout history.

**Aristocracy** - a hereditary privileged ruling class or nobility.

**Aryan** – Term used by Nazis to describe the German people as the “superior” race.

**Bolshevism** - A strategy developed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with a view of seizing state power and establishing their own brand of communism.

**Charismatic** - Having the exceptional ability to attract crowds and obtain support.

**Clandestine** - not openly, in hiding.

**Communism** - System by which the means of production and distribution are owned and managed by the government and the goods produced are shared by all citizens.

**Convolutd** - complicated, complex, confusing and mixed up.

**Darwinism** - According to the Darwin teaching of evolution. Charles Robert Darwin was a British naturalist.

**Emancipation** - To free from oppression, bondage, or authority; to liberate.

**Enlightenment** - A philosophical movement of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, proposing that rational thought rather than religious doctrines could be used to solve problems and serve as the ethical system for living.

**Ethnic** – Pertaining to a social group of people who share a common culture, history, religion or ancestry.

**Euphemism** - An inoffensive term substituted for one considered offensive.

**Foment** - incite.

***Incrementally*** - To increase in number by steps, one building upon the preceding one.

***Inhumane*** - Not human; lacking pity or compassion.

***Junker*** - A member of the Prussian land-owning aristocracy.

***Nationalism*** - Devotion to one's nation; excessive patriotism.

***Nordic, Teutonic*** – Relating to inhabitants of the Northern countries of Europe.

***Oratory*** - Speeches.

***Pacifist*** - Peace loving.

***Pogrom*** – Russian word used to describe organized violence against Jews, often with the consent of the government or police. These attacks led to injury, murder, looting and destruction of Jewish property.

***Vaterland*** - German word meaning one's country. For Germans, Germany.

***Versailles Treaty***- The treaty signed at the end of World War I which stripped Germany of her colonies, treasury and pride.

***Protocols of the Elders of Zion*** - A fraudulent pamphlet (exposed as a forgery) written to prove the existence of an international Jewish conspiracy.

***Reparations*** - Payments made to make amends; a compensation.

***Scapegoat*** – A person or group of people that is unfairly blamed for wrongs done by others.

***Subhuman*** - Less than human.

***Reinvigorate*** - To strengthen once more.

***Treaty***- A formal agreement between two or more states or countries; a pact.

***Ubiquitous*** - Being or seeming to be everywhere at the same time.

## Chapter I.

### Background to the Catastrophe:

“ Some authors claim that Nazism and the Holocaust were a distinctly German phenomena. I wish it were so. Then we would simply have to watch that one country in the future. But recent examples of ethnic hatred and genocide in various countries and the world’s indifference toward them show that the potential for such atrocities exists everywhere.”

--Fritz Ottenheimer

What is Holocaust Education? Why is it important? Let us begin by distinguishing between Holocaust history and Holocaust education. Holocaust history is the knowledge of the past. Holocaust education has for its goal lessons for the future.

To learn these lessons, we must learn to question. Therefore we should begin with the most important question: How was it possible for the Holocaust to occur in the midst of civilized Europe, in a modern, culturally advanced, predominantly Christian country, perpetrated by a people who gave us Beethoven, Bach, and Brahms? Those same people who prided themselves in justice, hard work, and tolerance? Where Jews lived for generations, accepted as equals, fought for their country, considered themselves patriotic Germans first and foremost, were decorated for bravery during WWI and some even lost their lives on the battlefield? How could a people ignore all this, then accept and follow a maniacal leader such as Adolph Hitler and do his bidding?

To answer these questions, we need to look at the immediate and long-range past of the region, prior to those immensely inhumane events. The Holocaust did not occur either spontaneously or in a vacuum. Certain conditions had to be present and had to come together at the same time in history. In the case of the Holocaust, three major conditions were present. One was the defeat of Germany in World War I and its consequent economic collapse. Two was the rise of Communism in Europe, which allowed well-meaning people to tolerate the Nazis, seen as a counter-force against Bolshevism; and three were the ancient teachings of the Church, portraying the Jew as a villain, allied with the devil, something Hitler exploited to its fullest by declaring Jews “an inferior *race*.” This allowed Germans to accept the notion of the Jew as a traitor, and therefore the ideal scapegoat for the evils that befell their nation during the First World War.

**I. World War I.** Between 1914 and 1918 Europe was engulfed in the First World War. It was called “the war to end all wars.” For the first time, chemical weapons in the form of mustard gas were used. Germany was accused of starting the war and was made to surrender unconditionally. The Treaty of Versailles that the German government was forced to sign, stated that Germany must accept full responsibility for the war and its consequences. The Allies: France, England, and later, America, set out to punish the German nation. Germany, once a proud military nation, was restricted under the conditions of the treaty to an army of volunteers only, numbering not more than 100,000 (no aircraft, tanks, or submarines.) It was forced to give up territory and had to pay heavy sums in reparations to the countries whose lands had been damaged because of the war. These terms ruined the economy and humiliated a proud people, unwilling to accept responsibility for their defeat. From the beginning of the hostilities, Germans were promised and believed in a lightning speed victory. Even when the war dragged on, the Junker generals kept alive the myth that the German army was invincible. And when the war was lost, they blamed the German surrender not on a military defeat but on a surrender forced on the army by traitors in their midst, declaring that the country had been “stabbed in the back” by these traitors, who were the Jews and also the communists. Millions of proud Germans chose to believe this lie.

Jews had become emancipated with the Enlightenment (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century.) They considered themselves Germans first and, for many, Jews a distant second. Consequently, when World War I began, they demonstrated their patriotism by enlisting into the army in record numbers. Some 100,000 Jews joined the fighting. (One in six of all German Jews, including women and children.) Of these, 80,000 served in the front-line trenches, 35,000 were decorated for bravery, and 12,000 were killed. Unfortunately, that same patriotic fervor which caused them to enlist was turned against them after the defeat. Even though *they* had thought of themselves as German first, to the non-Jew they remained the outsider, hence the “traitor” and “back-stabber.”

After World War I, Germany had its first attempt at creating a democratic government called the Weimar Republic. Unfamiliar with democratic issues, the Weimar Republic was a politically weak and ineffective institution. In the eyes of too many, democracy was unsuited to

Germany and the German people. It was a regime believed to have been imposed on them by outsiders, and Jews were once more declared to be the villains.

The exorbitant sums Germany had to pay as reparations caused economic disaster, which resulted in staggering unemployment and super-inflation of monstrous proportions. Soon a quart of milk became more expensive than a person's entire life savings. Conditions improved somewhat between 1925 and 1929, but the Great Depression of 1929 returned the nation to widespread poverty and hunger. A proud people had been brought to its knees, and needed someone or something to blame.

## **II. The Rise of Communism.**

Under such conditions of hardship, many new political movements emerged with promises of solutions. Among these were Nationalism and Communism, on either extreme of the political spectrum. Communism claimed to stand for equality for all men, was anti-capitalist, which it viewed as "exploiting the masses" for the benefit of the few ultra-rich. It had an appeal to the suffering poor, but was opposed by the old German aristocrats. Nationalism on the other hand was a backlash against the humiliating defeat of World War I, and an attempt to recover the pride in the superiority of the German nation. These two movements fought each other on the political platform and openly in the streets.

At first, Adolf Hitler and the Nazis were not taken very seriously. Because of their ruthlessness, they were not well received by a people who prided itself in having one of the most advanced cultures of Europe. At best they were viewed as a band of rabble-rousers. Yet Nazional-Sozialism, the official name of Hitler's Nazi party, stemming from the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) was tolerated and even welcomed, because many believed that it could defeat Communism, and in the process would cause its own demise as well. Therefore, there was no need to worry about the outlandish extremes set out in the Nazi platform, since there was little chance this party would have a lasting future.



Urging voters to break the shackles of the Treaty of Versailles, this poster trumpeted, "End it now! Elect Hitler"

Hitler, however, had other plans. In times of suffering, people look for a scapegoat and a savior. The rise of Adolph Hitler gave them both.



Hitler was a charismatic leader for the Germans. The adulation he inspired was intense and genuine, especially at the annual Nazi Party Rallies in Nuremberg.

Hitler was an extremely charismatic speaker, and he offered the German people the solution they yearned to hear. He reinforced the idea of a superior German race, and the concept that Germany had been stabbed in the back by traitors. These traitors, according to Hitler, were the Jews, offspring of a subhuman race. He appealed to Germany's pride in their superiority as a nation worthy

to rule the world, and promised to achieve this superiority once more by getting rid of those responsible for Germany's woes, namely the Jews. The Jew, he declared, could not be rehabilitated, because his degenerative traits were genetic. Reference to this inferior "blood" was ubiquitous in all Nazi propaganda and teachings.

Hitler's attempt to overthrow the Government by force in 1923 landed him in jail, where he wrote his infamous book "*Mein Kampf*," setting forth his ideas of German, or Aryan racial superiority, and the racial inferiority of Jews and others. It is said that his spelling was so poor that he dictated his notes to other Nazi prisoners who did the actual writing.

Civilians thrilled to the spectacle of parading German troops.



### Who are the Aryans?

In reality, there is no such thing as an "Aryan race," nor a Jewish race, for that matter. Hitler adopted the term "Aryan" to define certain physical traits present mostly in Northern European or Teutonic people: tall, blond, blue-eyed. The original definition of "Aryan" does not refer to any race, but rather to an Indo-European language family, which includes the languages of

Pakistan and Northern India, such as classical Sanskrit and modern Hindi and Urdu. Nevertheless, it suited Hitler to give this name to his German “Super-race,” worthy of ruling the world.

### **Hitler’s Convoluted Illogical Ideas.**

In his book “*Mein Kampf*” Hitler describes his ideas as “Social Darwinism,” the superiority of one race over another. He declares that a “Volk” or nation race must fight, or be doomed to extinction. It must also remain pure in order to survive and gain superiority. It further must not tolerate what he termed “foreign defilement,” which threatens purity and therefore survival.

Jews, he wrote, were the problem, because they were pacifist and international. Because of this they could not be trusted. He called them a “bacilli” infecting every aspect of German life, culture and politics. They were “Unmenschen,” less than human and unworthy of life. The other group Hitler despised were the Bolsheviks, for they, he said, stood in the way of Germany’s *natural right* to expand its territories to the East.

The following is a short summary of his principal ideas, as set forth in his book:

1. *Men are not created equal. As the most superior race on earth, Germans are true creators of culture. Since only they are capable of solving mankind’s future problems, the future of civilization depends on them. Therefore, Aryan blood must be kept pure or these superior qualities will be lost. Marriages to inferior races are forbidden. Germans must create a pure Master Race to rule the world.*
2. *Jews, the most inferior race, are the true destroyers of culture. They have deliberately invaded and drained all countries of the world of money and power. Therefore, the future of world power rests on either the rightful German masters or the Jews. Germans must save the world by ridding it of this Jewish poison.*
3. *Slavs, blacks, and Mediterranean peoples rank only slightly above Jews. They are fit only as German slaves.*
4. *The German Master Race will take as much land to the east as it needs for “Lebensraum,” or extra living space. Political*

*boundaries are nonsense. If others resist, Germany will use its arms and take land by force.*

- 5. Democracy and majority rule are stupid. The masses are ignorant sheep that need leading by a brilliant statesman. This divinely appointed leader is Adolf Hitler, who will rule the world with a few chosen elite. The Third Reich, or new German Empire, will last a thousand years. It will be a Nazi totalitarian state with total control of government over the lives of all its citizens.*
- 6. Force and fear are the only means to keep the masses under control. Reason and argument have no place in the Third Reich.*
- 7. Give the people a single enemy to hate and to blame for all their troubles. Then they will not feel guilty and will aim all their frustrations in one direction. Blame the Jew for everything evil.*
- 8. Thou shalt have no other God but Germany! (Hitler even proposes this to be the eleventh commandment.) Christianity is just a scheme created by Jews. Christian love, mercy and charity must be replaced by pride, willpower, defiance, and hate. Honor not a heavenly Father but the Fatherland.*
- 9. Propaganda, or a system to spread political ideas, must be used to gain support of the ignorant masses. Since the people are dull and forgetful, propaganda must be limited to only a few points and repeated over and over again in slogans. It is not important that these ideas be true, for people are willing to believe anything. In fact, the bigger the lies, the better.*

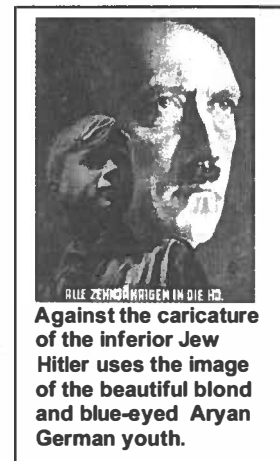
*Source: Understanding the Holocaust, by Betty Merty. Pp.43/4*

Hitler served only 9 months of his 5-year term, after which he wisely chose to attempt to gain power by more legitimate, constitutional means. In 1932, Hitler ran for President and won thirty percent of the vote. Rather than choosing a run-off election, the eventual winner, Paul von Hindenburg, agreed to a political deal with Hitler. Hitler was appointed Chancellor in 1933 by von Hindenburg in exchange for a promise of support. Once in power, Hitler systematically changed the laws, eventually giving himself unlimited power as Fuehrer of the German Nation.

Hitler used the idea of propaganda to its fullest. Propaganda was constant, accomplished with great fanfare via magazines, in movie theaters, and in the classrooms. The Jew was portrayed as less than human, conniving, money-hungry, and plotting for world dominion. In short, someone who could not be trusted, ever. The Nazis fomented hatred and engaged in clandestine ruthless killing of any potential opponent on the one hand, while on the surface promoting "*Gemuetlichkeit*" or easy living. Good times were coming once more to one and all! Children were enrolled in



the "*Hitlerjugend*," or Hitler youth, parading in super-spectacles of torch-lit marching bands. Music, pomp, banners, oratory. Hitler promised them the world for their future in song. And the young were all too willing and eager to accept it without a second thought to anyone else.



But Hitler's antisemitic propaganda had a deeper and more sinister purpose as well: it kept the masses distracted from his preparations for war. He put people back to work in ammunition factories. Preoccupied with their newfound scapegoat, the Jew, and happy to be working once more, very few worried about the "why" of all this rearmament.

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### Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you know of a case of scapegoating from your own experience? What was your reaction?
2. Look at the political cartoon on the following page. What is the difference between this cartoon and the Nazi propaganda? Is there any?
3. Do all politicians use negative propaganda, even today?
4. Once in power, Hitler systematically changed the existing laws. How was he able to do that?
5. How and why do politicians sometimes use language to mask their real values? Give some examples from real life.
6. Is most antisemitism based on not knowing and willing to believe what you read or hear, or is it based on willful hatred? Which is worse?

# People, propaganda, politics

## Fake poster swayed voters in late 1800s

**FEBRUARY IS** Black History Month. Each Sunday, we will look at black history and some of the people who helped create it and others who make history today.

BY M. FERGUSON TURELEY  
The Dominion Post

*A 108-year-old poster blares out the turmoil of 19th century West Virginia politics. It also highlights the frustration that still gripped the lives of West Virginia blacks a full generation after the Civil War.*

Connie Park Rice, a doctoral candidate at WVU, said she found the poster in the archives of the West Virginia and Region History Collection at the university. It depicts an African-American teacher thrashing a white school boy who is wailing and struggling to get away.

The poster was the 1892 Democratic vision of integrated schools.

There were no such schools in West Virginia or elsewhere in the United States. In fact, the poster was printed four years after Plessy vs. Ferguson, the Supreme Court decision that sanctioned "separate but equal" schools.

The poster was a political ploy contrived to keep the Republicans out of power in Charleston, Rice said.

She said the Democrats stood on Morgantown, Fairmont and Wheeling streets passing out the leaflets to frighten white voters. That year Republican gubernatorial candidate Thomas E. Davis and his backers — railroad and mining mogul Stephen B. Elkins was chief among these — were making the Democrats hush.

"They were making a good run for it," Rice said of the Davis crowd. Elkins was set on having the state house.

William MacCorkle was the Democrats' candidate, and his party had had full sway since 1870. They kept it, too, Rice said.

"The Republicans lost because MacCorkle used that age-old race formula," she said. "He raised the cry of 'Negro Domination.' And they talked about the 'Force Bill,' which required federal supervision of Southern elections."

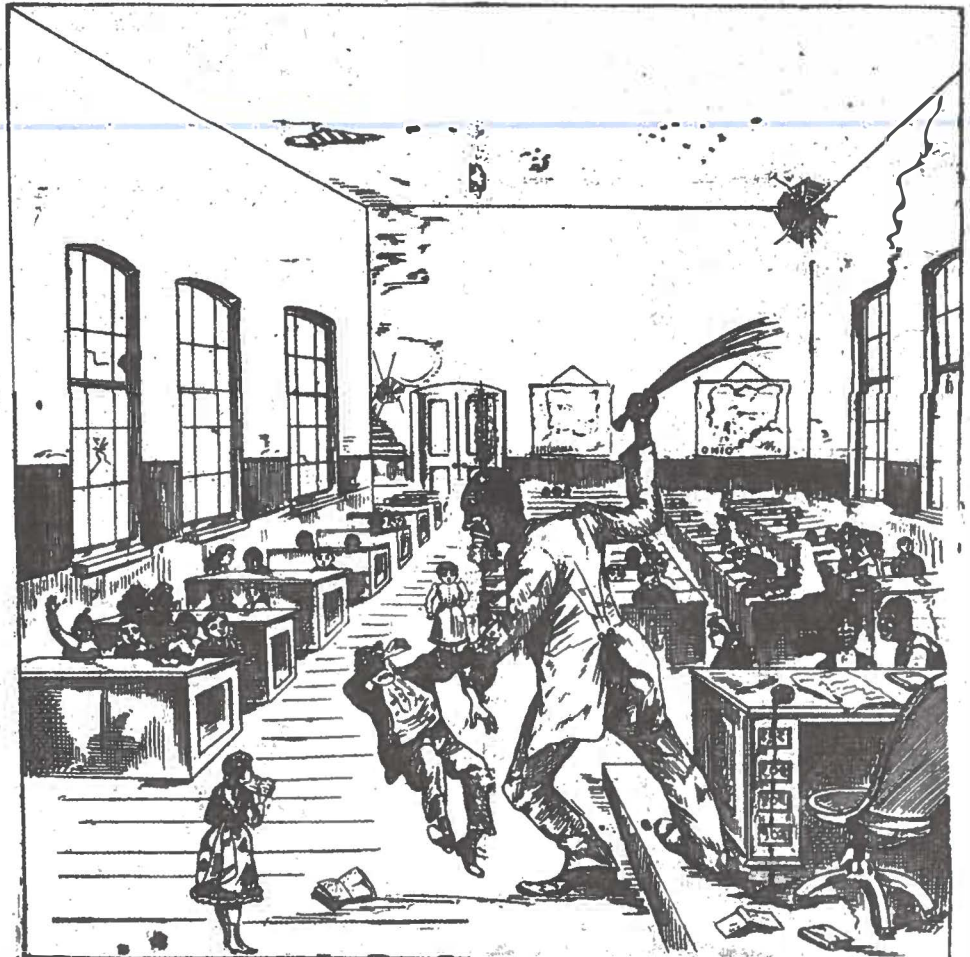
So, MacCorkle and his cronies flashed the phony classroom fliers and roused whites to vote Democratic.

"Of course, there never would've been a school like that," Rice said. She said blacks were forbidden to attend school before 1865 in West Virginia, as in other southern states. In 1872, the two parties legalized the concept of segregated schools in the state constitution.

All of this straddled a canyon-like rift that still existed in West Virginia over black voting rights, Rice said.

Many who kept their Confederate loyalties were

## A MIXED SCHOOL.



**Do the People of West Virginia want This?  
If so, vote the Republican Ticket**

The poster from the late 1800s depicts an integrated classroom. Democrats used such propaganda to pull votes from the Republicans, who were viewed as sympathetic to blacks in 1892. Actually, both groups despised blacks.

angry that black people would be able to vote while Confederates were still disenfranchised.

"They thought, 'Why should blacks be allowed to vote when white people can't?'" Rice said. "So, in May 1870, when blacks were given the right to vote, so were the Confederates."

That year, 2,705 black men went to the polls. "Soon, the black vote was courted by both parties," Rice said.

But, Lincoln's old party — the Republicans — had the upper hand. They saw blacks as a ripe field of votes, she said.

And most blacks then were uneducated — leaving many of them prey for politicians. "The Republicans, of course, said 'You owe us your loyalty,'" she said.

"But the black voters realized they weren't getting anything for their vote. No one was doing anything to help them. No one was keeping their promises to the black voters," Rice continued. "So they sold their votes to anyone."

She said some voted up to 12 times.

"They were called repeaters," Rice said. "They were labeled by the Republicans and other blacks as 'traitors to their race.'"

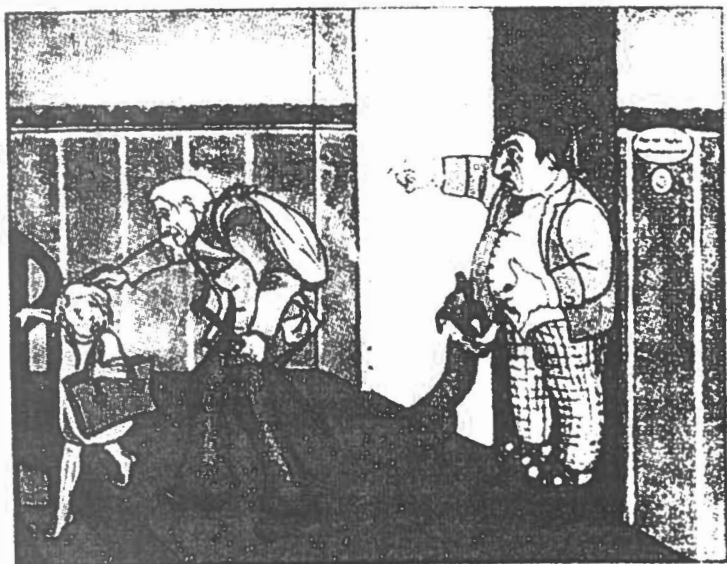
Rice said violence raged against blacks from everywhere — from the Republicans, Democrats and others.

"Teachers who dared to run for office had their schools torn up," she said. There were lynchings, unrelenting intimidation, ballot stuffing and the threat of passing a law to block black voters.

The confusion and grudges and shenanigans continued more than 20 years. Then, despite the madness, Elkins won a senate seat in 1894.

His win gave the Republicans a toehold on the governor's mansion, Rice said. In 1893, they took the mansion with George Atkinson's campaign.

That same year, Christopher Payne, of Fayette County, was elected a delegate. He was West Virginia's first black state legislator.



# ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Here, look at this swindler (crook)  
 He is the Jew Aaron Kahn  
 He calls a store his own  
 Everyone knows the cheap "specials"  
 He sells in (that store)  
 Which are of no value  
 He has an immense sack full of money  
 The money which he gets  
 Only from the dumb people who  
 Buy in his store  
 But once one comes to him  
 And asks "give bread, I'm hungry"  
 You can see in the picture  
 What Jews do in such a situation  
 Therefore listen, people from far and near  
 Trust no fox on the green heath  
 And no Jew by his oath (promise)

Er verkauft hier droben Quäner aus!  
 Das ist der Jude Aaron Kahn  
 Ein Geschäft hat er sein Laden nennt.  
 Den billigen Handel den jeder kennt,  
 Den er seinen Kunden  
 Den kann' ich nicht fassen heisst.  
 Den Geldbeutel hat er so vollen gemacht!  
 Das Geld davon hat er sich selbst  
 Den kleinen Leuten bringt allein,  
 Die in dem Geschäft kaufen ein! —  
 Der kommt denn immer und zu ihm  
 Und fragt: "Gib Brot! Ich bin hungrig!"  
 Ihr seht es auf dem Bild,  
 Das jüdische Geschäft im Bild!  
 Wenn ihr das seht, dann sollt ihr wissen:  
 Denn einem Fuchs auf grüner Heide  
 Und einem Juden bei seinem Eid!"

The title of this children's book is "*Trau keinem Fuchs auf gruener Heid und Keinem Jud bei Seinem Eid*" (You Can't Trust a Fox in a Heath and a Jew on His Oath). The book disseminated antisemitic propaganda to Germany's unsuspecting youth. This illustration leaves nothing to the imagination.

# **PARTY PLATFORMS**

Submitted by John Armstrong  
St. Mary's High School

In 1932, Hitler ran for president against a Communistic candidate and Hindenburg, the incumbent president. The election was a spirited one, in which 84 percent of all eligible voters cast ballots. Those voters had to decide which party offered the best solution to the nation's problems. The decision was not an easy one. To appreciate those choices, compare the platforms of the Pro Weimar Party, the Nazis, and the Communist Party:

## **Pro-Weimar Platform**

This party wishes to maintain the Republic and to allow Germany to take its place among the free governments of Europe.

1. We support the present German Republic so that freedom, democracy, and justice will live in the hearts of our German countrymen.
2. We will honor all of Germany's obligations, political and financial, in order that Germany's honor and respect will not be decreased in the eyes of the world.
3. We plan to create more jobs by undertaking an extensive program of public works.
4. We will establish unemployment compensation up to a six-month period.
5. We will cut government expenditures to lower taxes.
6. We believe in the right of those who disagree with the party to speak and write on those issues without interference.

## **Communist Party Platform**

We are committed to the overthrow of the presently existing, oppressive Republic and all of its economic and social institutions. The party favors:

1. The abolition of private property.
2. The establishment of land reform programs, in which the government will take over the land and distribute it for the common good of all.
3. The ownership of all industrial productive forces by the government so that they can be operated for the benefit of all the people rather than the capitalists.
4. A foreign policy that will build friendly relations between Germany and the Soviet Union, since both are allies against capitalism.

To the German people: The cause of your misery is the fact that the French, British, and American capitalists are exploiting German workers to get rich themselves. Germans, unite to get rid of this terrible burden.

## **Ten Major Points of the 25 Point Nazi Program**

We demand:

1. A union of all Germans to form a great Germany on the basis of self-determination of peoples.
2. Abolition of the Treaty of Versailles.
3. Land and territory (colonies) for our surplus population.
4. German blood as a requirement for German citizenship. No Jew can be a member of the nation.
5. Non-citizens live in Germany as foreigners only, subject to the law of aliens.
6. Only citizens can vote or hold public office.
7. The state insures that every citizen live decently and earn his livelihood. If it is impossible to provide food for the whole populations, then aliens must be expelled.
8. No further immigration of non-Germans. Any non-German who arrived after August 2, 1914, shall leave immediately.
9. A thorough reconstruction of our national system of education. The science of citizenship shall be taught from the beginning.
10. All newspapers must be published in the German language by German citizens and owners.

## Comprehension Check-up: Why did the Nazis Come to Power in Germany?

In this unit we have read about the rise of Nazism in Germany. Now it's time to sort out the reasons. Below are some factors that may have contributed to the rise of Nazism. See which one apply, then rank them in order of their importance.

1. *One man*, Adolf Hitler, was most responsible. His own charisma and ability to lead the masses seduced the German people.
2. *European power politics* was most responsible. Germany responded resentfully to the vicious attempt at Versailles to punish the German nation. The Nazis presented themselves as the best answer to the intended humiliation by other European nations.
3. Nazism was the logical outgrowth of a history of authoritarianism and militarism in Germany. Weimer was a historical accident for which the German people were totally unprepared. The Fuhrer principle satisfied what was a *historical anti-democratic need* of the German people. The Nazis represented the traditional values in German history which were acceptable to a large percentage of Germans in the 1920s.
4. Nazism rose in direct response to *fear* of the growth of the German Communist Party. This drove many moderate Germans to support the Nazis as the only alternative capable of stopping the Communists.
5. Nazism was the result of the attempt by big business and nationalist forces to stem the possibility of a socialist takeover in Germany. They feared the workers unity, thus they bankrolled Hitler, paying for an enormous advertising campaign that was very successful.
6. Nazism rode to power on the heels of a two thousand-year-old tradition of *anti-semitism*. The Nazis claimed that they would finally solve this "Jewish problem" in Germany once and for all. The German people, not unaccustomed to antisemitism, responded positively to the claims of the Jew-hating Nazis.
7. Nazism was the result of a *declining economy*, inflation and depression, that lead inevitably to its victory.
8. Nazism was a *spiritual revolt* against the Enlightenment idea that mankind could change its own nature. Nazism appealed to those who revolted against the individualism, rationalism and democracy.
9. Nazism expressed a basic longing for the past, for a more ordered time unlike the liberal chaos of Weimer Republic. Many Germans held these beliefs.
10. Nazism was the direct result of the *evil nature* of human beings, of the basic desire for authority and dominance that lies buried in every person. The Nazis gave people an opportunity to express their most basic instincts: to destroy and kill.

## **CHAPTER REVIEW**

### **HITLER'S PROGRAM FOR SPREADING NAZISM AND ANTISEMITISM IN GERMANY**

Let us review the methods used by Hitler to gain control and spread his message of hatred:

- Complete control of the mass media. At the time, this included newspapers and radio, and newsreels in movie theaters.
- Frequent public speeches, addressing large masses of people with the purpose of inciting hatred and spreading antisemitism and Nazism.
- Utilization of standardized symbols of recognition throughout Germany (swastika, Nazi flag, uniforms, arm bands, etc....)
- Ceremonial spectacles of torchlight parades and bonfires.
- Persistent display of Nazi slogans on banners and posters.
- Persistent display of antisemitic posters in public places.
- Organization of the Hitler Youth for the purpose of total indoctrination of the young in Nazi ideologies.
- A well-organized spy system to identify, arrest and persecute enemies of the Nazi party.

Now let us continue and study *how* he set the wheels in motion to create his master race of super Aryans, destined in his mind to rule the world.



## **Chapter II**

# **Why the Jews?**



## Definition of Terms: CHAPTER TWO

**Euthanasia-** The action of inducing a painless death of a person for reason assumed to be merciful.

**Crematorium-** A furnace or place for the cremation (burning) of corpses.

**Crusade-** Military expedition by European Christians in the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> century, to seize the Holy Land and Jerusalem from the Moslems, whom they called infidels.

**Divergence-** To move away; to go in a different direction.

**Exacerbate -** To make worse.

**Exile-** Forced removal from one's native country.

**Ghetto** – a quarter of a city in which members of a minority live, originally restricted to Jews.

**Homilies-** moralizing lectures, guarding against contact with Jews.

**Infamous-** Detestable; loathsome or evil.

**Ingratiate-** To bring purposely into the good graces or favor of another.

**Infidels-** To the Crusaders, the Muslims of the Holy Land or anyone who did not believe in Jesus Christ.

**Patriarchs-** Forefathers.

**Plagiarism-** The act of stealing and using the idea or writing of someone else's as one's own.

**Pogroms-** An organized and often officially encouraged massacre or persecution conducted against a minority, especially one conducted against the Jews.

**Precursor-** Something or someone that precedes or comes before and indicates what is to come; a forerunner.

**Secular-** Not specifically pertaining to any religion.

**Tenet-** A doctrine or principle held by a group or organization.

**Virulent-** Bitterly hostile or antagonistic; full of hate.

## CHAPTER II. Why the Jews?

### A. The Euthanasia Program of the Infirm.

In actuality, Hitler did not start his quest for a superior "Aryan" race with the killing of Jews. Rather, his first victims were Germans who were handicapped, mentally or physically ill. Since "racially pure" Aryans were deemed superior, anything less was "inferior," and unworthy of life. The primary importance was to be physically fit to fight, intelligence was less important. Whether a person in a wheelchair was intelligent or not mattered little.



A frame from a Reich Propaganda Office filmstrip showing that for the daily cost of 5.5 Reichmarks a family of "healthy" Germans could be helped instead of one hereditarily ill person.

Hitler secretly decided on a program of euthanasia in September 1939, via clandestine killings and some propaganda, pointing to the cost of supporting institutionalized life. In many institutions, patients were killed



Handicapped children described as "deformed". This photo is from a filmstrip put out by the Reich Propaganda Office showing frightening images of mental patients that were intended to develop public sympathy for the T-4 Euthanasia program.

with overdoses of medications administered by physicians and nurses. Others were shot or starved to death. The program was refined when the first gas chambers were built. Several euthanasia centers housed small crematoria, where the bodies were burned. Families were notified that their loved ones had died from 'heart failure' or pneumonia.

The high rate of deaths in the psychiatric wards aroused suspicion among relatives. The smoke from the crematoria was clearly visible, causing worries and concern. Too many inmates were dying of so-called “natural” causes. When the truth became apparent, Catholic and Protestant Bishops were more and more openly questioning and opposing the practice. In a sermon preached in St. Lambert’s Church in 1941, Msgr. Van Galen openly condemned the killing of any human being, stating: “No man has the right to kill an innocent person, no matter what the reason, except in case of war or in legitimate self-defense...”

Source: The Holocaust and Genocide, p.94

Shortly after Msgr. Von Galen delivered this sermon, the official euthanasia program came to an end, although some killings did continue in secret.



The crematoria built to kill the handicapped were the precursors of the crematoria that eventually killed millions of Jews, including nearly one and a half million children. Because protest arose against the killings of the mentally or physically unfit, that program was officially halted. Yet when Jews were deported and the stench of the crematoria chimneys was even more powerful, no major public outcry was heard which could have put a stop to the Holocaust, no official condemnation, no Church sermon. Therefore, we must ask ourselves once more. Why? What made the Jew such an acceptable scapegoat? What made it so easy for intelligent people to accept the Jew as the ultimate scapegoat, as less than human, as vermin to be exterminated?

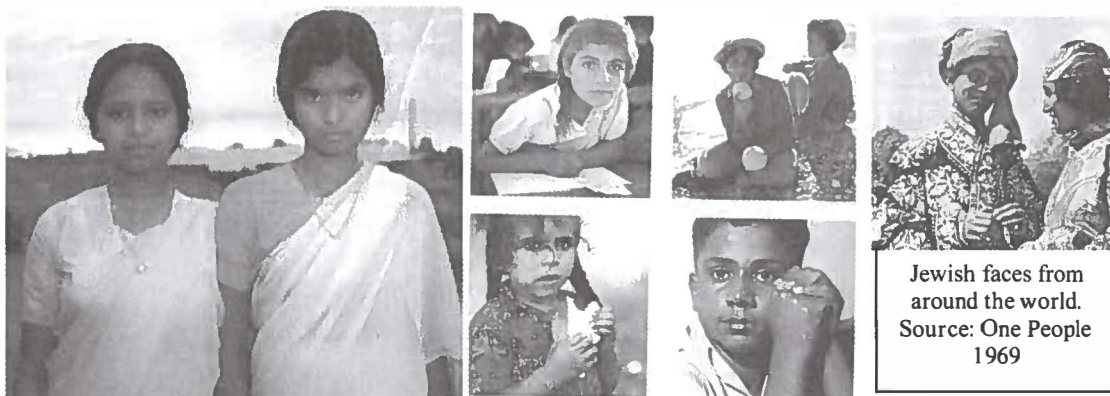
## **B. Why the Jews?**

**a) Antisemitism.** The answer to this question is something called antisemitism. To begin to comprehend antisemitism, we must find its roots, the twisted reasons for its development, due in part to superstition, fear, and the desire to dominate, not unlike racial, religious, or ethnic hatred in our days. Before we can discuss antisemitism, however, we must become aware of the

background of the people against whom it was directed and why the attempt to single them out was so successful.

### **b) Who are the Jews?**

Contrary to Hitler's assertions, Jews are not a race, but an ancient people nearly four thousand years old, who trace their lineage to Abraham of the Bible. He, his son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob are considered the Jewish patriarchs. Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah of the Bible are the Jewish matriarchs. Jews now live on nearly all continents. Over time, they have been influenced and have taken on the attributes of several civilizations. There are blond and blue-eyed Jews, brown-eyed, hazel-eyed, red and dark haired Jews, Jews from India with Indian physical traits. The Jews of Ethiopia in Africa are dark-skinned. They claim to trace their origins to King Solomon of the Bible. There are even Chinese Jews! Evolution and dispersion have also led to changes in details of the original faith, so that Judaism now possesses a variety of forms. To complicate matters even further, modern Judaism includes secular Judaism, which is the philosophy of those who accept specific Jewish values but reject religion.



Judaism, the religion of the Jews, is a belief in ethical monotheism, "ethical" meaning moral and "monotheism" refers to the belief in one single God. Judaism is called the mother religion of Christianity and Islam, because both religions have their origin in Judaism. Through Christianity, Judaism has spread its ethical teachings throughout the Western World. Judaism is very strongly this-world oriented. It is an all-encompassing daily living experience, whose primary center is the home, where it prescribes ethical behavior and action. Its primary rule is "*Do not unto others that which is hateful to you.*" The rest is considered commentary.

All Jewish holidays begin at sundown. The Sabbath is considered a day of rest and the most important Jewish Holiday.

The following is a short description of Judaism, quoted from: *“Religions of the World , pp.34/35”*

## JUDAISM

Judaism is a reasonable and moderate belief, countenancing no excess or extravagance. The central truth of its teaching is that the final aim of religion, the *summum bonum*, is morality. In this it differs from the more extensive religions—Hinduism, which makes ritual perfection the end, and Christianity, which makes faith more important than good works. To the Jews, right conduct, in everyday life is more important than right belief. According to the Talmud, every good man is assured of Heaven, the heathen who observes the moral law being the equal to the High priest. Judaism is a truly catholic belief: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” The Hebrew is bound to visit the sick, to relieve the poor, to bury the dead, without regard to religion. Loans are preferable to charitable gifts among them because they do not detract from self-respect. Judaism is free from sentimentalism. Self-imposed suffering, idleness, and asceticism are frowned upon. Manliness is a dominant note. Female worth is highly regarded. Humane treatment of lower animals is demanded. The milder virtues of meekness and humility are commended. An eleventh-century Hebrew writer sums up the teaching thus: “Speak the truth; be modest; live on the coarsest fare rather than be dependent on others. Shun evil companions, be not like flies that swarm in foul places. Rejoice not when thine enemy falls; be not both witness and judge; avoid anger, the heritage of fools.”

### **c) History Highlights of the Jewish People**

Abraham, the Patriarch, was born about four thousands years ago in the Middle East, in the city of Ur in Chaldea, which is now Iraq. He was a descendant of idol worshippers, who had many gods. Rich harvests or crop failures were attributed to the disposition of the gods; so were victories or defeats on the battlefields. Those who won were considered to have the more powerful gods.

Abraham, for our purposes, may be considered one of the earliest individuals on record to think for himself. He had difficulty believing, so the legend goes, that idols baked of clay could influence human destiny. Therefore, he chose instead to believe in one all-powerful, all-present and all-knowing, invisible God.

Abraham left the city of Ur and settled in Canaan, now Israel, with his family. Because of famine due to drought, Joseph's entire family came to live in Egypt, where they prospered and multiplied. Yet they did not adopt the Egyptian gods, but kept their customs and monotheistic beliefs.

Because they retained their culture and belief in the one God, they were considered different, and because they prospered and multiplied, a new Pharaoh in Egypt, (in approximately 1580 BCE) worried that their ever-increasing numbers might one day turn against the ruling authorities. Therefore he enslaved them and they remained slaves for generations, until freed by Moses, who parted the Red Sea and brought them to freedom. Moses, according to the Bible, received the 10 Commandments from God on Mount Sinai, while wandering in the desert for 40 years before reaching the Promised Land. At Mount Sinai, God is said to have made a Covenant with the people of Israel.

The theme of slavery and liberation is held as a constant reminder in Jewish tradition and scriptures. The Jew is admonished to "treat the stranger as yourself" and not to forget "that you were strangers and slaves in the Land of Egypt."

Ancient history of the Jewish people blends with the history of the region. Battles were fought, some won, others lost. Repeatedly, this region was occupied by conquering rulers. When an area was conquered, the people were made to conform to the beliefs of the conqueror and adopt his gods. Most ancient peoples were absorbed in this manner. But Jews as a rule stubbornly refused to abandon their culture and belief in the one and only God, often in spite of suffering and the imposition of harsh decrees.

The first king of the Israelites was Saul (1020—1000 BCE), followed by King David. During David's reign, the Israelites conquered Jerusalem and made it their religious and secular capital. King Solomon, son of King

David (961-922 BCE) built the first Temple in Jerusalem to house the Ark holding the secret Tablets of the Law, which the Lord had given Moses at Mount Sinai.

The Temple was destroyed by the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BCE, later rebuilt twice, then utterly demolished in 70 AD by the Romans, who, tired of the non-conformist Jews, decided to exile them. Very few were left behind, where they and their descendants remained until the present times.

Now the Jews had lost both the Temple and Jerusalem as physical entities. The idea of Temple and Jerusalem took tenacious hold in their memories and prayers. As exiles they would erect no temple, because although they believed God was everywhere, only Jerusalem was pure enough for His house. Out of this situation evolved the synagogue, the place of worship for modern Jews all over the world.

The dispersion of the Jews is called Diaspora. According to the Encyclopedia Americana, the Diaspora began in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Eventually, the Diaspora extended to Spain, France, England, the Rhinelands, and later to Poland, Russia, parts of India and China, as well as to the Western Hemisphere. What kept Judaism alive in spite of such dispersion, captivity, and exile was the common belief in the one god, their customs, and their hope of return to “Zion,” the homeland of the Jewish people. The timeline on the following two pages will help you trace Judaism from its beginnings 4000 years ago to the Hitler Era.

### **Review and Discussion Questions:**

1. Do you know anyone that is Jewish? Do you have any Jewish friends?
2. Would you be able to recognize someone as “Jewish” just by looking at that person? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Hitler decided that Jews were a race? How did this fit his purpose?
4. Judaism is called the “Mother religion of Christianity and Islam.” Explain what is meant by this term.
5. What is meant by “Diaspora” and how did Jews manage to keep their identity in spite of being scattered all over the world?

Timeline:  
JUDAISM—FROM ITS ROOTS TO THE HOLOCAUST.

**BCE/BC = Before Common Era.** (BC dates are counted *backward*, from the year 2000 to the year 1.)

2000 - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (forefathers)

1500 - Israelites in Egypt (eventually enslaved)

1250 - Exodus from Egypt, wanderings in the desert for 40 years.

1000 - Conquest of Canaan (now Israel region)

**First monarchy (kingdom) Saul, then David, then Solomon**

Solomon builds the first Temple (961)

900 to 800 First Temple period lasts until 586. Monarchy divides after King Solomon dies.

700 to 600 Kingdom of Judah.

600 to 500 Destruction of Jerusalem, temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 587, first exile of Israelites.

500 to 400 Persian period (setting of Book of Esther—Haman attempts to have all Jews killed, plot is overthrown)  
Period of second Temple lasts until the year 1.

300 to end of BCE Hellenistic (Greek) period.

200 to 100 Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164) Temple defiled with pagan gods  
Maccabean Period. Story of Hannukah: Maccabees regain control of temple, cleanse it and re-light the Menorah (special candelabra.)  
There is only enough pure oil to burn one day, but a miracle occurs and the oil burns for 8 days.

**BEGINNING OF COMMON ERA – AD**

Year 1 to 100 Rome rules the area. Temple is destroyed in 70 AD, Jerusalem destroyed, people exiled. Romans name the area Palestine after the Philistines, arch-enemies of the Hebrews.

Christ is born. Period of Paul, then Mark, Matthew, Luke and John.

100 to 500 Spread of Christianity. Emperor Constantine becomes a Christian and Christianity becomes the official religion of the Roman Empire at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Augustine Chrysostom (Church Father) writes virulently negative commentaries against Jews.  
Jews create Talmud (written Law) in Palestine and in exile in Babylon (Babylonian Talmud)

**DARK AGES** 500-1000 superstition and intolerance prevail.

1000 to 1300 Crusades in the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> century to liberate the Holy land from the “infidels.” The Crusaders kill Jews wherever they come across them on their way to Palestine.

1135-1204 Maimonides, great Jewish philosopher and physician of Spanish origin. Codifies the Talmud. Becomes rabbi of Cairo.

1200 Jews accused of “blood Libel.”

1300 Jews accused of causing the “Black Death.” (Bubonic Plague.)

1400 Expulsion of Jews from Western Europe.

1400 to 1600 Renaissance.

1500 to 1600 Reformation, resulting in separation between the Catholic and Protestant Churches.

1600 to 1700 Religious Wars. (Christian)  
Bogdan Chmielnicki, Cossack leader, fought against Poland.  
Responsible for the brutal massacre of over 100,000 Jews and  
The destruction of 300 Jewish communities.

1700 to 1800 Period of Elightment. Jews regain many legal rights in several European countries, including France and Germany, but anti-semitism remains just beneath the surface, and manifests itself on several occasions. (Dreyfuss affair, France.)

1800 to 1900 Outbreak of pogroms in Poland and Russia (see definition.) Many Jews killed in government sanctioned riots and killing sprees.

1914 – World War I, ending in defeat of Germany and Treaty of Versailles.

1919 – Weimar Republic founded in Germany, dissolved in 1933.

1939 – Adolph Hitler comes to power, assumes title of Fuhrer in 1934.

This list does not include any of the contributions made to society by people of the Jewish faith. If you wish to do some research in this field, some suggestions are: In the United States, Uriah Levy, (naval officer, War of 1812) Haim Solomon, (War of Independence) or Albert Einstein. There were many great thinkers, and scientists who discovered cures. Your teacher can help you in doing research, if you are interested.

#### d) The Roots of Antisemitism.

What exactly *is* Antisemitism? It has been referred to as “the longest hatred.” The term itself is relatively recent, given the long history of Jewish persecution. It was first introduced by Wilhelm Marr (1818-1904), a German anti-Semite who attempted to build a political career by founding the “*League of Anti-Semites*.” He contended that Jews were an inferior race and could never live in harmony with Germans because of “polluted blood” and “bad genes,” which prompted them to take over any country that accepted them. Yet this racial anti-Semitism had its roots in religious antisemitism, which originated in the teachings of the ancient church.

#### e) But *how* did it all begin?

Ancient Christian writings portrayed the Jews as villains, Christ killers and devil worshippers. This formed the basis of ancient religious anti-semitism. But that does not explain *why* this happened. It is difficult to believe that two religions having the same origins, Christianity stemming from Judaism, and a quarrel within the family, so to speak, can have such devastating long-range consequences. To understand the origins of Christian antisemitism, we must return to basics, to the times and life of Jesus Christ.

**f) Jesus Christ, in his time.** Jesus of Nazareth was a practicing Jew, reared in Jewish tradition. He was born, lived and died as a Jew in first-century Roman Palestine. His father, mother, brothers, followers and



**Left:** Jesus, a Jew, taught and lived by the tenets of Judaism. He was killed by the Romans who feared his unique leadership. **Middle:** Rome brutally put down the Jewish rebellion in 70 C.E., destroying the sacred Second Temple. **Right:** A converted Christian, Emperor Constantine ended persecution of Christians and granted the religion official recognition. He imposed a series of edicts oppressive to Jews.

Source: Holocaust Chronicle p.43

twelve disciples were also of the Jewish faith. The Last Supper is said to have been the Passover Seder, when Jews commemorate the deliverance from Egyptian slavery. Jesus lived in a time of crises for Jews, because the Romans insisted that those conquered worship Roman Gods, which the Jews were unwilling to do.

After the death of Jesus, his followers decided to ease the stringent Jewish laws so as to attract non-Jewish converts. These changes were in conflict with basic Judaism, created friction, and ultimately caused a total rift between established Judaism and the followers of Jesus. Still, all the arguments, attacks and counterattacks took place within the context of Judaism.

As Christianity became more popular and widespread with time, there arose a need and a desire to ingratiate the new religion to the ruling forces, i.e. the Romans, who already judged the Jewish free thinkers as stubborn, clannish and even hostile. The Church not only distanced itself from traditional Judaism, but in time became more and more anti-Jewish. The death of Jesus in the Gospel of John now was attributed to the Jews, not the Romans. Furthermore, The Church declared that the Covenant between God and His people had been taken over by Christianity, and that God had abandoned the Jews. Christian leaders, like the Roman's before, wanted everyone to convert to their religion. The Jews, as they had done over centuries, clung to the faith of their ancestors.

With the establishment of Christianity as the official Roman religion by Constantine in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, negative theological attitudes against Judaism began to abound, and sermons and homilies were issued, warning Christians against associating with the Jews. Among the most virulent of these are the writings of Church Father John Chrysostom, whose depiction of the Jew was most vile and damaging. Once these seeds were sown, they were passed on by the illiterate, superstitious masses of the Middle Ages to the detriment of Jews everywhere in Europe.

Hitler took full advantage of these ancient Church laws, when codifying the infamous Nuerenberg Laws. (see page 36)

## LAWS AGAINST THE JEWS

*a comparison*

CHURCH LAW	NAZI LAW
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prohibition of intermarriage and sexual intercourse between Christian and Jews (Synod of Elvira, A.D. 306)</li> <li>2. Jews and Christians not permitted to eat together (Synod of Elvira, 306)</li> <li>3. Jews not allowed to hold public office (Synod of Clermont, 535)</li> <li>4. Jews not allowed to employ Christian servants or possess Christian slaves (3<sup>rd</sup> Synod of Orleans, 538)</li> <li>5. Jews not permitted in the streets during Passion Week (3<sup>rd</sup> Synod of Orleans, 538)</li> <li>6. Burning of the Talmud and other books (12<sup>th</sup> Synod of Toledo, 691)</li> <li>7. Christians not permitted to patronize Jewish doctors (Trulanic Synod, 692)</li> <li>8. Christians not permitted to live in Jewish homes (Synod of Narbonne, 1050)</li> <li>9. Jews obliged to pay taxes for support of Church to the same extent as Christians (Synod of Gerona, 1078)</li> <li>10. Jews not permitted to be plaintiffs or witnesses against Christians in the Courts (3<sup>rd</sup> Lateran Council, 1179)</li> <li>11. The marking of Jewish clothes with a badge (4<sup>th</sup> Lateran Council, 1215)</li> <li>12. Construction of new synagogues prohibited (Council of Oxford, 1222)</li> <li>13. Christians not permitted to attend Jewish ceremonies (Synod of Vienna, 1267)</li> <li>14. Compulsory ghetto (Synod of Breslau, 1267)</li> <li>15. Christians not permitted to sell or rent real estate to Jews (Synod of Ofen, 1279)</li> <li>16. Adoption by a Christian of the Jewish religion or return by a baptized Jew to the Jewish religion defined as a heresy (Synod of Mainz, 1310)</li> <li>17. Jews not permitted to obtain academic degrees (Council of Basel, 1434)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor (September 15, 1935)</li> <li>2. Jews barred from dining cars (December 30, 1939)</li> <li>3. Law for the Re-establishment of the Professional Civil Service (April 17, 1933)</li> <li>4. Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor (September 15, 1935)</li> <li>5. Decree authorizing local authorities to bar Jews from streets on certain days (December 3, 1938)</li> <li>6. Book burnings in Germany (1933)</li> <li>7. Decree of July 25, 1938</li> <li>8. Directive by Goring providing for concentration of Jews in houses-- December 28, 1938</li> <li>9. Jews must pay special income tax in lieu of donations to the Party imposed on Nazis (December 24, 1940)</li> <li>10. Jews not permitted to institute civil suits (September 9, 1942)</li> <li>11. Decree of September 1, 1941</li> <li>12. Destruction of synagogues in entire Reich (November 10, 1938)</li> <li>13. Friendly relations with Jews prohibited (October 24, 1941)</li> <li>14. Order by Heydrich (September 21, 1939) (Note: See Timeline)</li> <li>15. Decree providing for compulsory sale of Jewish real estate (December 3, 1938)</li> <li>16. Adoption of Jewish religion by a Christian places him or her in jeopardy of being treated as a Jew (June 26, 1942)</li> <li>17. Laws against Overcrowding of German Schools and Universities (April 25, 1933)</li> </ol>

### **g) The Jew as Scapegoat**

Why was it so easy to accept antisemitism, to single out and blame the Jew for all the troubles of the world? Primarily because the precedent had been set, but also because the Jewish people no longer had a homeland.

If you were to travel outside the United States, you would require a passport. Your passport will clearly identify you as a citizen of your country, and therefore under its protection when abroad. But what if you did not have a homeland to protect you when traveling? And if your intent was not just to travel, but to find a new home, yet your customs differed from those of the host country in which you hoped to take up residence? The best you could hope for was to be accepted, even as an outsider. This is what Jews repeatedly strove to achieve. Whenever welcomed by a country, they would strive to become model citizens, obeying all the laws of the host country. All, that is, except giving up their culture, their customs, and their belief in the one god. Because of this, and because there was no country that would speak up *for* them, Jews became an easy target for superstitious hatred, and an easy victim as the typical scapegoat.

### **THE DARK AGES**

In the so-called Dark Ages (500-1000), in spite of the many anti-Jewish laws, Jews and Christians lived in relative harmony.

During the medieval period, Christians put pressure on Jews to convert to Christianity, sometimes resorting to forced baptisms. Once the Jew was baptized, with or without his or her consent, s/he became fully accepted in the Christian community. In the sixth century, Pope Gregory I (590-604) forbade the practice of forced baptism, suggesting instead that Christians try to convince Jews to change their religion by reasoning with them. Many Christians followed this idea, while others believed that Jews who did not convert should be made to live in shame for their stubbornness. The pointed hats the Jews were made to wear were a sign of this shame.

Because of this new interaction and all the theological discussions between the two religions, some church leaders worried that Jews might be

able to convince Christians to change to Judaism. So Jews were once more seen as a threat to the established authority, which now was Christian. Therefore, in order to prevent any possibility of Christians converting to Judaism and at the same time force Jews to convert to Christianity, many discriminatory laws were passed which made Jews second-class citizens. The chart on page 36 comparing Church laws to Nazi Laws, lists some of these laws. In order to make being Jewish even less appealing, Jews had to pay taxes to remain Jewish!

**Medieval Ghettos.** All these laws and the rhetoric against them soon made Jews social outcasts. Since the laws forbade them to own property or earn a living like Christians, they formed separate communities called **ghettos**. There they supported each other and developed menial trades that helped them to earn a living and survive. Outside the ghetto they had no choice of jobs. Still, the Medieval ghetto had nothing in common with the ghettos of the Holocaust. In Medieval times ghetto living was by choice. There was no attempt at starvation or annihilation, at least until 1096, the beginning of the Crusades and the outbreak of anti-Jewish pogroms.

**The Crusades**, a series of wars waged by Christian leaders between 1096 and 1271 to reclaim the Holy Land of Jerusalem from the Moslems, became a nightmare of persecution for Jews. Thousands upon thousands were killed and entire communities were wiped out.

To earn a better living, since they could not own land nor join Christian workers outside the ghettos, Jews turned to trading. First, they traded only with other nearby Jewish communities. Eventually, they developed trade routes across Europe, Asia, and Africa. In all these areas they had other Jewish connections and their commerce prospered. Jewish traders fulfilled a need for the European Christian Community, for they were the only ones who dared venture outside the cities on far-away foreign trade routes. There were many killing bandits outside the cities.

As they prospered from their trade routes, they took on yet another role, that of money-lenders. Although this profession fulfilled an important need for their community as well—as do banks nowadays—Jews were nevertheless chastised and called “usurers” because Christianity of the times forbade the charging of interest on loans.

## THE MIDDLE AGES

In the Middle Ages, rife with superstitions, Jews were accused of all sorts of demonic powers and were blamed for most any problem, which arose. Among the major accusations were **Blood Libel**, the killing of Christian children to use their blood for the preparation of Passover Matzah,



The blood-libel accusation. Germany 15<sup>th</sup> century.

or unleavened bread, and **the poisoning of the wells** when Europe was suffering from the Black Death, or Bubonic Plague.

These way-out accusations ran counter to fact or reason. By Jewish law, the consumption of any blood is expressly forbidden, and Matzah is eaten during Passover to remind Jews of the Exodus from Egypt, when they fled in such haste that the bread had no time to rise. This was 16 *centuries before* the founding of Christianity, and before the existence of 'Christian' children.

In 14<sup>th</sup> century Europe, the bubonic plague was blamed on the Jews. They were accused of poisoning the wells. In vain the Pope pointed to the fact that Jews were dying as well, but the hysterical masses needed a scapegoat.



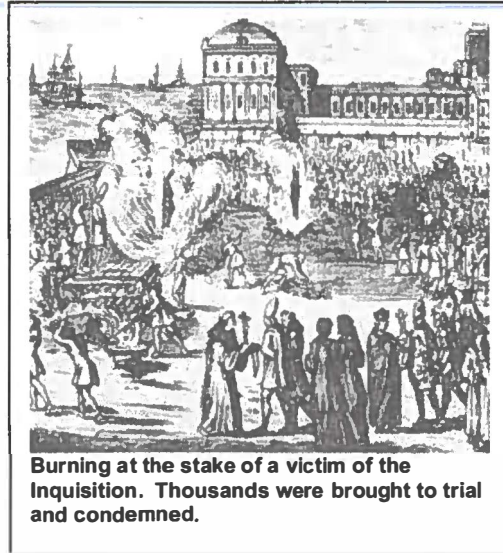
Jews being burned alive after having been forced into a pit. German woodcut from 1493. Pointed hats are a symbol of shame.

For more information and description of the consequences of religious antisemitism, and the treatment of the Jews during the Middle ages, see the stories in "*Complementary Readings*" in the back section of the text, or ask your teacher about the book :

*"A Boy of Old Prague."*

## **The Spanish Inquisition.**

Once antisemitism took root, with no homeland to defend the Jew as its citizen, this scourge spread throughout Europe. Palestine was conquered by the Arabs in the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Many Jews who fought in the Arab army when the latter conquered the Iberian peninsula settled in Spain, where they lived and prospered for centuries. They grew in numbers, influence and well-being. Their talents and know-how were to a large extent responsible for the prosperity of their adopted homeland. The Spanish Inquisition (1478) put an end to this idyllic situation. Judaism was no longer allowed as a religion. Christianity was the only officially accepted faith. Jews who had converted to Christianity were accused of still practicing Judaism in secret. They were called Marranos, were tortured until they confessed to practicing Judaism, and then were burned at the stake. In 1492, after some 14 years of torture and burning, Jews were offered a choice: convert or be exiled. Nearly all Jews chose to leave.



Burning at the stake of a victim of the Inquisition. Thousands were brought to trial and condemned.

## **Russian and Eastern European Antisemitism.**



Jewish Victims of a Russian Pogrom.

It is important to mention Eastern European antisemitism, because it helped the Nazis achieve much of their "Final Solution." In those countries, Nazi presence was minimal, the rounding-up of Jewish families and much of the killings were done by local inhabitants, and what prompted their willing cooperation was their ingrained antisemitic feelings.

Antisemitism followed the Jews, wherever they attempted to settle in Europe. Often they were segregated, and forced to wear identifiable clothing. In Russia in 1792, most Jews were confined to an area called the Pale of Settlement, which included parts of Russian Poland, Belorussia, the Crimea, Bessarabia and the Ukraine. Anti-Semitism was propagated partly through the Church, exacerbated by superstitious fear of those seen as "different." Government sanctioned pogroms destroyed entire Jewish villages, with Kossacks plundering, raping and killing inhabitants. The worst of these were committed by Chmielnicki and his marauding bands, responsible for the destruction of hundreds of Jewish communities in Poland and Russia during the period 1648-49.



A Russian-Jewish soldier returns home on leave only to find his family massacred during the 1906 pogroms against the Jews incited by the czarist government.

### French Antisemitism.

The most famous case of antisemitism in France is the Dreyfus case. France was the center of the Enlightenment movement which, at least in theory, frowned upon intolerance and the persecution of Jews. At the same time, the French Revolution 1789-99 was viewed by some Catholics and anti-republican militarists as the incarnation of evil, planned by mysterious anti-French and anti-Christian forces, namely the Jews. Captain Alfred Dreyfus was the first Jew to rise in military ranks despite his religion. In 1894 he was arrested, convicted, publicly disgraced and exiled to Devil's Island on trumped up charges of having sold state secrets to Germany. The Dreyfus affair inflamed antisemitic hatred and riots throughout France. In 1898 Emile Zola, a French novelist, published the now famous "*J'accuse*" "*I accuse*", a newspaper article which charged the authorities with conspiring to imprison an innocent man, and allowing the true traitor, Major Charles M. Esterhazy to go free. After his conviction, evidence was found that proved Dreyfus innocent, and in 1906 he was reinstated in the army. He was also awarded the Legion of Honor.



Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935)

## The Protocols of the Elders of Zion



*Pictured at left: different language editions of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. From left to right: French, German, and English Versions.*

Source: Goran Larsson,  
"The Protocols of the Elder of Zion: Fact or Fraud?"

Great damage was done by a fabrication that originated in Russia, called "*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*". This so-called document claimed to be the minutes of an international meeting of Jewish leaders, plotting to take over the world. Poorly written and implausible from the very beginning, it was nevertheless accepted by the people who found Jews to be convenient scapegoats. In 1921, a London Times reporter uncovered that the story was in reality a direct plagiarism on a satire about Napoleon by a French writer, Maurice Joly. Nevertheless, the harm was done. Starting in 1920, the Protocols were widely distributed, translated into 17 different languages, and were the basis for untold massacres. It is estimated that between 1918 and 1921, 30,000 to 200,000 Jews were killed in Russia, as an immediate result of the publication of the Protocols. Hitler heavily relied on the Protocols to make his case against the Jews. In his "*Mein Kampf*" he asserted that it having been declared a forgery, was to him "the best proof that it was genuine."

The publication of the Protocols is now outlawed in many countries. Nevertheless, this forgery is still on the market and recent copies have surfaced, translated into Japanese and Arabic, among other.

### Discussion Questions:

1. The Enlightenment was seen as a positive step forward by the Jews of that time. Why do you think this was so? Why did it not work?
2. Why was it important for the *Protocols* to be published in a newspaper? Who owned the German newspapers when Hitler was in power?
3. At the time, were there any other media of mass communications?
4. Who owns the local newspapers where you live? What other means are available at the present time to get information?
5. Is everything you read true?

## The Jew as Contributor to World Progress.

Yet, in spite of persecution, when allowed to live in peace, Jewish culture flourished. Jewish contributions to the world in nearly all fields outweighed by far their comparatively small number as measured to the rest of the total population. In the Middle Ages, Jews were the only people other than the clergy that were literate, could read and write. This was because study of the Jewish Scriptures, or Torah, was obligatory in the upbringing of Jewish boys. Their literacy came in handy for many nobles, who were not quite as versed in the written word. Because of their repeated forced exiles, Jews had become world travelers, and therefore knowledgeable of goods available in foreign countries. They automatically drifted into mercantilism, and became first grade merchants, always eager to help their lords or kings. They acquired knowledge of mathematics and astronomy from the ancient Arabs.

In modern Europe, after emancipation, when Jews were allowed to enter academies of higher learning, Jews excelled in many fields. Because of constant admonishings in Jewish teachings to “be responsible for the well-being of your fellow man,” many Jews flocked to careers or trades that would allow them to do just that. A poll conducted in 1996 indicates that between 1901 and 1994, 116 Jews (18% of the total) received Nobel prizes; this in spite of the fact that in 1901 Jews represented only 1% of the world population, down to only 0.2% at the time the poll was conducted.

We all know of Einstein and his theory of relativity. But there are many others. Among the major contributions in the sciences we can cite Dr. Jonas Salk, discoverer of a vaccine against polio which, until then, had crippled or killed thousands of children and young adults. (President Roosevelt was in a wheelchair, stricken with polio.) Thanks to Uriah Levy, (1792-1862) a career soldier the United States Navy, Congress abolished corporal punishment in the Navy. Louis Brandeis (1856-1941) was a famous American lawyer who fought for what he called “the little people”

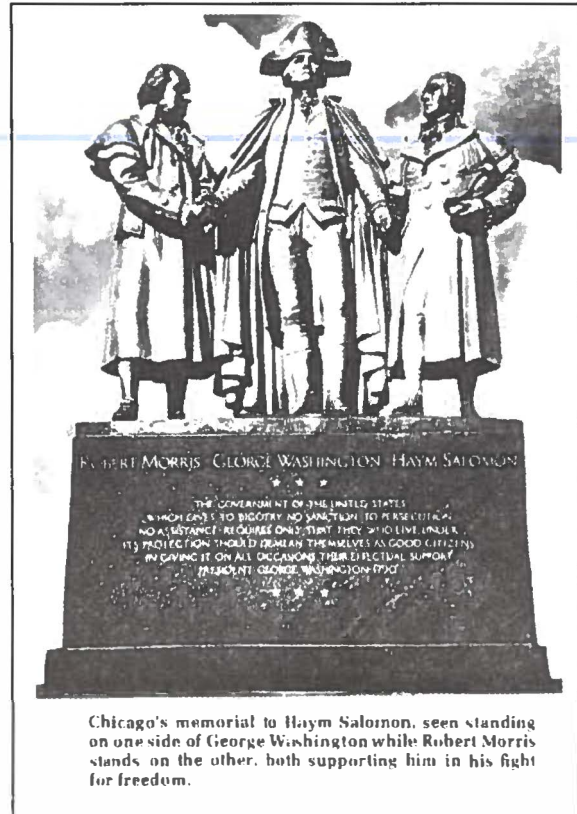


Uriah Phillips Levy (1792-1862), fighting naval man and admirer of Thomas Jefferson. He helped abolish corporal punishment in the United States Navy, where he rose to the highest rank, that of flag officer or commodore.

and for women's rights. In 1916, Brandeis became the first Jew ever to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. There were many others, in many fields.

One of the most important Jewish individuals during the American Revolution was Haym Solomon, a Jewish financier. Since Congress had no power to raise taxes to help feed and clothe the American army, this became a formidable task. Loans came from France and Spain, but they were in the form of "notes" which had to be "discounted", or cashed. Haym Solomon cashed these notes, and gave his entire fortune to the American Revolution. He died a pauper, leaving his wife and children dependent on charity and welfare.

There were many women who, by their works, left their mark on society and the world, among them Ernestine Rose, Lilian Wald, Henrietta Szold, and many others. You may want to research their achievements yourself. Perhaps the most famous and closest to our time is Golda Meir, (1898-1977) an American schoolteacher who became Prime Minister of Israel in 1969.



Chicago's memorial to Haym Solomon, seen standing on one side of George Washington while Robert Morris stands on the other, both supporting him in his fight for freedom.

### **SAM LEVENSON'S ANSWER TO AN ANTI-SEMITIC**

**(Sam Levenson was a retired school teacher turned comedian)**

"It's a free world; you don't have to like Jews, but if you don't, I suggest that you boycott certain Jewish products, like the Wasserman test for syphilis; digitalis, discovered by Dr. Nuslin; insulin, discovered by Dr. Minofsky; choral hydrate for convulsions, discovered by Dr. Lifreich; the Schick test for diphtheria, vitamins discovered by Dr. Funk; streptomycin, discovered by Dr. Selman Abraham Waksman; the polio pill by Dr. A. Sabin and the polio vaccine by Dr. Jonas Salk.

"Go on, boycott! Humanitarian consistency requires that my people offer all these gifts to all people of the world. Fanatic consistency requires that all bigots accept syphilis, diabetes, convulsions, malnutrition, infantile paralysis and tuberculosis as a matter of principle.

"You want to be mad? Be mad! But I'm telling you, you ain't going to feel so good!"

*(The Dominion Post, Thursday, Sept. 7, 1995.)*

## **CHAPTER II – REVIEW Why the Jew?**

In Chapter I we reviewed the methods by which Adolf Hitler came to power, and how anti-Jewish and antisemitic propaganda enabled him to reach his goal.

In Chapter II we now inquire as to why there seems to have been a willingness by the German people to accept Hitler's preaching of hatred. Chapter II teaches us about the dangers of prejudice, of indoctrination, (to teach and accept without critical thought) of scapegoating and of promises for "quick fixes" to difficult problems. German society prior to the Nazi takeover was one of the most educated, cultured, and advanced in the world. How then to explain the widespread acceptance of racist theories?

Adolf Hitler and the Nazis came to power because the German people were in trouble: unemployment, hunger, hurt pride. Hitler promised them a "quick fix" to regain prosperity and pride if they gave him full authority to act unilaterally, and the German people agreed by vote, giving up personal rights.

The Nazis banked on latent feelings of antisemitism to create their Jewish scapegoat. Jews had been outcasts for centuries and only recently had reached a measure of equality. The Nazis turned ancient religious antisemitism into modern "racial" antisemitism, by declaring Jews an "inferior race."

What are the lessons for today?

- Never relinquish your personal rights of freedom of speech and decision making to a leader, no matter what the circumstances.
- Just because something is written does not make it so. Hitler's hatred was spread through newspapers, periodicals, children's books, as well as on the radio and in movie theaters.
- Prejudice, expressed as benign racial jokes or slurs are not harmless, for they set a precedent upon which true hatred can build.
- Racist hatred of all kinds still exists today, and some have deep-seated roots, as does antisemitism. The Holocaust teaches us what can happen if hatred and prejudice are taken to extremes. We must be alert and not allow it to happen again. We must care enough to not allow such hatred to grow.



## **Section Two**

### **Chapter III**

# **The Incremental Destruction of a People**



## SECTION II

### Definition of Terms: Chapter Three

***American G.I.'s***- American soldiers.

***Appropriating***- To take from someone else for personal use.

***Attache***- A person officially assigned to the staff of a diplomatic mission to serve in some particular capacity.

***Consul***- An official appointed by a government to reside in a foreign city and represent its interests and give assistance to its citizens there.

***Degradation***- lowering and demeaning.

***Entry visa***- An official stamp on a passport permitting entry into and travel within a particular country or region.

***Ingratiate***- To bring purposely into the good graces or favor of another.

***Neutral Country***- Country not fighting in the war.

***Partisans***- Freedom fighters against the Nazi occupation.

***Refugees***- A person who flees to find refuge, one who escapes from invasion, oppression, or persecution.

***Usurp***- To take over power without legal rights.

### **Chapter III: The Incremental Destruction of a People.**

In the previous chapters we learned that:

- Hitler believed in racial superiority
- He considered Aryans to be superior to all other races.
- He defined Aryans as blond and blue-eyed Germans.
- Because of their natural superiority, Aryans were destined to rule over all other races and nations and were entitled to those lands for German “Lebensraum.”
- People of so called “inferior races” would become servants or slaves to the superior Aryans
- Hitler incorrectly identified the Jews as a race.
- This race he stated was the most inferior, to the point of being less than human, akin to ‘vermin.’
- Because this inferiority was in the “blood,” Jews could not be rehabilitated but had to be eliminated to preserve the racial superiority of the Aryan.

On the other hand, we have seen that:

- At the time of the rise of the Nazi party, Jews had lived in Germany for many generations as productive and respected citizens.
- Most Jews considered themselves proud Germans first and Jews a distant second.
- Many were assimilated and/or had non-Jewish spouses.
- A disproportionate large number had volunteered to fight for their country, their “Vaterland” during WWI.
- Many had been decorated for bravery in combat, and many more gave their lives in battle.

Having lived as respectable citizens for generations in one area, it logically follows that these families had developed close friendships with other non-Jewish German citizens. In such an atmosphere, mass killings and torture would not have been easily accepted.

Hitler therefore needed: a) *time* to accomplish his planned genocide, and b) an *incremental* program, allowing one step to be accepted before implementing the next.

The tools used by the Nazis to achieve their goal were:

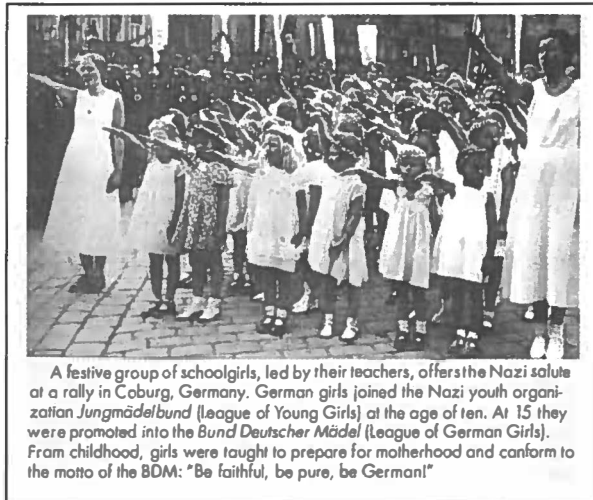
- Indoctrination of the young.
- Discontent arising from the economic situation.
- Scapegoating.
- Propaganda, which was used relentlessly to achieve all other results.

### **1. Indoctrination of the Young .**

The two primary methods of indoctrination were the revamping of the school curriculum and the mandatory enrollment of all youngsters in the Hitler Youth.

The school curriculum was rewritten to include allegiance to the ideals of the Third Reich and the superiority of the Aryans over other races. History books were rewritten, attributing all negative historical developments to the Jews, and all positive ones to the Germans.

The “Hitler Jugend” or Hitler Youth were youth groups organized by the Nazis for boys and girls, not unlike our Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts. But the intent was different. These youngsters were subjected to a barrage of constant propaganda as to the inhumanity and inferiority of the Jew and his misfortune to German people, the superiority of the Aryan race and the grandeur of allegiance to the Fuehrer.



A festive group of schoolgirls, led by their teachers, offer the Nazi salute at a rally in Coburg, Germany. German girls joined the Nazi youth organization *Jungmädelbund* (League of Young Girls) at the age of ten. At 15 they were promoted into the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* (League of German Girls). From childhood, girls were taught to prepare for motherhood and conform to the motto of the BDM: “Be faithful, be pure, be German!”

The rewards for this allegiance to Nazi propaganda, as seen by the children, were the lure of the uniforms, the beautiful songs and torch-lit marches, the feeling of belonging to something special, to be a force in the creation of a superior world for themselves under the Fuehrer’s benevolent guidance. Life promised to be beautiful in the 1000-Year Reich.



Children in the Hitler Youth in military rudimentary training.

**The Hitler Youth Organization** was headed by a rabid antisemite, Baldur von Schirach. The Hitler Youth was the only youth group allowed. All others, such as Catholic Youth Associations, were disbanded.

In 1939, participation became mandatory by law. All boys and girls from age 10 to 18 had to join. Any parent who did not comply had their children taken away by the Nazis. In that manner, almost eight million young Germans came to belong to the Hitler Youth.

German boys in the 10 to 14 year age group passed through a program of indoctrination in Nazi beliefs and soldiering. At age ten, they took the following oath:

“In the presence of this blood banner, which represents our Fuehrer, I swear to devote all my energies and my strength to the savior of our country, Adolf Hitler. I am willing to give up my life for him, so help me God.”

At age 14 the boys entered the Hitler Youth proper, thoroughly trained in and faithful to the Nazi ideology of the superiority of the German race and the unworthiness of Jewish life.

German girls were trained much like the boys, including long marches with heavy backpacks. Additionally, there was emphasis in their education on becoming healthy mothers of healthy “Nordic” German children.

The product of the Hitler Youth organization was a loyal national youth, thoroughly indoctrinated in Nazi ideologies, ready to carry on the future of the Third Reich.

*Source: The Holocaust: Can it Happen to me? ©1990*

## **2. Discontent of the Masses, arising from the Economic Situation**

The hurt pride of the German people after the defeat of WWI, followed by the deep depression, unemployment and hunger caused largely by the severe penalties exacted by the allies at the Treaty of Versailles, left the German people poor and humiliated. Hitler exploited these feelings to the maximum. He bolstered the people’s personal pride by putting them

back to work, albeit in ammunition factories, and he promised them greatness once more, not only *among* other nations but *superior* to them.

Not all Germans necessarily believed in Hitler's rantings against the Jews. Still, his regime provided employment, promised a Volkswagen for every Aryan family, and good times, "Gemuetlichkeit" for one and all.

After all the hard times, when such a rosy picture is put before someone, isn't it easy to close one's eyes to the excesses and rationalize away misdeeds as "a passing fancy," necessary to establish order and prosperity? So no mass protest erupted, especially when protesting became dangerous to one's own welfare.

### **3. Scapegoating.**

Scapegoating is the practice of blaming others unfairly for something not of their doing. Scapegoating is unfortunately an all too common human tendency. It is especially easy to affix blame on those who are unable or unwilling to defend themselves, as is the case with minorities.

Compared to other European countries, the German nation of the time was very young. Before unification, Germany consisted of a group of states, loosely connected into a German Confederation. The long-awaited unification was the result of three wars that the German army won easily and quickly. This gave the German people a fierce pride in their military victories and their own special German individuality or "Volk." True Germans were those who had German ancestry of long standing, someone who was "part of the German soil." The Jew, seen as a relative newcomer in the eyes of too many, was not true "Volk."

As we have seen in the last chapter, Hitler was further aided in his anti-Jewish propaganda by the latent age-old virus of antisemitism. Why not believe that Jews were not only "different" but also truly an untrustworthy "alien" minority that had infiltrated German society, bent at its destruction? That all the previous German misfortunes were indeed someone else's fault, primarily these "Jews?"

**Question for Discussion:** Can you explain the fundamental (basic) difference between education in the US and in Germany under the Nazi regime?

## **The Nazi Genocidal Plan.**

The Nazi Party received only 33% of the popular vote in 1932. In spite of that, on January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler was named Chancellor, the most powerful position in the German government, by the aging President Hindenburg. Once in power, Hitler moved quickly to do away with all traces of democracy. The various methods used culminated in the *Enabling Act* of March 23, 1933 by which Hitler gained full dictatorial powers.

The following timeline, courtesy of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, shows the gradual implementation of the Nazi genocidal plan. This plan was based on three progressive steps which included: *1)isolation, 2)dehumanization* and finally, *3)extermination:*

### **Part One: Isolation. 1933 to 1938**

Isolation, the initial step, was accomplished by degrees, beginning with repressive laws against the Jews, followed by deportations and ghettoization and culminating in extermination.

Hitler was able to use the law even more effectively than violence to eliminate Jews from government service and public life. Beginning in 1933 and culminating with the Nueremberg Laws of September 15, 1935, over 400 anti-Jewish laws and decrees were passed by the Nazi government. These resulted in the gradual denial of all basic civil and economic rights of the German Jews. Measures against the Jews included:

***April 1, 1933:*** A boycott of Jewish shops and businesses by the Nazis.

***April 7, 1933:*** The law for the Re-establishment of the Civil Service expelled all non-Aryans (defined on April 11, 1933 as anyone with a Jewish parent or grandparent) from the civil service. Initially, exceptions were made for those working since August 1914; German veterans of World War I; and, those who had lost a father or son fighting for Germany or her allies in World War I.

***April 7, 1933:*** The law regarding admission to the legal profession prohibited the admission of lawyers of non-Aryan descent to the Bar. It also denied non-Aryan members of the Bar the right to practice law. (Exceptions were made in the cases noted above in the law regarding the civil service.)

Similar laws were passed regarding Jewish law assessors, jurors, and commercial judges.

**April 22, 1933:** The decree regarding physicians' services with the national health plan denied reimbursement of expenses to those patients who consulted non-Aryan doctors. Jewish doctors who were war veterans or had suffered from the war were excluded.

**April 25, 1933:** The law against the overcrowding of German schools restricted Jewish enrollment in German high school to 1.5% of the student body. In communities where they constituted more than 5% of the population, Jews were allowed to constitute up to 5% of the student body. Initially, exceptions were made in the case of children of Jewish war veterans, who were not considered part of the quota. In the framework of this law, a Jewish student was a child with two non-Aryan parents.

**May 10, 1933:** Public burning of books written by Jews, political dissidents, and others not approved by the state.

**July 14, 1933:** Law stripping East European Jewish immigrants of German citizenship.

**May 31, 1935:** Jews barred from serving in the German armed forces.

**September 15, 1935:** "Nueremberg Laws": anti-Jewish racial laws enacted: Jews no longer considered German citizens: Jews could not marry Aryans; nor could they fly the German flag. (see p.36)

**November 15, 1935:** Germany defines a "Jew" as anyone with three Jewish grandparents; someone with two Jewish grandparents who identifies as a Jew.

**March 3, 1936:** Jewish doctors barred from practicing medicine in German Institutions.

**March 13, 1938:** *Anschluss* (annexation of Austria): all antisemitic decrees immediately applied in Austria.

**April 26, 1938:** Mandatory registration of all property held by Jews inside the Reich.

**August 1, 1938:** Adolf Eichmann establishes the Office of Jewish Emigration in Vienna to increase the pace of forced emigration.

**October 5, 1938:** Following request by Swiss authorities, Germans mark all Jewish passports with a large letter "J" to restrict Jews from immigrating to Switzerland.

**October 28, 1938:** 17,000 Polish Jews living in Germany expelled; Poland refused to admit them: 8,000 are stranded in the frontier village of Zbaszyn.

**November 9-11, 1938: *Kristallnacht*** (Night of Broken Glass): anti-Jewish pogrom in Germany, Austria, and the Sudetenland; 200 synagogues destroyed; 7,500 Jewish shops looted; 30,000 male Jews sent to concentration camps (Dachau, Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen) The pretext for the state-organized riots was the assassination in Paris of German diplomat Ernst vom Rath by Herschel Grynszpan.

**November 12, 1938:** Decree forcing all Jews to transfer retail businesses to Aryan hands.

**November 15, 1938:** All Jewish pupils expelled from German schools.

**December 12, 1938:** One billion Marks fine levied against German Jews for the destruction of property during *Kristallnacht*.

A law passed on April 11, 1933 defined exactly what was meant by “non-Aryan.” A “non-Aryan” was anyone descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish parents, even if only one grand-parent was a “non-Aryan.”

These continuous decrees against the Jewish people, gradually and incrementally increasing in their severity and restriction of contact with non-Jews, slowly and inevitably put distance between the Jew and his Christian neighbor. Hitler further won many friends by ousting Jews from important jobs and giving those positions to loyal Nazi party supporters.

The constant barrage of negative propaganda against the Jew as “Unmensch,” usurper of the



Poster reads: “Shun Jewish Doctors and Lawyers”



The assault begins: Storm Troopers urge Germans to boycott Jewish-owned shops.

German fortunes, following the formula of “repeat lies often and loud,” worked well. By November 1938, now remembered as “*Kristallnacht*,” neighbor turned against neighbor in unbelievable fury. Jews now were seen by the rioting masses as “bloodsuckers,” and enemies of the Reich, responsible for all its woes. They had stabbed the German Volk in the back, treacherously usurped its riches, and therefore Germans were justified in taking from the Jew what was rightfully theirs. Still,

even at this point, *some* friends or neighbors could be found who saved Jewish lives by quickly hiding them until the fury subsided. The events of Kristallnacht are described in greater detail on page 59.

## **Reaction of the free World. Appeasement and indifference.**

- **Appeasement.**

What happened in the Western world during these five years? Were other civilized nations aware of Hitler's decrees, of his politics, his expansionist theories of *Lebensraum*? What was the world's reaction to the gradual deterioration of the human condition for the German Jews?

While television was not yet invented, news nevertheless traveled by cable and wire. Reporters were in Europe and sent messages to their home papers. During the Olympic games held in Berlin in 1936, Hitler softened his stance somewhat, but the plight of the Jews was unmistakable. There was some protest in the newspapers, but no major action was taken.

On August 2, 1934, Hitler had proclaimed himself *Fuehrer und Reichskanzler* (Leader and Reich Chancellor.) Armed forces now had to swear allegiance to him. In direct violation of the Treaty of Versailles Hitler rearmed, and the world was silent. On March 7, 1936, Germany marched into the Rhineland, previously demilitarized by the Versailles Treaty. His military advisors cautioned against such a move, fearing an allied military response. Hitler is said to have stated that if there was opposition, he would order withdrawal. There was no opposition, and the territories were occupied by Germany.

Hitler demonstrated a rapacious appetite for expansion. His next move was to demand the *Sudetenland*, a German speaking section of the democratic republic of Czechoslovakia. On September 30, 1938, at a Conference in Munich, Germany, without the consent of Czechoslovakia and without consulting or seeking the approval of its government, Great Britain and France agreed to the German occupation of the Sudetenland. The conference was attended by Neville Chamberlain, Prime Minister of England, Benito Mussolini of Italy, Edouard Daladier of France and Adolf Hitler, who threatened to take the Sudetenland by force, if it were not

handed over to him. Hitler's only concession in return was a peace treaty to the Allies, which of course he had no intention of keeping. Chamberlain triumphantly returned to his homeland, waving the signed peace treaty in his hand and declaring "peace in our time." Only Winston Churchill, then a member of the British political opposition, opposed what he called "a policy of appeasement."

As to the plight of the Jews, by 1938 it was well known that Jews desperately tried to leave Germany and Austria. Long lines formed day and night, people attempting to receive passports and exit visas. But that was only half the battle, because hardly any country opened its doors to welcome these desperate refugees, even though many were highly educated and respected individuals. At this point, Jews were literally trapped, with no apparent legal way out of the country.

- **Indifference.**

- a) The Evian Conference.**

In the spring of 1938, giving in to pressure from the press and private organizations, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for a conference to decide upon a plan of action. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, France approved of Evian-les-Bains, a luxurious resort on the shores of Lake Geneva, as the site for the conference. It took two more months, until July 23, for delegates from 23 nations to convene for the purpose of discussing the "refugee problem." While on the surface this conference seemed to offer some hope to the Nazi victims, in reality the Evian Conference was a disappointment and dismal failure for those desperate to find refuge. One by one the nations, including the US, gave reasons why *their* country could not accept these refugees!

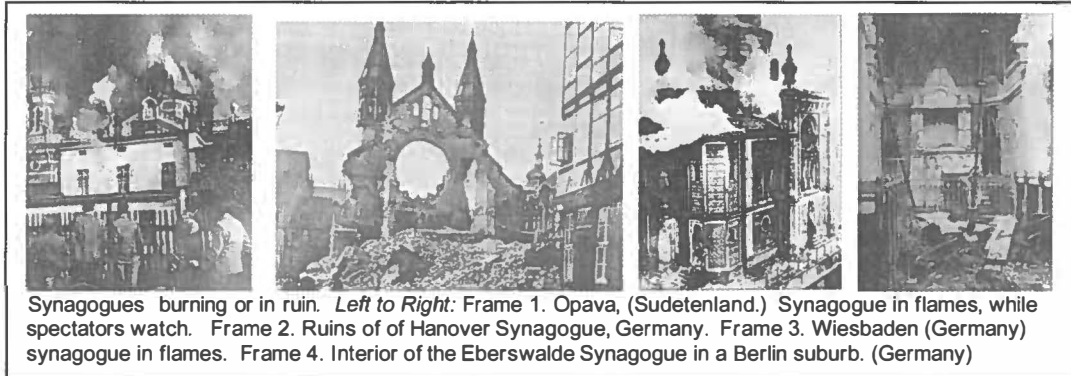
The Evian Conference was more than a dismal failure of human concern. By refusing to act, the nations gave a clear signal to a jubilant Hitler who is said to have declared that the nations had "given him his Jews." The Nazi propaganda machine used the failure of the conference to its fullest, proclaiming that "no



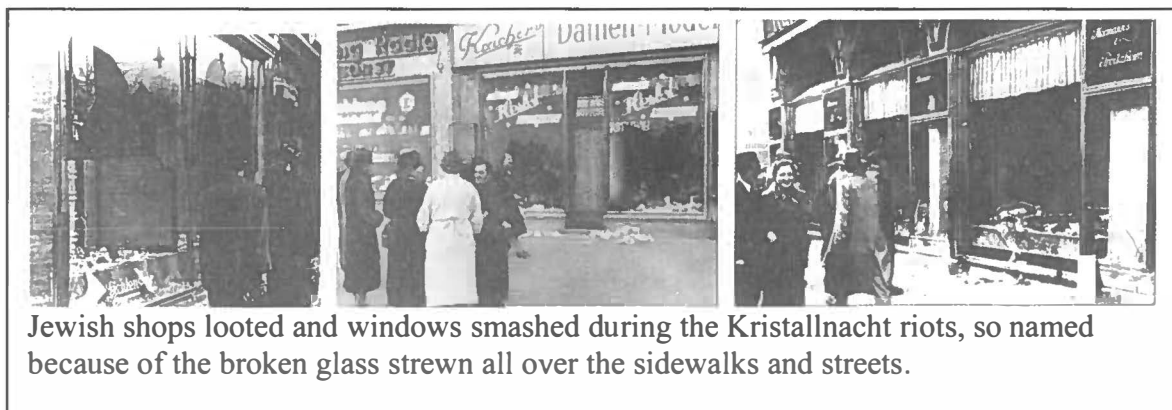
Hotel Royale in the French resort of Evian-les-Bains on Lake Geneva, site of the conference.

one wanted the Jews.” The organized riots, massacres and deportations of Kristallnacht followed on the heels of the Evian Conference.

### Kristallnacht.



Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, was the first full-fledged openly organized statewide attack on Jews and Jewish property. It derived its name from the broken glass littering the streets after the riots. On November 9, 1938, in a so-called ‘retaliation’ move for the assassination of Ernst vom Rath, a German diplomat, by a distraught Jewish Youth, Propaganda Minister Goebbels encouraged party leaders to incite “spontaneous” antisemitic riots throughout Germany, Austria and the Sudetenland. During three days of rioting, over 191 synagogues were burnt, looted and 76 were fully destroyed. More than 7,500 Jewish businesses were looted and over 800 ruined. Nearly 30,000 Jews were sent to concentration camps and close to 100 were killed in the riots. To add insult and misery to injury, the Jews of Germany were forced to pay one billion Marks for the damages that the Nazis had done. For personal eyewitness accounts from people who lived through the Kristallnacht events, turn to the *Complementary Reading* section.





Yet, when this plan by the host countries was announced, a spokesman for the League of Nations issued a statement to the world press warning that this type of offer from the governments providing refuge to the St. Louis passengers would not “constitute a precedent.”

The story of the St. Louis is not unique. The British liner, *Orduna*, was also turned away from Cuba. Three ships were ordered back to Germany after Paraguay and Argentina refused entry to the passengers. Mexico turned away the French steamer *Flandre*. With the refugees pressing to get out, it was now evident that there simply was no place to go.

(source: *The Holocaust, can it happen to me?*)

### **Questions for discussion:**

Discuss appeasement and indifference.

1. Appeasement. What was done to appease the Nazis and why? Give at least two examples. Did it have a positive effect? A negative effect? Explain your point of view.
2. Indifference. What could have been done that was not done and why? Would it have made a difference and if so, in what way?

## **Part Two: Dehumanization – Ghettos and camps.**

Because of the massive propaganda effort and the ruthless suppression of any type of opposition, the Nazis eventually gained the support and sympathy of the majority of the German people.

Having reached this point, it was now possible to physically remove the Jews from their homestead via mass deportations, without the worry of any major objection from the German population. Still, the Nazis were careful to use euphemisms, to minimize or mask the true horror of their ultimate intent. They further gained support and adherence from the masses through the process of “Aryanization,” turning over all Jewish properties to non-Jews. If not taken outright, Jews were forced to sell their properties, including shops, industries, and all other businesses at ridiculously low prices to German “Aryans.” The appropriation of Jewish wealth enriched not only those individuals who received these properties, but Germany itself. By the end of the war nearly 9 billion dollars of Jewish money, goods, and property had been collected and given to non-Jews through this legalized theft.

The first concentration camps opened at Dachau on March 22, 1933, at Sachsenhausen in 1936 and at Buchenwald in 1937. These camps were on German territory and were originally intended as detention centers for communists, homosexuals, and political dissidents. After the riots of Kristallnacht, over 30,000 Jews from Germany and Austria were deported to those camps, where many of them died.

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939, the German armies invaded Poland, marking the beginning of WWII. Having conquered Poland, Hitler now had room to expand his deportation efforts unto new territory, and to deal with the Jewish population of Poland by concentrating them into Ghettos under most inhumane conditions.

As we have seen, most German Jews were largely assimilated, tending to blend with the general German population. The desire to be accepted as “German first” and Jew second, resulted in the establishment of Reform Judaism in the 1800’s. This movement changed religious worship to resemble more closely church services. Prayers were now recited in the vernacular German, rather than the traditional Hebrew, organ music accompanied the service, the yarmulka or head covering and the tallit or prayer shawl were done away with. Removed from the prayer books was the traditional longing for a return to Zion. Jews were content to be German citizens. Most dietary laws and many restrictive prohibitions such as travel on the Sabbath were no longer practiced.

Poland on the other hand had a large Jewish population of nearly four million souls, with a vibrant Jewish culture, established over its 400-year existence. Though some city Jews were emancipated, the bulk of the population, especially in rural areas, adhered strictly to their ancient culture and traditions. The Shtetl was a Jewish homogeneous enclave that rarely mixed with its non-Jewish neighbors. These neighbors, more often than not, viewed the Jew through the superstitious antisemitic lens of the Middle Ages. Jews had repeatedly suffered in the past at the hands of non-Jews from pogroms and expulsions. Golda Meier, an American school teacher who later became Prime Minister of Israel, often spoke of the terror she remembered as a very young child during one of these pogroms in her home town of Kishinev.

When the Nazis invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, they inherited this large Jewish population and immediately set out to deal with the

“Jewish question.” Here, unlike in Germany itself, they did not have to worry about mixed (intermarried) families and their offspring, and of a Jewish element closely integrated in the local cultural and national life.

A flood of antisemitic decrees were swiftly enacted, beginning with directives by Reinhard Heydrich September 21, to establish Ghettos for the Jews in German-occupied Poland. The ghettoization and dehumanization of the Jews was a stepping-stone to their ultimate destruction.

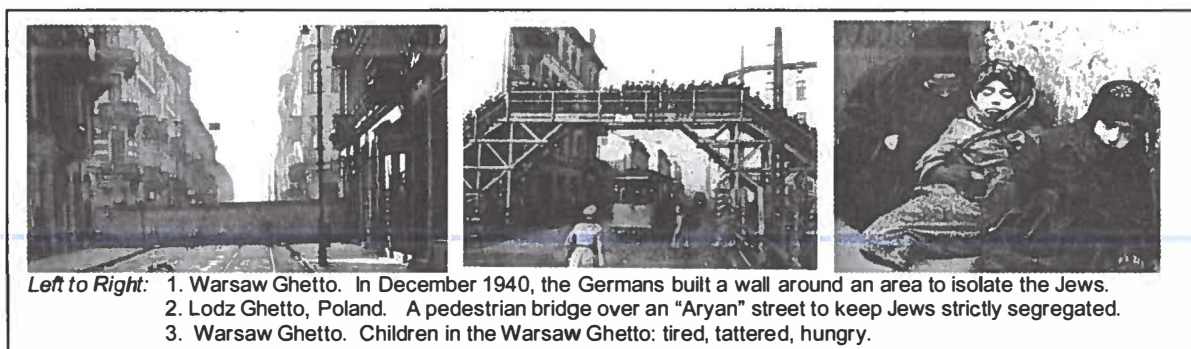
In October of the same year, the Nazis began the deportation of Austrian and Czech Jews to newly established Polish concentration camps. These were originally forced labor camps in which prisoners became virtual slaves. Here, true dehumanization began. Inmates were subjected to the most barbarous treatment of starvation, beatings, and execution.

### **Ghettos as Centers of Dehumanization.**

“Just imagine this: Shove more than one half-million people into slightly more than one square mile of space; contaminate the water supply; throw in tuberculosis, typhoid and body lice; take all winter clothing away from the inhabitants; give them no medication at all; allow them only a quarter of the food ration relegated to Germans; and work them to the bone. Now you have a picture of the Warsaw ghetto.

*Understanding the Holocaust*  
The Warsaw ghetto—A living Hell—1982

Barely three weeks after the Nazis invaded Poland, Reinhard Heydrich, Chief of the German Security Police, ordered all Jews to be concentrated into ghettos, leaving most of their possessions behind. Ghettos as a rule were set apart from the rest of the community, in the poorest section of town. Local residents were ordered out, creating a section of total isolation for the Jews. In all, 45 ghettos were established throughout the occupied territories, the majority in Poland itself. The largest Ghettos were in Lodz and Warsaw. On May 7, 1940, the Lodz ghetto was sealed from the outside world. It housed 165,000 people in 1.6 square miles. The Warsaw ghetto was sealed on November 16 of the same year; it ultimately contained 500,000 people.



From the Nazi's perspective the ghettos were temporary institutions, ultimately to be liquidated, their inhabitants sent to extermination camps.

Overcrowding in the ghetto was the norm, 14 people to one room was not unusual. Sanitary facilities were inadequate to non-existent, causing disease of epidemic proportions. Starvation was deliberate. Under those conditions, the death rate soared.

All Jews were further ordered to wear a distinguishing badge, the yellow star, in the form of an armband and sewn to the front and back of their clothing. All able-bodied individuals, men and women, were compelled to do forced labor, all Jewish property was confiscated. In the ghettos, intent at dehumanizing the inhabitants, all religious services, education of children, or other civilized activities were strictly forbidden. In spite of these decrees, clandestine schooling of the young continued, and religious practices were observed whenever possible. Jews, in these hellish conditions, strived to preserve their human dignity.

Towards the end, ghettos served as areas of concentration from where Jews were systematically sent to death camps, to be murdered. The annihilation of the Jews in the ghettos through barbaric and inhumane conditions of disease and starvation was still deemed too slow by the Nazi authorities. While the death rate was high, there remained too many Jews still in other areas of occupied countries. A more efficient killing method had to be created.

**Discussion Question:** In the ghettos, children often found themselves orphaned, alone, and seemingly abandoned. Discuss how you think such children felt. What would you have done under those circumstances to try and survive?

## Part Three – Annihilation – The Final Solution – 1942

### The Wannsee Conference

Dear Teacher:

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness; Gas chambers built by LEARNED engineers; Children poisoned by EDUCATED physicians; Infants killed by TRAINED nurses; Women and babies shot and burned by HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE graduates. So, I am suspicious of education. My request is: Help your children become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more humane.

*From Teacher and Child, by Haim Ginott*

Germany, hungry for ‘Lebensraum,’ continued to occupy country after country. On April 9, 1940, they invaded Denmark and southern Norway; on May 10, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and France. On April 6, 1941, Germany attacked Yugoslavia and Greece and occupied these territories; and on June 22, Germany invaded the Soviet Union. On March 19, 1944, with the war effort already going badly, Germany occupied Hungary and immediately began mass deportation of Hungarian Jews to the death camps. Within two month’s time, 380,000 human beings were sent to their death in Auschwitz.



The stately mansion in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee, where the “Final Solution” to the “Jewish Problem”, was concluded on Jan. 20, 1942. The meeting was chaired by Reinhard Heydrich.

Jews were not the only victims to suffer from the ruthless Nazi cruelty. Gypsies, Jehovah’s Witnesses, homosexuals, habitual criminals, Communists, political dissidents and “anti-socials” were also persecuted, some interned in camps, some killed. However, the “Final Solution” or “Endlösung” applied to Jews only. In the words of Elie Wiesel: “not all victims were Jews, but *all* Jews were victims.”

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1942 at Wannsee, a quiet suburb of Berlin, senior government bureaucrats met in a high-ranking cabinet meeting to decide on “The Final Solution” of the Jewish question. This cabinet meeting was

attended by 15 senior officers of the Reich, eight of whom held Ph.D's. Protocol was strictly observed, minutes were taken, language was carefully selected, using once more euphemisms to mask true intent. In less than two hours, these men of so-called culture and education cold-bloodedly outlined the perimeters for the potential murder of 11 million people.

Now the emphasis shifted from concentration camps to death camps. The sole purpose of these camps was to murder millions of victims by gassing them and burning their remains.

Within the confines of the 90-minute deliberation of the Wannsee Conference, an ultra-modern, technologically advanced, ultra-efficient killing machine was set into motion. Engineers designed the crematoria and gas chambers; companies submitted bids to be granted the opportunity to build these genocidal infernos. Scientists discussed, reviewed, analyzed and finally settled on Zyklon B as the most efficient poison to be used; railroad employees and engineers carefully organized and supervised the train schedules, so that the cattle cars loaded with victims could reach their final destination with utmost efficiency. What had happened to modern Europe, to cultured Germany? Was all sense of morality, of human values lost?

**Discussion topic:** What should education include? The participants of the Wannsee Conference were *learned* people. In your opinion, was something missing from their education? Or were they somehow taught the wrong thing? Or both? Explain your position.

### **Just exactly what were death camps?**

Not all camps were actual death camps. The Nazis established 24 main camps and several sub-camps. Beside those under Nazis control, German collaborators operated camps in other occupied European countries.

Most camps were forced labor camps, but six were especially designated to become death camps. They were equipped with special apparatus specifically designed for systematic mass murder. All death camps were located in Poland. Six such camps existed: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibor, and Treblinka.

## EUPHEMISMS USED BY THE GERMAN NAZI PARTY TO HIDE TRUE INTENTIONS

<b><u>Column 1</u></b> <b><u>German Word</u></b>	<b><u>Column 2</u></b> <b><u>Literal Meaning</u></b>	<b><u>Column 3</u></b> <b><u>Real Meaning</u></b>
1. Ausgemerzt	exterminated (insects)	murdered
2. Liquidiert	liquidated	murdered
3. Erledigt	finished (off)	murdered
4. Aktionen	actions	mission to seek out Jews and kill them
5. Sonderaktionen	special actions	special mission to kill Jews
6. Sauberung	cleansing	sent through death process
7. Ausschaltung	elimination	murder of Jews
8. Aussiedlung	evacuation	murder of Jews
9. Umsiedlung	resettlement	murder of Jews
10. Exekutivmassnahme	executive measure	order for murder
11. Entsprechend behandelt	treated appropriately	murdered
12. Sicherheitspolizeilich durchgearbeitet	worked over in security police measure	murdered
13. Losung der Judenfrage	solution of the Jewish question	murder of Jewish people
14. Bereinigung der Judenfrage	cleaning up the Jewish question	murder
15. Judenfrei gemacht	made free of Jews	all Jews in area killed
16. Spezialeinrichtungen	special installations	gas chambers/ crematorium
17. Badeanstalten	bath houses	gas chambers
18. Leichenkeller	corpse cellars	crematorium
19. Durchgeschleusst	dragged through	sent through killing process in camps
20. Endlosung	the Final Solution	the decision to murder all Jews
21. Hilfsmittel	auxiliary equipment	gas vans for murder

**Slowly, but systematically the ghettos were liquidated. Jews of all ages were put on trains and sent to extermination camps.**

**The lucky ones, those who had some skill and stamina, or were in the right transport, were sent to slave labor camps as an interim step before their murder. The statistics show the magnitude of the elimination of the ghettos.**

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**ABBREVIATIONS  
OF COUNTRIES**

Br—Belorussia  
Cz—Czechoslovakia  
Hu—Hungary  
La—Latvia  
Li—Lithuania  
P—Poland  
Uk—Ukraine

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## **Major East European Ghettos**

<b>GHETTO</b>	<b>JEWS</b>	<b>FOUNDED</b>	<b>LIQUIDATED</b>
Baranovichi (Br)	10,000	12/12/41	12/17/42
Bedzin (P)	27,000	07/01/40	08/01/43
Belchatów (P)	6,000	03/01/41	08/11/42
Berdichev (Uk)	20,000	08/25/41	09/15/41
Berezhany (Uk)	4,000	10/15/42	06/12/43
Bialystok (P)	50,000	08/01/41	08/18/43
Bochnia (P)	3,500	03/15/40	09/43
Brest-Litovsk (Br)	20,000	11/41	10/15/42
Brody (Uk)	6,000	01/01/43	05/21/43
Budapest (Hu)	70,000	11/13/44	02/13/45
Chernovtsy (R)	50,000	10/11/41	10/43
Chortkov (Uk)	6,000	04/42	12/15/43
Cluj (Hu)	16,000	05/03/44	06/09/44
Czestochowa (P)	48,000	04/09/41	09/22/42
Debrecen (Hu)	9,000	04/28/44	06/21/44
Dés (Hu)	8,000	05/03/44	06/08/44
Diatlovo (Br)	4,000	12/41	08/06/42
Drohobycz (Uk)	10,000	10/42	05/21/43
Dvinsk (La)	11,000	07/25/41	05/01/42
Grodno (Br)	25,000	11/01/41	01/22/43
Horodenka (P)	4,000	01/42	07/42
Kaposvár (Hu)	5,000	05/44	07/04/44
Kédainiai (Li)	3,000	07/41	08/28/41

GHETTO	JEWS	FOUNDED	LIQUIDATED
Kharkov (Uk)	21,000	12/14/41	01/05/42
Kherson (Uk)	5,000	08/41	09/16/41
Kielce (P)	27,000	04/41	08/20/42
Kishinev (R)	11,000	07/24/41	10/04/41
Kolomyia (Uk)	18,000	03/25/42	02/02/43
Košice (Cz)	12,000	04/28/44	05/15/44
Kovel (Br) (Uk)	14,000	05/21/42	10/06/42
Kovno (Li)	40,000	06/24/41	06/21/43
Krakow (P)	19,000	03/03/41	05/28/42
Lodz (P)	205,000	02/08/40	05/44
Lublin (P)	34,000	03/24/41	03/17/42
Lutsk (Uk)	18,000	12/11/41	08/20/42
Lvov (Uk)	110,000	11/08/41	12/42
Minsk (Br)	100,000	07/20/41	10/21/43
Piotrkow Trybunalski (P)	18,000	10/08/39	10/13/42
Przemysl (P)	16,000	07/14/41	09/02/43
Radom (P)	36,000	04/07/41	08/16/42
Riga (La)	43,000	08/15/41	11/30/41
Rzeszow (P)	12,500	12/17/41	01/44
Tarnów (P)	15,000	06/19/42	09/02/43
Vilna (Li)	41,000	09/06/41	09/23/43
Warsaw (P)	500,000	10/19/40	05/16/43

Source: *Edelheit & Edelheit: A World in Turmoil*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990

## Suggested Reading

Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews of Vilna*

Lucjan Dobroszycki,  
*The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto*

Chaim Kaplan,  
*The Warsaw Diary of Chaim Kaplan*

William W. Mishell, *Kaddish for Kovno: Life and Death in a Lithuanian Ghetto*

Gertrude Schneider, *Journey into Terror: The Story of the Riga Ghetto*

Hersh Smolar, *The Minsk Ghetto*

## Selected Videos

*A Day in the Warsaw Ghetto – A Birthday Trip in Hell*

30 minutes

Recommended for age 14 and up.

*Partisans of Vilna*

130 minutes

Recommended for JHS and up.

*The Story of Chaim Rumkowski and the Jews of Lodz*

55 minutes

Recommended for age 14 and up.

*A Tale of Two Ghettos*

17 minutes

Recommended for JHS and up.

*The Warsaw Ghetto*

51 minutes

Recommended for JHS and up.

## 70

70

70

## CHAPTER ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing.”

Edmund Burke  
18<sup>th</sup> Century English Philosopher

### **Difficult Questions**

This unit is not designed to deal with what happened in the camps themselves, their dehumanizing cruelty. You will come to study this in greater detail at the high school level. Our quest is to find out how it all became possible, what could have been done to prevent it from happening, and why we need to be watchful for the future. Therefore, let us review and discuss the following:

As stated early on in this study, the Holocaust did not begin with the gas chambers, it ended there. Adolf Hitler officially entered politics in January of 1933, being appointed chancellor of Germany. By August 1934, one and a half years later, he had manipulated the laws, influenced the masses, and proclaimed himself Fuehrer and sole ruler of the Third Reich. He demanded and received allegiance from the military and his people.

- How was this achieved? By propaganda, by ruthless suppression of any opposition, and by scapegoating. By blaming others—the Jews—for past misfortunes. By rewriting history books, blaming all negative historical development on the Jews, and attributing everything positive to the Germans. And by indoctrination of the young via the Hitler Youth.

But there was more. There was appeasement from other nations; there was lack of moral condemnation for his actions from religious leaders. It was almost as if no one or no nation wanted “to get involved” until it was nearly too late.

- How were Hitler’s intentions so misjudged at the onset? Was his book “*Mein Kampf*”, where he expounded his ideas, an unknown work of literature? Hardly so. And yet, nations lulled themselves into believing that his excesses could be contained and time and again gave in to his demands.
- What about the age-old scourge of antisemitism? What role did it play? Without it, would ordinary Germans have accepted the premise of the

Jew as “Unmensch” or would they have objected, as was the case with the Euthanasia program? Without the Jew as scapegoat, what would have happened to Hitler’s master plan?

- How about the lure of belonging to a “super-race”? Thomas Keneally, author of *Schindler’s List* states in so many words that prejudice and racism are the “hairy backside” of what we all need: a sense of identity and belonging. Yet, does this sense of belonging necessarily exclude tolerance and respect for others? Or is it possible to have pride in one’s own heritage, while recognizing, respecting and accepting the beliefs and human dignity of others as well?

We all love the feeling that we are somehow superior, better than average, better than the “other guy”. The best way to reach this point is to excel at something. Each and every one of us is above average at something, be it sports or music or math or just plain human kindness. Feeling good about oneself does not necessitate putting someone else down. If the only means to rise above average is to put others down, then we haven’t really attained any loftier heights. All we have done is lower the common denominator or standard. That is not an achievement in which we can or should take pride.

On the other hand, tolerance does not mean accepting blindly the values of others, especially if they tend to be prejudicial or racist in nature. Not from peers, and certainly not from leaders. Therefore we must be alert, react quickly, and carefully review background and motivation of any individual in whom we place our trust or to whom we grant the reins of our country and ultimately our lives. All too often, as we have seen in the case of Adolf Hitler, laws can be changed. Those eager to gain power will resort to any subterfuge to get our vote. We must look beyond their words. We must do our homework. We must never let our guard down and never allow evil to grow because of our ignorance or apathy.

For ultimately, evil destroys all. Think of the legacy Hitler left to his people. Instead of a glorious vastly expanded 1000-year Reich, Germany being the master over all other enslaved nations, Hitler left his people far less. His tally sheet includes ruined cities, a divided country for over forty years, (East and West Germany) and a permanent stain on Germany’s history in school texts of the present and the future. The German youth from

now on will have to live under the shadow of this history, even though nothing that happened during the Third Reich was of their doing.

In the end, hatred destroyed all. There were no winners. Not the perpetrators, but neither the victims that survived the Holocaust. For they had lost their homes, their country, their loved ones. Fathers, mothers, children. They have to continue living with their haunted memories. Hatred and prejudice and discrimination may achieve some temporary victory but will lose in the end. As Elie Wiesel so eloquently states, "Hate consumes both the victim and perpetrator".

- Do we need to care if injustices occur in our country? Elsewhere? Can we make a difference? Just because the Holocaust happened was it inevitable? When is a good time to speak out? When is it too late to do so? Is it ever too late?
- Adolf Hitler used children, the Hitler Youth, to achieve his goal. Are there other countries that at the present time or in the past used similar tactics? How would you feel if you were urged to defend a cause "with your life"? What do you think of a philosophy that exhorts children to become "martyrs" for a cause? How important is a careful selection of a leader?
- Was our country always blameless or did we too, have excesses in our past? How did we deal with them?
- Do hate crimes still exist? How do we deal with them at present? Is this enough? What else can be done? In what areas have we been most successful? Where do we need additional work?
- Could the Holocaust have happened here?

Your teacher may decide to discuss these questions with the class as a whole, or to subdivide the class into smaller groups, who will share their conclusions with the entire class. Another means is to state your conclusions in writing, and then discuss the various responses with the entire class. Review the following page and include those facts in your deliberations.

Was the Holocaust strictly a German phenomenon, as some would like us to believe, or could it happen elsewhere? (Have genocide's happened since?) How important is it that we carefully scrutinize and care about the leader we select? Let us return to the period of the 1930's and compare the economic situation of the times in both the US and Germany.

### GERMANY

- The depression
- Economic collapse
- Unemployment
- Hunger
- Soup kitchens
- Bread lines
- Rise of Communism
- anti-Semitism
  - Nazi Propaganda stirs up old hatred, blaming Jews for Germany's hard times
- Hurt pride – Treaty of Versailles
- New Leader, **ADOLF HITLER, Fuehrer**
- Inherit weak, inefficient government
- Hitler extols physical superiority of Aryans
- Foments hatred and scapegoating
- NUREMBERG LAWS
- *Deutschland Uber Alles*
- Political indoctrination
- Hitler Youth
- Put people to work in ammunition factories
- Prepares for war.
- Instills pride by blaming others

### THE UNITED STATES

- The depression
- Economic collapse
- Unemployment
- Hunger
- Soup kitchens
- Bread lines
- Rise of Communism
- anti-Semitism
  - Father Charles E. Coughlin delivers weekly anti-Semitic sermons on the radio.
  - Hamilton Fish opposes European involvement
- New Leader, **Franklin D. Roosevelt, President.**
- Inherit weak, inefficient government
- Roosevelt in wheelchair, stricken with polio.
- Enacts social Reforms
- “NEW DEAL”
- *We have nothing to fear but fear itself*
- Fair Labor Standard Act
- Public Utility Act
- Federal Emergency Relief
- Civilian Conservation Corps—instills pride by putting people back to work

## **Section Three**

### **Chapter IV**

# **The Human Equation**



## SECTION THREE

### Chapter IV. The Human Equation.

*"It may be too late for the victims...but  
not for our children, not for mankind.  
Elie Wiesel, Holocaust Survivor  
and Nobel Laureate.*

In this chapter we will discuss how civilian human beings coped, caught in a situation thrust upon them by circumstances outside their control.

In a free society such as ours, we can plan our future. We can go to school, decide upon our level of education and choose a career for the future. With some effort and dedication, barring unforeseen misfortunes, we can stay on track and achieve our goal.

Life, under Nazi oppression, did not afford this basic human luxury. People had to improvise as situations arose and deal with them on an individual, day to day basis.

Those lucky to escape the Nazi clutches sometimes hid in the woods, roamed the countryside, or were hidden in institutions or by morally righteous individuals. The author of this reader owes her life to one of these righteous individuals, by the name of Elizabeth Hoolmann. No one could make any long-range plans. No hidden children could go to school. The only day to day plan was survival.

Some, as was the case in the Warsaw Ghetto revolt, once aware of the fate that awaited them, chose to die in battle with human dignity, rather than allowing the Nazis to take them to extermination sites. You can read more about their heroism and their leader, Mordechai Anielewicz in your *Complementary Reading* section in the back of this text.

Because the doors of immigration to other countries were closed to the Jews trapped in the murderous hands of the Nazis, many desperate parents made an all out effort to try and save at least their children. They did so by literally giving them away, sometimes by bribing individuals with money and jewelry to take them, sometimes by hiding them in convents or monasteries willing to take the risk of having these youngsters join the other

children under their tutelage. They sent them away to other countries, primarily England, on something called the *Kindertransport* or children's transport. They hoped to survive and then reunite with their children, once the Nazi regime was defeated. Unfortunately, all too often, this was not the case.

Non-Jews, non-persecuted individuals also had choices to make, moral choices. Sometimes they had to make these choices on the spur of the moment. When you view the video, "*The Courage to Care*" you will become acquainted with some of these individuals. It might be a good idea to discuss this video, once it has been shown in class. Others, because of the authority given them by their governments, rescued large numbers of individuals, even against the wishes of their countries.

Those who helped were but a small minority of less than 1%. Yet they are very important to us, because they have shown us that it is possible to say "NO" to evil and to build a better world for our future.

## **A. Resistance**

The Jewish people, inexorably condemned to death by design of the Nazis, took up arms against the Nazi fiend and his running dogs from other nations:

- In the revolts of Warsaw, Bialystok, Czestochowa, and other ghettos
- In the uprising at Treblinka, Sobibor, Auschwitz and other camps;
- In partisan warfare on Soviet, Polish, Slovak, Yugoslav, Greek, French, and Belgian territory, wherein about 150,000 Jews participated, some of them forming Jewish national units;
- And in the Allied nations' regular armies, wherein fought some 1 ½ million Jewish soldiers and officers, while the small Palestinian Jewish population contributed 26,000 soldiers and officers to the Allied forces.

From The Holocaust and Resistance, Yad Vashem, 1972

When learning about the Holocaust, students have been known to ask: "How is it possible to kill so many innocent victims, 6 million Jews and many millions of others, without it being known and without anyone offering resistance? Why did the Jews go so willingly, like sheep to slaughter? Why didn't anyone try to stop this genocidal madness?"

As we have seen, the world was well aware of the plight of the Jewish people, of the slave labor camps and the death camps. Yet nations around

the world didn't seem to care, they were apathetic. The story of the S.S. St. Louis is a sad example of the indifference of nations. Perhaps one reason for the reluctance to help was antisemitism, which existed in nearly all countries. Another may have been that many countries were fighting their own problems, economic depression was widespread. The high hopes for a solution from the *Evian Conference* were ill-founded. The Conference was more than a failure; it became a propaganda tool for Hitler and the Nazis, who could now claim that "no one wanted the Jews."

**The League of Nations.** After World War One, an international peace keeping organization was founded, called the *League of Nations*. It was something akin to our United Nations, but largely ineffective. It was disbanded in 1946. The League of Nations came into being in 1920 after WWI and was headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. Its lofty aim was: "To promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security." This organization did nothing to alleviate the plight of the Jews trapped in Nazi occupied Europe. Petitions to help were submitted repeatedly, among them, appeals against the denial of rights for Austrian Jews, after that country was annexed by Germany in 1938. These appeals were never even placed on the Council's agenda.

In those countries where opposition to the Nazis killing schemes did exist, as was the case in Denmark, Jews on the overall fared considerably better. Sadly though, in many European countries, especially in Eastern Europe, where antisemitism was most pronounced, it was the collaboration of the local inhabitants that allowed the Nazis to execute their murderous agenda at top efficiency.

### **Why did Jews go when ordered?**

Jews were unarmed civilians of all ages including the elderly, women and children. The Nazis had machine guns, grenades and dogs. Resettling—a euphemism Germans used to obtain compliance, didn't seem so terrible, not worth being shot or being chewed up by a dog. In Eastern Europe, Jews had been asked to pack up and leave in the past following pogroms and they assumed this was just more of the same. Resettling was seen as a temporary problem that would pass. Besides, the Nazis lied about work, food and better living conditions to get cooperation. By the time reality did set in, it was too late.

The majority of the Holocaust victims had no idea they were going to be put to death. In Russia, Jews were rounded up by the Nazis and murdered on the spot, they were given no time to think or to warn others. Jews in the ghettos knew nothing about the Russian massacres, so they were willing to cooperate. Yet, in spite of the overwhelming superior military power of the Nazis and the near impossibility of armed resistance by the victims, resistance did exist, and it took on several different forms. ***Armed resistance*** was just one of them. Other types of resistance included: ***spiritual resistance***, ***moral resistance*** and ***passive resistance***. Resistance occurred in camps as well as outside camps.

### Were the Jews able to fight back?

“The question is not why all the Jews did not fight, but how so many of them did. Tormented, beaten, starved, where did they find the strength – spiritual and physical – to resist?

Elie Wiesel, Nobel Prize Laureate,  
Holocaust Survivor.

Resistance in the Holocaust was not a choice between victory or defeat but rather between life and death. When the true intent of the Nazis became known, resistance took on yet another meaning: to die with dignity, rather than being slaughtered. This was the case in the Warsaw ghetto uprising in April of 1943. You will find this heroic story in the *Complementary Reading* section. The picture at left is that of Mordechai Anielewicz, commander of the Jewish Warsaw Ghetto fighters. He was killed in the uprising.



### Physical Resistance

Physical resistance included several uprisings in the ghettos and camps, as well as resistance fighters, called Partisans, in the forests. Armed resistance was made more difficult because with little or no assistance from the world at large, Jews were unable to acquire sufficient arms to fight. Another problem was the hostile population surrounding the ghettos. If someone was able to get out, nine times



Resistance fighters, called Partisans, from the forest. Picture was taken after liberation.

out of ten that person would be caught by the non-Jewish population and turned in. Jews in Poland had to form their own partisan groups, because they were not accepted by the non-Jewish partisans who fought as Nationalists to free their country, not to save their lives as did the Jews. In other countries such as France, Holland and Belgium, Jews were welcomed and fought together with the local partisan groups. In Belgium, they sabotaged railroads to stop trains from leaving the country. When the trains slowed or stopped, partisans would attempt to open the cattle cars and allow the victims to escape. Many partisans and victims were killed by Nazi gunfire in such instances, but a large number of them were able to escape.

### **Spiritual and Moral Resistance.**

Another kind of resistance was spiritual resistance. Such resistance against the Nazi genocidal programs of starvation, torture, and slow death took many forms. For example, though schools were forbidden in the ghettos, secret schools were set up, and an attempt was made to normalize the life of children as much as possible under the prevailing conditions. An underground press was established, and information was secretly distributed. Poems were written, some very movingly describing the plight of the victims. Songs were composed. Many of these survived, hidden from the Nazis, and they have been passed down to us. Religion was also practiced secretly. Diaries were written, hidden once more and later found. Those diaries always pleaded with the finder to “tell the story” and “never forget.”

Nazi plans to kill the Jews included dehumanization and degradation. Yet Jews in spite of these inhumane conditions, refused to become mere animals.



Janusz Korczak with  
some of his wards.

Jews helped each other by smuggling food and by organizing underground aid organizations. Parents refused to abandon their children; Rabbis went to their death with their congregation members. Educators like **Janusz Korczak** refused to save his own life as offered him by the Nazis, and accompanied his students and orphans under his protection to the death camps. There is additional

information on the heroism and the life of Janusz Korczak in the *Complementary Reading* section.

### **Passive Resistance**

Passive resistance was simply outwitting the Nazis in some small or larger measure. This type of resistance included sabotage in the work place, such as creating defective bullets, wrong size airplane rivets, or appropriating part of the material to build weapons for freedom fighters. All this was extremely risky, because death was certain when the sabotage was discovered. Passive resistance further included in Poland hiding outside ghettos and camps. In other occupied countries, it meant hiding out or functioning as a non-Jew.

People hid in many places: attics, closets, cellars, barns, underneath floor planking. But more often than not, this was only possible with the help of courageous non-Jewish friends. We all know the story of Anne Frank. Unfortunately, like in the case of Anne Frank, people in hiding were often denounced to the German occupying forces by individuals who were either seeking personal favors from the Nazis or just simply hated Jews. Because hiding out required help from good and courageous people, this type of resistance was more common in Western European countries, where antisemitism was not as virulent. Some parents placed their children in hiding in convents and monasteries. It was very difficult to give up one's child in those circumstances, but the parents wanted at least the children to have a chance to survive. Sometimes, in some places, these children were baptized without their parents' knowledge. At other times, the children were denounced to the occupying forces, and all were taken by the Nazis to be killed in the death camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Nevertheless, this unselfish commitment by many religious institutions helped save thousands of victims from certain death.

### **Passing as a non-Jew.**

Passing as a non-Jew was more difficult. Most of the time this necessitated moving to an area where the person was unknown, and therefore could not be recognized by former neighbors. Leaving a hiding place and venturing into a hostile world was often done by children, because no one paid much attention to a single child walking the streets. In this manner, a child would become a lifeline, providing food for the rest of the family. Still, this was at times very risky, requiring a good bit of courage, far beyond the tender age of the child.



Dr. Levy leaving the hiding place in search for food for mother and baby brother.

## **B. The Righteous Among the Nations**

If we would light one candle daily to honor  
one victim of the Holocaust, it would take  
16,000 years to commemorate them all.

**DIDN'T ANYONE HELP?** Didn't anyone care? Was there no help at all?  
Were the Jews of Europe truly abandoned by the world?

At first glance, it would seem that this was so. As we have seen, the United States and their allies Great Britain and Russia, although aware of the plight of the Jews, did not mount any rescue effort at all. Repeated requests from individuals and organizations were ignored. News of the worst atrocities was withheld from the press. The pleas of Jan Karski, a Polish diplomat who traveled all the way to the United States to ask his Bishop and the U.S. government for help for the Jewish victims, fell on deaf ears.

The Allies' primary concern was winning the war against Germany and Japan. Perhaps their theory was that if they won the war, the Jews would be saved. But by the time the war was over, six million Jews, including one and a half million children, had perished, and millions of non-Jews were dead as well. In Poland alone, 90% of the Jewish population was wiped out.

But just as the Holocaust teaches us about the evil ordinary people can commit when they feel justified, and the tragic consequences of apathy and indifference, so too do we learn from the Holocaust of the unselfish goodness and moral heights some individuals reached under the most trying circumstances. Their heroic acts stand out like a shining beacon of light, shattering the darkness of this tragic time in human history. This is especially true, since they represent only one tenth of one percent of the total population involved.

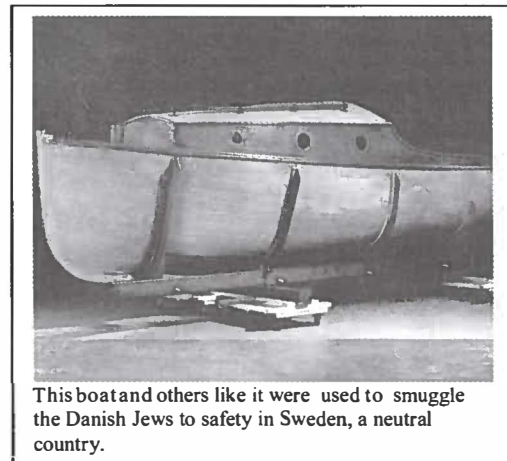


Girl at right is a Jewish girl  
in hiding in a Belgian  
convent.

In countries where antisemitism was at its highest, primarily Eastern European countries, the inhabitants collaborated and aided the Nazis. In those countries and because of this collaboration, the Jewish death toll was staggeringly high. Yet while defying the killers was difficult, it was not impossible. Whenever there was opposition to the deportations—be they by

governments or religious leadership—Jewish people fared much better, as the following examples demonstrate:

- In Italy, which had no history of antisemitism, many Jews were hidden in convents by nuns and priests, even though the Vatican voiced no official objection to the Nazi treatment of Jews.
- In Belgium, Joseph Ernest von Roey, Belgium's Chief Bishop, ordered all Catholic institutions to hide Jews whenever possible.
- In a remote region of southern France in Le Chambon-Sur-Lignon and surrounding villages, Jews would come to seek help and shelter. Under the guidance of Pastor André Trocmé, a Protestant minister, hundreds of Jews were saved.
- The story of Denmark and the Danish people is unique in the annals of the Holocaust. Denmark, though occupied by the Germans in 1940, defied the Nazis by refusing to adopt anti-Jewish laws. In October 1943, the Nazis decided to round up all Danish Jews and send them to the death camps. The Danes, learning of this, were able to prevent this massacre by rescuing over seven thousand people—nearly all the Jews of Denmark. Overnight, they secretly scurried them out of the country in fishing boats, sending them to Sweden, a neutral country where the Jewish people found safe haven.



### The Kindertransport – Difficult Questions.

How would you feel if your parents decided to send you away to a temporary home in a strange land to people you didn't know who spoke a different language? Would you feel loved or abandoned? Even if you were old enough to understand that this was a desperate attempt by your parents to save your life?



Two German-Jewish children after their arrival in England in 1938.

How would you feel *after* the War was over and you realized that your parents would not come to take you back because they were no longer alive?

Or conversely, what if over the years you had become attached to your new parents, spoke their language and did not want to leave them? Especially when you were still very young at the time you were sent on the Kindertransport and only vaguely remembered your parents? What if only one of your birth parents survived and came to take you to an uncertain future, when here you had a home and two parents who treated you well? Would you think of the pain of your birth parent, having survived all that horror, and now seeing the reluctance in your eyes, you being all he or she had left? What if those who had taken care of you over the years had done so only because they received money from a relief agency and when these funds stopped, they no longer really wanted you?

The scenarios here are endless. Parents sent their children on the Kindertransport in a desperate attempt to save their lives. But even this gesture of altruism left deep-seated scars. Children that were not directly involved with the horrors of deportation and death camps nevertheless have their private memories of pain.

### ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Oskar Schindler

Some people, because of their social or political station, were able to become rescuers of many. You may have heard of Oskar Schindler or even seen the movie "*Schindler's List*." But there were others who used their positions to save human lives. Nearly all of them followed their conscience, and most did so against the direct orders of their respective governments.

- Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara- One of the best known cases of individual rescue is by Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara, the Japanese consul in Kovno, Lithuania. In the early years of the war, he assisted 3,000 Jewish refugees. Although his government refused him permission to grant Jewish refugees entry visas to his country, he gave out over 1,500. These visas enabled the refugees to escape the Nazi fate. Upon his return to Tokyo, Sugihara was requested to resign for his insubordination.



Sempo Sugihara  
Japanese Consul  
in Kaunas (Kovno),  
Lithuania 1940

- Raoul Wallenberg.



Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish aristocrat, was sent to Budapest, Hungary in 1944 to serve as an attache to the Swedish Embassy. Hungary is in Eastern Europe and deportations to the death camps from that country proceeded at a furious pace. The Nazis were aided in their killing efforts by the local Hungarian group called the *Arrow Cross*, more barbaric than the Nazi SS themselves in their murderous frenzy. Within the first nine days of deportations, 116,000 Jews were sent to Auschwitz. Wallenberg printed certificates of protection to Jews, that claimed their connection to

Sweden. His exploits are legendary. He saved many thousands of lives. He was captured by the Soviets on one of his missions. His fate after that remains a mystery.

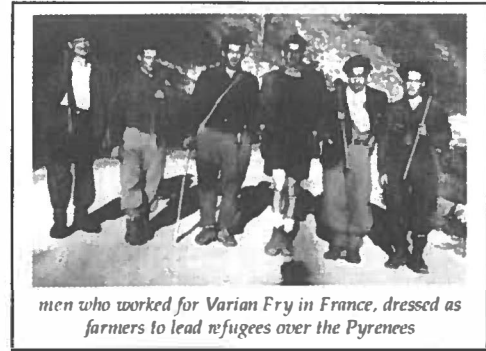
- Sousa Mendes. Mendes was the Portuguese Consul General to Bordeaux, France from 1938 to 1940. During that time, and against instructions from the dictator of Portugal, he issued 30,000 visas to refugees who hoped to leave Europe from Portugal by ship. For this act Mendes was recalled to Lisbon, the capital of Portugal. Once in Lisbon, Mendes was removed from his official post and stripped of benefits accumulated from 30 years of service. He was publicly disgraced, could not find work and died impoverished in 1954.



- Varian Fry. Fry was an American journalist sent to Marseilles, Southern France in 1940 for a three-week stay. His mission: to help rescue 200 of the most famous intellectuals and artist from the Nazi clutches. While in Marseilles, Fry realized the plight of other Jewish refugees and their desperate attempts to leave Europe. To aid these refugees, Fry created the Emergency Rescue Committee and secretly helped smuggle over 2000 refugees out of Vichy, France, thus saving them from the clutches of the Gestapo and a

certain death.

Anti-immigration and antisemitic sentiment was widespread at that time in the United States (1940). The State Department and the U.S. Consulate in Marseilles opposed Fry's mission. Yet, he persisted for 13 months, until the US refused to renew his visa and he was expelled from France.



But not everyone had the opportunity nor the power to perform heroic acts on a large scale. Many decent people saved victims on the spur of the moment, without giving their humanitarian act a second thought. Others,



primarily in Eastern Europe, were willing to help only for personal gain by being rewarded with money or expensive gifts. Desperate Jewish parents would go to any length to save their children, if not themselves. The picture to the left is that of one simple person. Her name was Elizabeth Hoolmann. She was no diplomat, no delegate, no envoy of any nation. Just one human being who let her conscience be her guide. In doing so, she saved the life of this author, and that of her mother and baby brother. In doing so, she enabled me to bring this message to you and in this way she, one simple human being, made a tremendous difference, perhaps even in *your* future. She deserves our gratitude, and to be included among the Righteous.

### **THE JEWISH FOUNDATION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS.**

These altruistic people (*Altruism*: Concern for the welfare of others, selflessness) showed us the way to a better future. Individuals saved individuals, sometimes friends, sometimes perfect strangers. The names of all these heroic people will never be known. At present, grateful survivors have formed an organization called the "***Jewish Foundation for the Righteous***". This organization seeks out and provides financial aid to aging rescuers in need. It is gratitude well placed, for without the selfless aid of these people, many of the individuals honoring and supporting them would not have survived. In Israel, at Yad Vashem, the memorial to the Holocaust victims, there is a special garden for the Righteous. Thus far, more than 13,000 names have been inscribed.

**Discussion Question:** How important is it to remember the Righteous? What do they teach us?

## **Chapter V. The Aftermath**

It would be all too easy to assume that, once the war was over and the camps were liberated by the allied forces, life for everyone went back to normal. But that is wishful thinking. "Happily ever after" occurs in fairy tales. This was real life, not a fairy tale.

What happened to the liberated survivors, to the children without parents, to the adults without any family and without a home to return to?

In our time, when a disaster of major proportion strikes, helping hands reach out to the victims. Counselors and social workers are called in to help survivors cope with the aftermath of their traumatic experiences, and to minimize any long-range effects.

None of this was available to the survivors of the Holocaust. Alone in the world, with no one to turn to and no place to go, their first thoughts were to try and find some living relative or friend. Sadly, all too often, they had to accept the harsh reality that they were all alone in the world. They needed to cope with the sinking feeling that no one really cared about them and that they would have to rebuild their shattered lives by themselves, as best they could. Not all were capable to cope with the magnitude of their pain and some of their stories are very sad indeed. Yet even those who succeeded in rebuilding seemingly normal lives, deep down carry the lifelong scars of their memories.

The American soldiers who liberated the camps, seasoned on the battlefields, were nevertheless totally unprepared for what they witnessed in the camps. It seemed beyond human understanding, beyond human endurance. Yet there it was, before their very eyes. Many became physically ill and threw up.

What about the survivors? What happened to them? Many were too sick to care anymore. Others tried to eat too much too quickly, and died because their digestive system could no longer tolerate or absorb normal food. Some were transferred to makeshift or regular hospitals. But the majority of the survivors were put in new camps, now called "displaced person camps" or DP camps for short. Some were kept there for up to six years. Some tried to return to their home villages in Poland but were not welcomed by the local residents. Those people now lived in the Jewish

homes, owned the Jewish property and were reluctant to give anything back. On July 4, 1946, the inhabitants of Kielce, Poland, in a riot reminiscent of past pogroms, massacred 42 Jewish survivors who had returned, including 2 children.

And so the survivors were left once more to languish in camps behind barbed wire, erected by General Patton. When President Truman heard of the situation, he immediately ordered that the barbed wires—traumatic reminders of the death camps—be removed. General Patton objected, but ultimately had to follow orders.

### **Life Reborn.**

The people now hoarded into DP camps included husbands who had lost their wives and children, wives and mothers who had lost all as well, children without parents, young adults now alone in the world. Despair, to find themselves once more behind barbed wire would have been a logical conclusion. Yet a strange thing happened. With the death threat gone, once nurtured back to health, there was an overwhelming desire to embrace life to its fullest and to rebuild from the ashes of the crematoria. Couples found each other and married, without lengthy courtships. There was a need to belong, to have someone to hold on to, with whom to build a new life. No one thought of or expected big weddings like today, or fancy gifts. What these people had in common was a past they were trying to put behind them as much as possible. Only years later did they come to realize that this was not possible and that the emotional scars were there forever. But in the DP camps they married and had babies. The birth rate soared. Building a new life with a new family seemed absolutely essential.

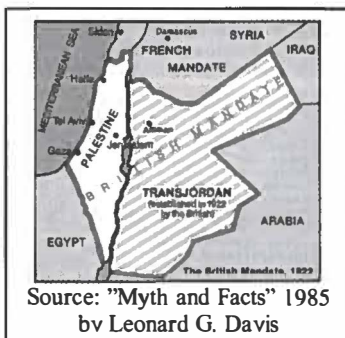


Women with baby carriages in the Landsberg DP camp.

Life in the camp was by necessity temporary. Yet where to go? Some who were fortunate enough to have family in the United States or elsewhere who were willing to sponsor them managed to immigrate. The bulk of the refugees however needed a homeland.

## The Balfour Declaration – A Jewish Homeland.

As we have read in a previous chapter. The area in the Middle East which was the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people had been conquered and occupied by many different civilizations over centuries. When the Romans became the landlords so to speak, they exiled the majority of the Jews whom they found too free-thinking and non-conformist. Then they renamed the area Palestine, a derivative of the name Philistine, for the Philistines had been the sworn enemies of the Israelites.



Source: "Myth and Facts" 1985  
by Leonard G. Davis

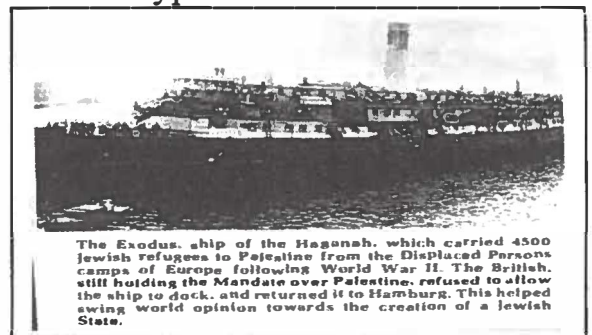
During World War I, beginning September 1917, Palestine was under British mandate, established by the League of Nations. This meant that Great Britain ruled the land like a colony. At the time, there lived a Jewish chemist by the name of Chaim Weizman. The British asked Weizman to develop weapons to help them win WWI against Germany. In return Lord Balfour promised to

reestablish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This was done via an official document called the "Balfour Declaration." Palestine at the time encompassed both Trans- and Cis-Jordan, the areas that are now Israel and Jordan.

Of the 250,000 Jews who became displaced persons at the end of the WWII, most hoped to immigrate to Palestine. Unfortunately, the British did not keep their word and restricted Jewish access to Palestine. Between 1945 and 1948, an underground organization called the *Mossad*, helped smuggle refugees into their ancient homeland. About 70,000 people managed to reach Palestine beaches under cover of night. Another 50,000 were stopped and taken to a British detention camp on the Island of Cyprus.

**The Exodus.** The liner *Exodus* reached the shores of Palestine in the summer of 1947 with 4,515 refugees aboard. The British troops did not allow them into Palestine. The people refused to leave the ship, in spite of the heat and cramped quarters. Eventually, they were returned to Hamburg

in Germany, where they were forcibly removed and transferred to a British internment camp in Germany. The plight of these refugees helped swing world opinion towards the creation of a Jewish State.



The Exodus, ship of the Haganah, which carried 4500 Jewish refugees to Palestine from the Displaced Persons camps of Europe following World War II. The British, still holding the Mandate over Palestine, refused to allow the ship to dock, and returned it to Hamburg. This helped swing world opinion towards the creation of a Jewish State.

## The Creation of the State of Israel.

In 1947, after a lengthy debate the United Nations, by unanimous vote, at long last declared a Jewish homeland in Palestine. It was only a fraction of the territory promised by the Balfour Declaration, but finally Jews had a home like any other nation, to which they could return and rebuild a future. The first Prime Minister of Israel was David Ben Gurion. On May 14, 1948, David Ben Gurion proclaimed the existence of the state of Israel. The overwhelming international support for the creation of a Jewish homeland was largely influenced by the tremendous loss of Jewish life during the Holocaust. One of the most successful Prime Ministers was Golda Meir. She was an American schoolteacher, born in Poland. She vividly remembered and would talk about the pogroms she had witnessed in Poland when she was but a child.

## YAD VASHEM

In Israel, a memorial institution was established in 1953 called *Yad*



bearing a plaque with the name and nationality of the righteous person. The name of Madame Hoolmann, the woman who saved this author's life, is included among the Righteous at Yad Vashem. To date, over 13,000 individuals have been recognized. This is an ongoing process, and many requests are still pending.

*Vashem*, dedicated to the memory of the Holocaust victims. The different buildings house a museum, research and documentation facilities. Since 1963, Yad Vashem has sponsored a program honoring non-Jews who risked their lives in an effort to save Jews during the Holocaust. To that effect, the "*Garden of the Righteous among the Nations*" was created. Carob trees are planted along the walkways, each one dedicated to the memory of a righteous person. Survivors, who wish to have someone designated as "righteous," must submit testimony and if possible, some documentation substantiating their claim. A special committee considers all cases, and when approved, a tree is added to the garden,

## Crime and Punishment: The Nuremberg Trials.

*These Nazi crimes were “....so calculated, so malignant and so devastating that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive their being repeated..”*

Robert H. Jackson, opening the  
Nuremberg trial-at right



For all the survivors, no matter what their country of origin or from what camp they were liberated, the memories of liberation would always remain a mixture of joy at being alive and free; of hope for a new life, and of pain at the realization of the magnitude of their losses. For many it also included the “guilt of the survivor,” an irrational feeling of guilt for having survived, when loved ones or friends through no fault of their own did not. They hoped for some justice and for punishment of those who had committed those horrendous crimes. Not only for the sake of justice, but as a reminder and a deterrent for the future, so that the atrocities of the Holocaust would never be repeated on anyone or any nation.

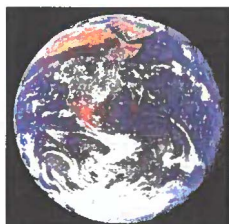
The unconditional surrender of Germany to the Allied forces on May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945, marked the end of World War II in Europe. Adolf Hitler did commit suicide on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1945. Other war criminals were put on trial by the Allies, accused of “crimes against humanity.”

Hitler had chosen Nuremberg for the annual Nazi party rallies, because this medieval city lent itself to all the pomp and splendor of the torch-lit parades and spectacles. The allies chose that same city to convene an international military tribunal to pass judgment on major German war criminals. The 22 men put on trial all claimed innocence, stating they had merely “followed orders.” Twelve were condemned to death by hanging and seven received prison sentences ranging from ten years to life.

### Discussion Questions:

1. When do you consider the statement of “just following orders” as valid and when is it not?
2. Can you find incidences in this text when “not following orders” was the right thing to do?
3. What would you do if you were told by someone in authority to commit an act that you considered immoral? How would you go about counteracting this order? Would you?

## EPILOGUE



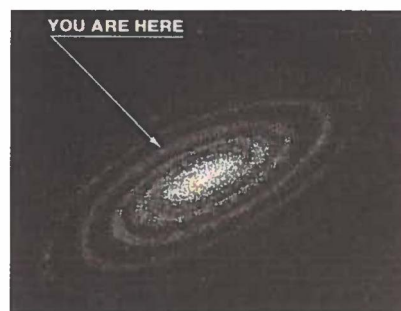
Planet Earth

Have you ever looked up at the sky on a clear night and marveled at the myriad of stars? At the vastness of our universe? In that vast universe, as an integral part of it, there twirls a small, beautiful blue planet called Earth. People, you and I and many others, live on this planet. We have begun to explore the rest of the universe via satellites and spaceships, and men have actually walked on the moon. These are very exciting times, for the present *and* the future, your future.

Yet there is something very troublesome on this beautiful little planet of ours, something dangerous that risks spoiling all future plans for mankind. It is called intolerance. You see, people have difficulty getting along with each other. Too many love to hate others that are somehow “different.” They only point at the differences, and don’t try to seek similarities. Ignorance of “other” begets fear, and fear begets hatred. Hatred, ultimately begets intolerance and bloodshed.

We must not allow this to happen. If this text is meant to serve as a warning for the future—which is what we set out to do—then we must confront what happened during the Holocaust, what human beings were willing to do to other human beings. We must begin to understand the tragic consequences of bias, prejudice and hatred. We must commit ourselves to work towards a better future of understanding, acceptance and respect for our fellow human beings.

We hope to have aroused your curiosity about the study of the Holocaust sufficiently, so that you will continue to pursue further independent research, as have many students before you. To help you find material, some additional sources of information have been made available to you in the appendix. We are confident your teacher or librarian will be happy to help further. The resource Center of the West Virginia Holocaust Education Commission will be glad to help you as well.



Our planet Earth in the Galaxy.



## **COMPLEMENTARY READING**

### ***Section One: Historical***



## *"The Killing of the Jews"*

When faced with a calamity that they can neither escape nor understand, men often seek scapegoats. In Europe the traditional scapegoat has been the Jews, an alien community in a Christian world. The calamity of the Black Death set off the greatest massacre of Jews until the time of the Nazis.

Medieval Christians looked upon the Jews with a mixture of hatred and fear. The Jews were regarded as the unrepentant killers of Christ, and their religious practices were considered strange and almost satanic. They were often accused of kidnapping and killing Christian children as part of their religious ceremonies and of stealing and defiling sacramental bread. The Jews performed necessary social functions as merchants and money lenders. These occupations, however, did not increase their popularity. In some parts of Europe, particularly Spain, Jews were among the most educated and richest members of society.

There had been massacres of Jews off and on for centuries. Usually these were unorganized acts of brutality launched by the poor rather than organized campaigns. Sometimes civil and religious authorities supported the killings. The authorities were often as ignorant and superstitious as the common folk, though occasionally they had ulterior motives. A massacre of Jews could rid a prince, bishop, or lord of troublesome creditors. Whatever wealth the Jews possessed might also fall into their hands. But as often as not, the authorities tried, with varying degrees of success, to protect the Jews in their domain.

When the Black Death struck, the rumor circulated that the Jews were deliberately spreading the plague by poisoning wells or by smearing walls with plague-infected matter.

At Chillon, near Geneva, there was a "trial" of local Jews in the autumn of 1348. Under torture a Jewish physician confessed that he had poisoned a well, and he implicated other Jews. These individuals too were tortured into implicating still others. All of those named were burnt.

Many towns did not even bother to go through the formality of a trial. At Strasbourg, Germany, two thousand Jews were herded upon a great scaffold and burnt alive. This happened despite the efforts of the

deputy of the town to save them. At Basel, Switzerland, hundreds of Jews were locked in wooden buildings that were then set alight.

In less than a year, however, the wave of persecutions died down. Perhaps people had begun to notice that Jews suffered from the plague just as Christians did, and that the plague struck at areas where there were no Jews, or where the Jews had already been killed. But the anti-Jewish hysteria lay just beneath the surface, and it flared up once again under the influence of the flagellants.

A typical scene took place in Frankfurt in July, 1349. A procession of flagellants entered the town and made its way straight to the Jewish quarter. A horde of townspeople followed and the result was a general massacre of Jews. To the fanatically religious flagellants, the Jews were killers of Christ, and they had to be either converted or exterminated before the Millennium could begin. Jews were slaughtered under the influence of the flagellants because, in the words of a contemporary chronicle, "they sought to please God in that way."

The persecutions ended with the extermination of the flagellant movement. One of the Pope's chief complaints against the brethren was that "most of them or their followers, beneath an appearance of piety, set their hands to cruel impious works, shedding the blood of Jews, whom Christian piety accepts and sustains."

The protection came too late. According to Norman Cohn, by that time most of the Jewish population in Germany and the Low Countries had been killed. Throughout the rest of the Middle Ages, the Jewish communities remained small, poor, and condemned to the segregation of the ghetto.

## What are "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"?

The war that the Nazis waged against the Jews was not just a war of physical annihilation. It was an international war of propaganda to convince the rest of the world of the evils of Judaism. One of the primary weapons that the Third Reich used for this international effort was a forgery known as "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." It is claimed that the Protocols are the minutes of a meeting of Jewish leaders at the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897, in which Jews plotted to take over the world. The Protocols are a complete forgery most of which was copied from an obscure satire on Napoleon III by Maurice Joly called "Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel" ("A Dialogue in Hell Between Montesquieu and Machiavelli").

The story of the Protocols starts with a chapter in a novel called "Biarritz" by a German bureaucrat named Hermann Goedesche writing under the pseudonym "Sir John Retcliffe" (sometimes altered to "Sir John Readcliffe" in later literature). Goedesche was an anti-Semite in the middle of the 19th century who believed in a conspiracy between Jews and Masons to dominate the world. One chapter of the novel, titled "In the Jewish Cemetery in Prague" relates a speech by a Rabbi named Eichhorn or Reichhorn which reveals a Jewish plot against European civilization. Although it was part of a novel, it was printed separately as an anti-Semitic pamphlet in Russia as early as 1872. It was widely circulated as a truthful account for the rest of the 19th century and represents the precursor of the Protocols. It is still occasionally attached to current editions of the Protocols.

The Protocols were actually written in Paris sometime between 1895 and 1899 by an agent of the Russian secret police Pytor Ivanovich Rachovsky, who is known to have forged other documents for the various intrigues in which he took part. While the Protocols are overtly anti-Semitic it is believed that the Russian minister of finance, Sergei Witte, was also a target of the Protocols. At the time Witte was the leader of the movement to modernize Russia and limit the influence of the old Russian aristocracy. The Protocols attempt to discredit Witte's reforms of the Russian economy by linking Witte's program to a Jewish plot to destroy western civilization.

The Protocols, as they are usually published, are divided into twenty-six separate chapters each of which are a lecture on how to subvert western civilization, although some versions, including the first in English, did not have this division. The "program" set forth in the Protocols is vague and generalized. The Protocols advise, for example: "Therefore in governing the world the best results are obtained by violence and intimidation, and not by academic discussions." (Protocol 1). Some are just silly. One Protocol (23) advocates making people unhappy by passing laws prohibiting drunkenness. The Protocols are vigorously anti-democratic as well. Protocol 25 advises: "Several members of the seed of David will prepare Kings and their successors, who will be elected not by right of inheritance but by their own capabilities. These successors will be initiated in our secret political mysteries and plans of governing, taking great care that no one else should acquire them."

The parochial political controversies that sparked the writing of the Protocols was soon forgotten but the anti-Semitism remained. The Protocols were first published in full by Sergei Nilus, another agent of the Russian secret police, in 1905. Nilus, who might have been one of the authors of the Protocols, became their main promoter; he circulated several editions of the Protocols in Russia as part of an campaign of anti-Semitism. While the early publications of the Protocols were in Russia, it was spread to the rest of Europe by Russian expatriates after the fall of the Tsars in 1917, where they claimed that it provided proof that the Jews were behind the Russian Revolution. Another expatriate Russian, Boris Brasol, brought it to the United States around 1920 where it became the core of Henry Ford's anti-Semitic program. By the time Nilus died in 1930, Europe had been saturated by millions of copies of the Protocols. It had also been exposed as a forgery.

The Protocols reached Germany sometime around 1918. One of those who brought them to Germany was Alfred Rosenberg, an Estonian of German heritage who first encountered the Protocols when a student in Moscow. According to Rosenberg a stranger entered his room, placed the book on the table and silently departed. Whether his tale was true or not, Rosenberg soon became an anti-Semite convinced of the authenticity of the Protocols. When he fled Raval (now Tallinn) in the civil war that followed the Russian Revolution, he took the Protocols with him.

In Germany Rosenberg soon became involved with a mystical group that was a precursor to National Socialism known as the Thule Society where he frequently lectured about the Protocols. Rosenberg was there to explain the mysteries of the Protocols when Adolf Hitler appeared on the stage of right-wing politics in 1921. Rosenberg was at Hitler's side during the attempted putsch in Munich in 1923. By then the Protocols had become one of the central themes of Nazi thought. The Protocols were the basis for much of *Mein Kampf*, and Rosenberg's book *The Myth of the 20th Century* became the most important exposition of Nazi philosophy.

It was already known that the Protocols were a forgery when Hitler received his first copy. The exposure of the forgery began as soon as the Protocols began to appear in western Europe but the *coup de grâce* occurred in 1921, one year after the Protocols were first published in Great Britain. In August, 1921, the Times of London printed a devastating exposure of the forgery by printing extracts from the Protocols side-by-side with the passages from Joly's book that had been plagiarized. From that point, the Protocols were dismissed by thinking people everywhere. It did not, however, stop the wide circulation of the Protocols by Russian expatriates and later by Hitler. Even the decision by a Swiss court after consultation with three experts (one appointed by the publisher) in May, 1935 did not affect the distribution of the Protocols by the Third Reich.

The anti-Semitic agitation of the Nazis was international in scope. The Protocols was the chief weapons used in the propaganda campaign against the Jews. Under the direction of Joseph Goebbels, the Protocols were translated into many other languages and the world was flooded with cheap editions of the forged document. With Henry Ford's "The International Jew" (also based in large part on the Protocols), it became the staple text for the anti-Semitism exported by the Nazis around the world. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler described the importance of the Protocols to his program of anti-Semitism:

**"JEWISH WORLD  
PLOT."**

**AN EXPOSURE.**

**THE SOURCE OF THE  
PROTOCOLS.**

**TRUTH AT LAST.**

The revealing "Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

*London Times,  
August 16, 1921*

... To what extent the whole existence of this people is based on a continuous lie is shown incomparably by the Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion, so infinitely hated by the Jews. They are based on a forgery, the Frankfurter Zeitung moans and screams once every week: the best proof that they are authentic. What many Jews may do unconsciously is here consciously exposed. And that is what matters. It is completely indifferent from what Jewish brain these disclosures originate; the important thing is that with positively terrifying certainty they reveal the nature and activity of the Jewish people and expose their inner contexts as well as their ultimate final aims. The best criticism applied to them, however, is reality. Anyone who examines the historical development of the last hundred years from the standpoint of this book will at once understand the screaming of the Jewish press. For once this book has become the common property of a people, the Jewish menace may be considered as broken.

From: *Mein Kampf*: Die Protokolle der Weisen von Zion. Aus  
11. Kapitel: Volk und Rasse - Erster Band: Eine Abrechnung.

Even today the Protocols of the Elders of Zion is one of the principal propaganda weapons of anti-Semitism. In the United States it continues to be circulated by the Christian Identity movement, the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi groups. It is still distributed by those who deny the Holocaust as well. The Institute for Historical Review - the intellectual center of the movement denying the Holocaust - continues to sell the Protocols and it is still used to attack Jews. Ernst Zündel, who states openly that he is an admirer of Hitler and claims the Holocaust never happened, still repeats the lies of the Protocols:

Could it be that word is out that, according to the Protocols of the Wise Elders of Zion, the New World Order is soon going to be locked in place, with Israel the hub of power and the United States its dedicated slave?

<http://www.holocaust-history.org/short-essays/protocols.shtml>

1/2/00

## Dr. Joseph Goldberger

The name of Dr. Joseph Goldberger is familiar to every doctor in the world—and to thousands of patients whom he saved. For it was this Jewish immigrant doctor who discovered the cure for a disease called pellagra. Before this discovery thousands of people got sick and died from the disease.

Dr. Goldberger was born in Austria in 1874. His parents came to the United States as immigrants when he was only 6 years old. He went to school in New York City and studied medicine. He liked to experiment and he set up a chemical lab in his crowded home.

After becoming a doctor he became interested in diseases which usually are suffered by people in warm climates. One of the diseases from which many suffered was pellagra. Patients would get red rashes on the skin, especially in parts of the body exposed to the sun. Headaches would follow and sometimes a patient's mind would be affected.

Dr. Goldberger had an idea the disease came from the lack of certain foods. Usually the poorer people got the disease. After many experiments he proved that such foods as milk and fresh lean meat provide the vitamin that protects against pellagra. Doctors thought pellagra was caused by a germ. Dr. Goldberger believed it was caused by poor diet. They ridiculed him and didn't accept his statements.

He then experimented with 12 prisoners. He put them on a diet of food similar to what poor people in the South ate. Some prisoners soon developed the disease. Dr. Goldberger injected some of the diseased convicts' blood into his own veins to prove that germs do not cause the disease. If germs did, he would get sick. Nothing happened to the doctor. The diseased prisoners were then placed on a diet which Dr. Goldberger believed produced the needed vitamins. They all became well. He proved his findings.

Dr. Goldberger's discovery was soon hailed by doctors throughout the world. They began to treat their pellagra patients by placing them on a special diet. Prevention of pellagra also resulted because people knew its cause. Today, as a result of the good work by the immigrant Jewish boy who became a doctor, the disease has been beaten.

## **KRISTALLNACHT**

### **Background on the Night of the Pogroms**

Dead silence – not a sound to be heard in the town. The lamps in the street, the lights in the shops and in the houses are out. It is 3:30 a.m. All of a sudden noises in the street break into my sleep, a wild medley of shouts and shrieks. I listen, frightened and alarmed, until I distinguish words: Get out, Jews! Death to the Jews!”\*

With methodical precision during the night of Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, and early morning of Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1938, SA, SS and Nazi stormtroopers, disguised in plain clothes, assembled in pre-arranged meeting places and fanned out to selected targets in the Jewish communities of Germany, Austria and the occupied Sudetenland, all part of the Third Reich. Following Gestapo instructions, these Nazi agents axed windows, demolished furnishing, wrecked houses, smashed store fronts, ravaged merchandise, torched synagogues, and arrested thousands of Jews. As the well-coordinated destruction took place, most “neighbors” just watched.

By Friday morning, November 11, nearly 100 Jews were dead, 7,500 Jewish businesses had been destroyed, 275 synagogues had been razed or burned, and 30,000 Jews had been arrested, the majority of whom were sent to the German concentration camps of Dachau, Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald. Carpets of crushed glass and debris covered the streets in the towns and cities of the Third Reich.

The German public labeled this event “Kristallnacht” or the Night of Broken Glass. Some American newspapers dubbed it “Black Thursday,” while others, comparing the destruction with the physical attacks against Jews in Czarist Russia, called it the Night of Pogroms.

Within days of the event, Hermann Goering, Reichs Minister of the Four-Year plan, issued the Decree Eliminating the Jews from German Economic Life. He initiated a 25 percent “flight” (thousands of Jews, in response to “Kristallnacht,” began seeking refuge in other countries) tax on all Jewish property being removed from German territory and, in a perverse maneuver, levied a fine of one billion marks (\$400 million) on the Jewish communities to compensate for the damages wrought by the Nazis. Goering expropriated all remaining Jewish businesses by transferring their ownership to “Aryan” hands. Thus, surviving Jews were not only robbed and assaulted, but they were made to absorb the cost of the destroyed property belonging to them without any means of income.

Panic pervaded the Jewish communities. Thousands packed Western European and American consulates pleading for exit visas. Only a small percentage managed to escape, since the total requests far exceeded the stringent immigration rules and regulations established by such countries as France, Great Britain, the United States, Canada and others. In desperation, some Jews committed suicide. The few thousand others managed

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\* Bentwich, Norman. “Kristallnacht: Pogrom in Emden.” *Jewish Youth Comes Home*. In: Eisenberg, Azrie. *Witness to the Holocaust*. New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1981, page 84.

to immigrate to Shanghai (China), British-controlled Palestine, South America, South Africa and Australia. Of approximately 560,000 Jews remaining in the Reich at the time of "Kristallnacht," a group representing barely one percent of the total population, about 160,000 were able to get out (nearly one out of every three.)

"Kristallnacht" marked the intensification of a 5-year antisemitic program initiated by Adolf Hitler, Chancellor of Germany, soon after he assumed power in 1933. Between January 30, 1933, and November 9, 1938, through a series of laws, Jews had been systematically denied their civil rights within the German community and gradually deprived of the right to gainful employment. The violent physical violations of November 9-10 were the first attacks on Jews to go beyond the borders of Germany, affecting incorporated Austria and the newly occupied Sudetenland.

These events were widely reported in the United States media. News stories filled the front pages of papers and close to a thousand editorials were printed. Americans reacted originally with outrage. Calls for an economic and political boycott of Nazi Germany poured into Washington from trade unions, civic associations, parent-teacher associations as well as from leaders of both political parties. Notwithstanding the public outcry, the Department of State decided not to alter U.S. immigration laws. On Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, President Franklin Roosevelt announced the recall of Hugh Wilson, U.S. Ambassador to Germany.

The events of November 9-10 were significant advancement of the Nazi's "final solution of the Jewish question." Within the two months following "Kristallnacht," in a major address to the German Parliament, Hitler promised the destruction of the Jewish people throughout Europe, should there be war. Thus, the Jews were inexorably consigned to the Nazi's Kingdom of Night.

Under what pretext had the Nazis unleashed such a blatant criminal violence against the Jews at this time? In Paris, France, on Monday, November 7, 1938, Hershel Grynszpan, a teenage immigrant Jew, shot Ernst vom Rath, the Third Secretary in the German Embassy in Paris. Grynszpan was protesting the Nazi Government's forced expulsion of his family from Germany back to Poland as part of the Nazis' anti-Jewish policy (known as the Zbaszyn Incident).

Following the news of vom Rath's death, at 4:00 p.m. on November 9<sup>th</sup>, what purported to be "spontaneous" attacks on the Jews, synagogues, and other Jewish property broke out throughout the Third Reich. These were surreptitiously organized by local Nazi Party officials, instigated by the antisemitic Reichs Propaganda Leader, Dr. Josef Goebbels. The actions were carried out by SA and SS men in plain clothes, as well as other Party members. As the depredations spread, the murder and mayhem were mingled with arson against synagogues and Jewish-owned stores and shops. Uniformed police cordoned off the areas and did not interfere with the ongoing handiwork of the perpetrators. Firemen stood by only to prevent the spread of the raging fires to Aryan property. Meanwhile, the Gestapo carried out their orders to arrest 20,000 to 30,000 preferably affluent Jews. The rampage continued unabated all that night and well into the next morning.

The Nazis attempted to camouflage their viciousness under the cloak of vindication, but the world decried these acts of barbarism. However, the tremor of protest over “Kristallnacht” soon passed.

As for the 17-year old Hershel Grynszpan, for over a year the French developed elaborate plans to bring him to trial. The proceedings were never initiated. He fell into the hands of the Nazis after their occupation of France. Dr. Josef Goebbels was to have staged a showcase trial, but again the plans were never carried out. No records have emerged since the war disclosing conclusive evidence of this young man’s fate.

**Sixty years later, why should we commemorate this event?**

“...Anyone who closes his eyes to the past is blind to the present. Whoever refuses to remember... is prone to new risks of infection.... We must erect a memorial to thoughts and feelings in our hearts.”

Excerpts from a speech by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Richard von Weizsacker, May 8, 1985, on the 42<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the conclusion of WWII.

“Seeking to forget makes exile all the longer. The secret of redemption lies in remembrance.”

*Jewish Wisdom* (Baal Shem Tov (ca. 1700-1760).

## THE DAY THEY MURDERED THE BOOKS

The following Monday, Cato sat in the classroom glaring at the picture of Adolf Hitler hanging over the blackboard. She wanted to jump and tear it into bits.

For a second time, the schoolmaster cleared his throat. Then he said, "The minister of education has asked us to correct some errors in our textbooks, since the village is too poor to buy the new ones issued by the party. Please turn to page seventy-nine.

There was a rustle as everyone leafed through the book.

Cato stared at the picture of Heinrich Heine: "Heinrich Heine, born 1797, died 1856, one of Germany's greatest lyric poets...Poet of the people." Every German composer Cato knew seemed to have put Heine's poem to music. Did that mean they could no longer sing his songs? Heine was born a Jew, but he had converted to Christianity. Blood was blood, according to the Nazis.

"All references to Heine are to be removed." The teacher looked confused. He checked the paper on his desk to make sure he had read it correctly.

One of the boys whooped, "No more memorizing Heine!"

"Quietly," the teacher murmured.

A tear slipped down Cato's cheek, but her hands froze.

"Cato," The school master said, placing a ruler against the spine of her book.

Cato winced as the sound of page after page being torn from the bindings rippled across the room. Good bye, Heine.

The teacher wet his index finger with his tongue and turned to another section. "Page ninety four," he called, fingering the paper. "Ninety four, five, six, seven, and eight, out." August von Wasserman, Jew, discoverer of test for syphilis, rip out. The ragged edges increased.

Thomas Mann, Christian, Nobel Prize winner, hater of Hitler and war...tear to bits.

When school ended, Cato stared at her textbook. Only German grammar remained untouched. History, literature, science, art music – slashed, trashed, hanging by threads...

Her fingers dropped to her side. “No!” she whispered aloud, recalling the evening of May 10, 1943. That night, Cato had been in the living room dancing to an American song playing on the radio, “I’ve Got Rhythm.” Papa had taught her some tap steps on his last visit, and she was showing Mietje a buck-and-wing.

Abruptly, the music stopped. A news broadcast followed: “Tonight all over Germany, students are ridding our libraries of subversive materials and throwing these ignominious volumes into the bonfires burning in front of universities and libraries.”

Someone began to call the names of the authors books were being tossed into the flames in front of the University of Berlin. Cato held her hands over her ears.

“Theodor Lessing, Thomas Mann, Sigmund Freud, Heinrich Heine, Lion Feuchtwanger...” The voice, triumphant, moved on to foreign authors: “Emile Zola, H.G. Wells, Upton Sinclair, Jack London, Pearl Buck, Sinclair Lewis...”

Then the minister of propaganda Josef Goebbels, took the microphone and proclaimed, “These flames not only illuminate the final end of an old era, they also light up a new one.”

Amelie, her arms around her trembling niece, repeated Heine’s warning of a hundred year’s ago, “Those who burn books soon burn people.”

Now, a year after the book burnings in the larger cities, Nazi fingers were reaching into the villages to destroy the works of any authors who spoke for freedom. Cato realized that if someone inspected the books on their living room shelves, Mama and Ameilie could be arrested.

Source: Friedman, M R *Flying Against the Wind: The Story of a Young Woman Who Defied the Nazis*. Lodgepole Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 1995 pages 45-46.

## Ghetto Life.

Ghettos are broadly defined as any section of a city where a particular group of people are confined. Historically, European Jews experienced such confinement in many urban centers, though not all Jews.

The ghettos created for Jews by the Nazi German government had nothing to do with medieval Jewish ghettos or contemporary urban ghettos. Only the word is the same. They differed radically in purpose, manner of creation, size, organization and population. Any comparison is simplistic at the very best.

The ghettoization of Jews was only a preliminary step toward genocide. The vast majority of the ghettos created by the Germans were on captured Polish and Russian soil. Three weeks after the invasion of Poland in 1939, marking the beginning of World War II, Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the German Security Police, ordered the concentration of Jews in the larger cities. Most of the ghettos were established between October, 1940, and April, 1941. About 200 in all were established.

The process which created them was slow. The initial German rationale for the ghettos was to isolate the Jews from the rest of the population and thus control them better. Jews were forced into the ghettos under the pretext that they carried contagious ailments, were criminals, and generally threatened sanitation.

Ghettos were provisional, serving as concentration points for eventual deportation to concentration camps and death factories. Conditions differed from ghetto to ghetto. Some ghettos only lasted a few weeks and others for several years. The ghetto of Lodz, Poland, or *Litzmannstadt* as it was called in German, survived the longest from 1940-1944. The Warsaw Ghetto, also in Poland, was the largest. Some 350,000 Jews were concentrated there within a one square mile area. Some ghettos were almost hermetically sealed, for example Lodz, where walls and fences did not allow Jews to have contact with other residents of the city; while others, like Radam and Kielce, were deceptively open-like. Some ghettos served the German industry through the forced conscription of slave laborers among the inhabitants. In other cities dual ghettos were established i.e., one for the elderly, sick and disabled (usually deported first) and the other for the physically able who were used as slave laborers.

Life in the ghettos was a constant misery. The Jews were usually forced to concentrate into the poorest, most disheveled and dirtiest sections of the city. Housing was grossly deficient, leading to overcrowding. Fourteen persons to a room in the Warsaw Ghetto was not unusual. Food was rationed to the point of starvation. Lack of proper sanitation and hunger led to the spread of disease which decimated people. Periodically, German units would assault the inhabitants of the ghetto, looting their possessions and murdering them. The general liquidation of the ghettos started in the spring of 1942. Jews

were assembled in the center of the ghetto to be transported to the concentration camps to certain death. This was a gradual process.

Organizationally, the ghettos were administered by Jewish Councils (Judenrate) whose members were chosen by the Germans to implement their commands to establish order. The welfare of the inhabitants was ultimately in the hands of the Germans. The composition, duties and personalities of these Councils varied from ghetto to ghetto. The extent of cooperation in implementing the orders also varied from place to place.

Though no religious, cultural, or educational activity was legally permitted after a certain point, Jews continued to organize themselves as they had traditionally done. Children were secretly educated. Cultural and political groups continued to meet clandestinely and issue leaflet newspapers. Religious services and rituals continued to be performed, though Jews were forbidden to do so. Theatrical and musical reviews were given.

The two most well-known organizations we know about today are both from the Warsaw Ghetto. The Jewish Fighting Organization, numbering about 700 youth and led by 24 year-old Mordechai Anielewicz, in April, 1943, led an unsuccessful desperate attack against the German armed forces of the Ghetto. With crudely constructed home-made guns and grenades, young men and women withstood the German armed might for several weeks.

Although ghettos like Vilna and Bialystock had major uprisings, the Warsaw Ghetto Revolt stands as a monumental symbol of resistance. The other organization was cultural, the Oyneg Shabbes group led by the Jewish historian Emanuel Ringelblum. By recording the detail of events and conditions in the Ghetto, they left us with a unique set of contemporary documents which give us greater insight into the life of Jews in the Nazi ghettos.

In summary, the Nazi ghettos were:

- Concentration points of Jews;
- A preliminary step toward the finalization of annihilation and thus provisional;
- A constant misery under inhuman conditions;
- Structurally organized by the Nazis, including the appointment of the Judenrate to execute their ultimate design;
- Witness to physical, cultural and spiritual resistance by the inhabitants.

*Witness to the Holocaust*  
Isaiah Kuperstein, Henry Hausdorff & Doris Gow (ADL)

## Janusz Korczak 1878-1942

Janusz Korczak came from a well-to-do family. His grandfather had been a surgeon and his father a prominent lawyer. He lived in a large home in an affluent area of Warsaw as did many upper middle class Jews. Korczak attended medical school at Warsaw University and became a doctor in 1904. After serving in the Russo-Japanese War (1905) he began to work with orphans and was named a director of a new orphanage for Jewish children.

Janusz Korczak was born in either 1878 or 1879 in Warsaw. Henryk Goldszmit (the name he was born with) was murdered in 1942 at Treblinka. It was Janusz Korczak who introduced the idea of progressive orphanages designed as just communities into Poland, founded the first children's national newspaper, trained teachers in what we now call moral education and worked in juvenile courts defending children's rights. His books "How to Love a Child" and "The Child's Right to Respect" gave parents and teachers new insights into child psychology.

At the end, Korczak, who had directed a Catholic as well as a Jewish orphanage before the war, had refused all offers of help for his own safety from his Gentile colleagues and friends. "You do not leave a sick child in the night, and you do not leave children at a time like this" he said.

Among the measures established to control the population of the ghetto was the wearing of armbands. Among those who objected and refused to wear them was Janusz Korczak. Korczak was imprisoned until his Polish Gentile friends got him released. Korczak headed the children's aid commission in the ghetto. He concentrated his efforts on the orphanage, trying to provide food and clothing for the children. In the midst of the deterioration of the ghetto, the orphanage was kept clean, education continued, and cultural enrichment was maintained. Polish friends offered Korczak asylum outside the ghetto walls, but he refused. He was not willing to save himself and abandon the children.

Source: William L. Shulman, *Janusz Korczak's Warsaw*.  
Queensborough Community College.

## AUSCHWITZ ALPHABET

### R ESISTANCE

*~ Resistance was almost impossible in Auschwitz, where disobedience meant torture and death, for one's peers as well as oneself. Nevertheless, it occurred. The most notable instance was that of the Sonderkommando that seized a crematorium.*

*Just months before the liberation of the camp, when it was already known that the Russian army was approaching, the SS caught wind of the fact that the last of the Sonderkommando – the squads of Jewish prisoners formed to shepherd their fellows to the gas chamber – were planning an uprising. They determined to eliminate them all.*

*On October 7, 1944, as the SS were forming a detail of three hundred members of the Sonderkommando for some outside work (this was thought to be a ruse to separate and execute them), the Sonderkommando began pelting the SS with stones and drove them off. They packed crematorium IV with explosives they had “organized” or stolen, and blew it up. Eighty to one hundred trucks of 55 men arrived and the Sonderkommando fought them with stolen machine guns and grenades they had been stockpiling: the SS responded in kind and by unleashing fifty attack dogs.*

*Sonderkommando in other units rose up too: some seized crematorium II and threw an SS man and a Kapo into the furnace alive. Some men cut holes in the barbed wire and fled, but in the wrong direction, remaining within the larger confines of the extended camp. The SS trapped some in a barn and set fire to it and hunted others down in the woods: by the end of the day, hundreds of members of the Sonderkommando had been burned and shot to death.*

*After the revolt was put down, the remaining two hundred members of the Somderkommando were executed, some with flame throwers.*

Friedrich. Pp. 80-85.



## **READING SECTION TWO**

### ***Personal Eyewitness Accounts***



# Montana city refuses to accept attacks on minority groups

## Billings leaders stir community outrage, cow hate organizations

BY TOM LACEY  
Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont.

Police Chief Wayne Inman has seen what happens when racism and anti-Semitism are allowed to fester. As a cop in Oregon, he watched skinhead hatred turn murderous.

When the swastikas appeared in Billings, Montana's largest city, Inman was determined to halt the hatred early. He and others stirred the community to a roar of outrage that appears to have cowed the racist groups, at least for now.

"Hate crimes are not a police problem, they're a community problem," he said in an interview. "Hate crimes and hate activity will flourish only in communities that allow it to flourish."

The first signs came last year, when fliers started showing up in Billings mailboxes, on doorsteps, under windshield wipers. The fliers and anonymous phone calls vilified Hispanics, Indians, blacks, gays, lesbians and welfare recipients but reserved special venom for the city's Jewish community of 48 families.

Then, a series of seemingly random, isolated incidents:

■ In January, a few skinheads slipped into a Martin Luther King Day observance; afterwards, par-

ticipants found their cars papered with Ku Klux Klan material.

■ In the spring, skinheads began showing up in twos and threes at Wayman Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, glowering in the back pews. As the Rev. Bob Freeman recalls it, "They were trying to intimidate us with 'the stare,' you know."

■ In August, a black swastika painted on white posterboard was nailed to the door of Beth Aaron Synagogue, and tombstones were toppled in its cemetery.

■ In October, swastikas and racial slurs were spray-painted on the home of a mixed race couple, white and Indian.

From his previous job, Inman recognized an emerging pattern — hate literature to intimidation to vandalism to personal attacks — which in Portland had culminated in the November 1988 beating death of Mulugeta Seraw, a young Ethiopian. Seraw's three skinhead attackers were fresh from a meeting of East Side White Pride at which two agents of White Aryan Resistance, a supremacist group, gave a spirited "recruitment" speech.

The skinheads pleaded guilty, and, in a trial two years later; WAR founder Tom Metzger and his son, John, were convicted of inciting Seraw's murder by



Dawn Fast Horse and her three-year old daughter, Ryan, stand in front of the racist graffiti left on her home in Billings, Mont. Oct. 23, 1993. Similar incidents prompted residents to rally against prejudice.

recruitment. "I saw the emergence of the hate groups and a community's denial, and I saw a wakeup call that was the death of a black man ... by baseball bat because he was black," Inman said. "That's what it took to wake up Portland. We didn't have to go through that here to get the wakeup call."

What was different in Billings, a metropolitan area of about

100,000 people, was the united public reaction to the early ugliness.

harass and intimidate one member of this community you are attacking all of us."

Inman kept repeating a message to civic groups and community leaders: Hate groups must be resisted, not ignored. [And the resistance was more than bluster. Within five days of the spray-painted vandalism, 27 volunteers from Painters Local 1922 swarmed over the defaced house and obliterated the slurs in 45 minutes.]

Bigotry resurfaced the next month. On Nov. 27, a beer bottle was hurled through a glass door at the home of Uri Barnea, conductor of the Billings Symphony. Five nights later, a cinder block thrown through a window sent shards of glass spraying over the bed of 6-year-old Isaac Schnitzer.

Both houses were decorated with Hanukkah menorahs. Both houses had children at home with baby sitters.

The threats to children aroused a fierceness in the city. Christian churches distributed photocopies of menorahs. The Billings Gazette published a black-and-white picture of a menorah with an editorial, then a full-page version in

color. Several businesses began providing paper menorahs.

Within days, the nine-candled symbol of Jewish perseverance and resistance from second century B.C. was displayed in thousands of windows across the city.

The menorah idea started with the Rev. Keith Torney of the First Congregational Church and Margie MacDonald of the Montana Association of Churches.

"This was just getting to be too much," Torney said. "At first the homosexual community was being harassed. First the gays, then the black community, but it seemed to me they kind of hit their stride in the Jewish community. It's like they're searching around to get attention."

Civic leaders, churches and businesses declared their revulsion. Universal Athletics replaced its billboard display on a busy thoroughfare with this message:

"NOT IN OUR TOWN! NO HATE. NO VIOLENCE."

But the hatemongers returned. Over two weeks in December, they broke windows at two Jewish homes and two churches that displayed menorahs, shot bullets through windows at Billings Cen-

tral Catholic High School, and stomped and battered six vehicles at homes displaying menorahs, telling two owners in phone calls, "Go look at your car, Jew-lover."

The spasm of hate only created more resistance.

"The result was that many more people put menorahs in their windows," Inman said, allowing himself a rare grin at the memory. "It became physically impossible for the hate groups to harass and intimidate thousands and thousands of Billings citizens."

On Dec. 10, about 100 people attended a Hanukkah service at Beth Aaron Synagogue. Outside, other neighbors discreetly stood vigil in the dark.

The city is not proclaiming victory, but Inman thinks the hate groups have backed off. No vandalism has occurred since the incidents in December, and the literature and anonymous calls have diminished.

"I would hate to predict we have stopped the influence and impact of hate crimes, but something appears to be working," Inman said.

Yellowstone County Sheriff Charles Maxwell remains optimistic.

"It may happen again," the sheriff acknowledged. "But the reaction will be the same."



Billings Police Chief Wayne Inman stands in front of the Beth Aaron Temple where a swastika on posterboard was nailed to the door.

"There was not silence. There was community outrage, saying, 'If you harass and intimidate one member of this community you are attacking all of us.'"

Wayne Inman  
Billings Police Chief



## Anti-Semitism behind a shining countenance

by Gloria Liebensohn

The year was 1934. I was 12 years old, enrolled in the seventh grade at the Robert Emmet School in Chicago.

J.P., who lived in another neighborhood, but attended our school because his mother taught there, was a wiry, bespectacled boy with blond hair, beautiful manners and immaculate clothing. His hand flew up to the teacher's questions. None of us, his classmates, knew quite what to make of J.P., but we were in awe of this perfect child.

I, on the other hand, took a casual approach to my school work. I lived for the bell that freed me for ice skating at the neighborhood ice rink.

One day I found no skaters there, and no ice. The playground manager told me that the rink would be back in service in a day or two, but he knew of a playground a mile away that had really good skating.

There was an almost

dreamlike quality to the whole scene: no messy gutters, no apartment buildings, no kids out on the street. Just tidy little houses with tidy little front yards. And, strangely, not a soul in sight.

When I was within mere feet of the playground, suddenly, there was J.P.! He was almost unrecognizable. He stood facing me, his arms akimbo, his features contorted into a fright mask — open fury dissolving into naked hatred. I stood frozen.

Then, J.P. shrieked: "Don't you come one step closer, you filthy kike! Take those skates and go home. We live here so we don't have to put up with you dirty Jews. We don't allow Jews here."

I turned. Running, I felt a stinging pain dead center on my back. J.P. had punctuated his message with a rock.

Up to that point, Jewish was just another thing I was. In a home where Papa and Mama always spoke Russian to each other and where the emphasis centered around The Russian Intelligentsia,

I probably would have described myself as Russian, if someone had bothered to enquire. And, oh yeah, Jewish. After all, went the demographics in my head, wasn't just about everybody Jewish? That night I knew I was wrong.

My second issue that night, was about hatred. All 12-year-old girls know that it is okay to hate for something: telling on you, being two-faced, having long blond hair—but hating for somebody's religion was a new concept.

The next morning, I sat in my seat and P.J. entered the classroom. This time he did not approach his seat from the outer aisle. He came to the middle aisle where I sat. With eyes half-closed, he smiled a broad, close-mouthed smile—catlike—and proceeded to his desk. He sat down, folded his hands and turned his shining countenance to the door where the teacher was just entering.

*Gloria Liebensohn is a Washington, D.C. interior designer and freelance writer.*

## YOUR HAT IS ON CROOKED

A personal story of an incident, shortly after the “Anschluss.”

By Dr. Edith Rechter Levy.

The year was 1938. The place was Vienna, Austria. I was a seven year old little girl living in the midst of a loving family. I had lots of aunts, uncles, and cousins, and an older brother who, to me, seemed to know everything. I had just started school and loved it. When German troops marched into our country with lightning speed, things changed practically overnight. Just before the “Anschluss”—this was what Hitler called the decision to make Austria part of greater Germany—before that, I remember political rallies and slogans “rot, weiss, rot bis in den Tod” (red, white, red, until death) painted all over sidewalks. You see red, white, and red were the colors of the Austrian flag.

Then came the “Anschluss”, the annexation of Austria to Germany and Jews were no longer allowed to lead a normal life. The first thing the Nazis did was to take Jewish citizens and make them scrub the streets and sidewalks to clean up all the national Austrian patriotic writings. They also made them defile Jewish property by making them write nasty things on the walls of properties belonging to Jews. All this was done surrounded by jeering crowds.

I used to love to play in the Augarten, a park near our home, but Jews were no longer permitted in the park, nor could we wear the same clothes that most people wore: Lederhosen for boys and men and Dirndls for girls.

The events I am retelling you here happened one evening shortly after the “Anschluss”. We were walking home from visiting family, outside the Augarten, since we were no longer permitted to set foot inside. My brother and I walked slightly ahead of our parents. I was vaguely aware of a bunch of noisy young men coming up fast behind us. I stepped off the curb to let them pass, but they did not. Instead they surrounded my parents and one say to my dad “Pepperl, (hey Joe) this is no way to wear a hat!”

“My hat is fine”, replied my dad.

“No” said the man again, “no, no, here, let me show you how to wear it.”

All this was accompanied by laughter and noise from his companions. With that, several started to pull the hat over my father’s eyes, so he couldn’t see to defend himself, and they started beating and kicking him. It all happened terribly fast. My mother, in an attempt to shield my dad, stepped between him and his assailants. She now received part of the blows herself.

My childish first reaction had been to want to tell my dad to let the young men show him how to wear the hat correctly. I had not encountered evil before, and did not suspect that these young men had any mean intent. After all, we didn’t know them! But

before I could even say anything, these Nazis had my dad pinned against the brick wall surrounding the park and were beating and kicking both dad and mom!!

Something was terribly wrong here. I looked for my big brother for advice or an explanation. But he wasn't there!! Where was he? I frantically looked around and finally saw him across the street, holding on to a lamppost. Then I realized he was still wearing the "Lederhosen," forbidden clothing for Jewish boys!!

I felt all alone in this terribly frightening situation. Then I did what came naturally and instinctively to a child. I screamed! I screamed and stomped my feet. While I was doing it, I vaguely remembered that mom and dad did not allow us to stomp our feet, but I couldn't help myself, It was all too frightening. And the scream! It was so loud and piercing I even stunned myself but again, I couldn't help it, it just came out.

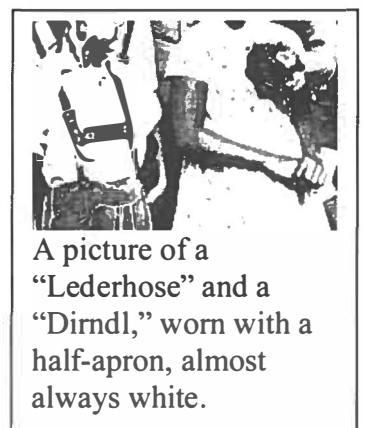
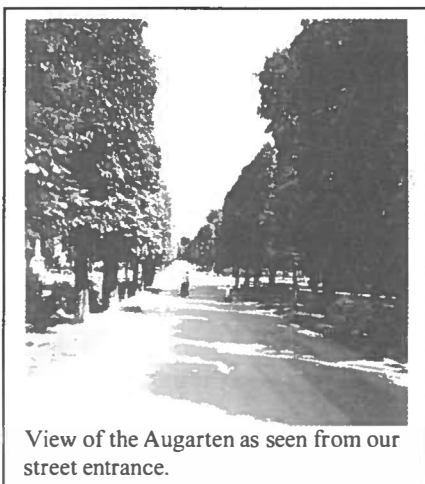
Luckily for us, there was a pub across the street where men were having a drink or two. When they heard the piercing shrieks of a child, they rushed out to help and chased the young offenders away. Those ran off laughing.

The support of these people probably saved my father's life. I remember him bruised and bedridden after that, and I remember our non-Jewish neighbors surrounding the bedside. I will never forget the words of one lady. "This is hooliganism," she said, "this can't go on, that kind of action will and must be punished."

The year was 1938, and the worst was yet to come. Yet I have often wondered:

- What did this lady say in 1942?
- Would she still have had the courage to speak up?
- Did she still feel Jews were worth protecting or did she now believe otherwise?
- Would she risk her life and endanger her family to save a Jewish person, a Jewish child?
- Did she keep silent because it was safer and more expedient?
- Or did she simply go on with her own life and not care one way or the other?

It has been said that the Holocaust happened not because bad people did evil things, but because good people stood by and did nothing. What do you think?



## KRISTALLNACHT EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

### Essen, Germany

James Ingo Freed

Eyewitness to Kristallnacht

Architect of the U.S. Holocaust

Memorial Museum

In November 1938, I was 8 ½ years old, living with my mother, father and baby sister in Essen, Germany, where I was born. My family and I already had experienced what, to a child, seemed unrelated events. I could not understand them. Simple things which children normally take for granted were mysteriously denied – for example, we could no longer enter a public park.

Early in the day of November 9, my father received a warning that it would be wiser for him and me not to go home that night. It was assumed that my mother and 3-year-old sister would remain and be safe there.

In the evening my father and I boarded first one streetcar, and then another, riding endlessly throughout the night. Twice our journey took us past the main synagogue of Essen, which was in flames. I asked my father why it was burning, but he reminded me not to speak. Although we remained unharmed that night, for the first time, I realized the world we had known—the world of my parents and grandparents—was not going to be my world.

My sister and I left Germany in early 1939 for France, and, from Paris on a children's refugee train, traveled on to Switzerland. We came to the United States at the end of 1939; our parents followed us in late 1940. Although my immediate family escaped, most of my mother's family perished in the Holocaust.

### 2. Berlin, Germany

A fourteen-year-old boy, M. I. Libau, had gone to bed that night in his home in Berlin. Suddenly, at six o'clock in the morning, the doorbell rang, waking him up. His mother went to the door and opened it. He told what happened then:

I heard the shrill, barking, yelling voices of men. It seemed to me there were at least twenty of them.

"Are here Goyim or Ivrim (Gentiles or Jews)?" Then I heard my mother's calm voice. "Please speak German. I understand it very well, but if you wish to know whether we are Christians or Jews, we are Jews!"

"Where are the Jews? Where are they?" they yelled. I heard noises of falling furniture and breaking glass. I could not imagine what was happening. I stood behind my bed when one Nazi in full uniform entered the room. He stepped back a fraction of a second

when he saw me; then he began to yell “I’ll do nothing to you. I won’t do any harm to you.”

Now he stood near me, his face sweating. A smell of bad alcohol came out of his mouth. He took another glaring look at me and began to destroy everything within reach. While he was breaking the closet door, my mother came into the room. He commanded her to hold the clothes for him so that he would be able to tear them better. Desperately my mother called out, “Those are all our clothes! What shall we wear?”

“You wear? Nothing!” he shouted. “ You don’t need any more clothes! You can go naked now.”

It almost broke my heart when I saw him take my father’s best suit. “This is my father’s best suit,” I called out. “Don’t tear it! Don’t.”

....We watched the men destroy the whole apartment of five rooms. All the things for which my parents had worked for eighteen long years were destroyed in less than ten minutes. Piles of valuable glasses, expensive furniture, linens—in short, everything was destroyed; nothing was left untouched. After those ten minutes, the apartment was a heap of ruins.

My mother and I looked at everything without shedding a tear. We felt as if we had lost our minds. The Nazis left us, yelling, “Don’t try to leave this house! We’ll soon be back again and take you to a concentration camp to be shot.”

But the Nazis did not come back—then. Mr. Libau, who had been working nights as a forced laborer on the railroad, came home and went into hiding in the cellar of a Christian friend. Many of the family’s friends committed suicide that night, some went insane, and some were murdered.

*In: Meltzer, Milton. “The Night of Broken Glass.” Never to Forget: The Jews of the Holocaust. New York: Harper & Row, 1976 pages 52-53*

### 3. Duesseldorf, Germany

(Rabbi Eschelbacher had just returned home at midnight on November 9<sup>th</sup> when the telephone rang) A voice, trembling with horror, shouted – “Rabbi, they’re breaking up the synagogue hall and smashing everything to bits, they’re beating the men, we can hear it from here.” It was Mrs. Blumenthal who lived next door.... I was just about to go there, but almost at that very moment there was a violent banging at my own door. I switched off the light and looked outside. The square in front of the house was black with SA men. The next moment they were upstairs, pushing in the front door of the flat. The staircase swarmed with men, of all ranks. They rushed in on us shouting: “Revenge for Paris! Down with the Jews!” They pulled mallets out of their pouches and in a moment splintered glass flew from the window-panes and mirrors, and splintered wood from the

furniture. The gang came up to me with clenched fists, one of them got hold of me and ordered me downstairs. I felt certain I would be beaten to death. I went into the bedroom, put down my watch, wallet and keys and took leave of Berta.

Downstairs the street was full of SA men. Counting those in the house there must have been between fifty or sixty altogether. The shout met me: "Give us a sermon!" I began to speak of the death of Vom Rath, saying that his murder was more of a misfortune for us than for the German people, that we were in no way guilty for his death.... On the corner, in the Stromstrasse, the street was covered with books that had been thrown out of the window, together with papers, documents and letters. The ruins of my typewriter were there also... I myself was gripped by an SA man and hurled across the street against the house. The party Kreisleiter (district leader) said to me: "You are under arrest."

(Rabbi Eschelbacher was then escorted to Duesseldorf police headquarters by SA men who sang in unison "Revenge for Paris! Down with the Jews!" Passers-by joined in the chorus.)

*Kochan, Lionel. Pogrom: 10 November 1938. In: Eisenberg, Azriel. Witness to the Holocaust. New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1981, page 87.*

#### 4. Leipzig, Germany

Jewish dwellings were smashed into and the contents demolished or looted. In one of the Jewish sections, an eighteen-year-old boy was hurled from a three-story window to land with both legs broken on the street littered with burning beds and other household furniture.... Jewish shop windows by the hundreds were systematically and wantonly smashed throughout the city at a loss estimated at several million Marks.... The main streets of the city were a positive litter of shattered plate glass.... The debacle was executed by SS men and Storm Troopers not in uniform, each group having been provided with hammers, axes, crowbars and incendiary bombs....

An American eyewitness, describing what he saw. In Meltzer, Milton. *The Night of Broken Glass*. Never to Forget: The Jews of the Holocaust. NY: Harper & Row, 1976, page 52.

#### 5. Dinslaken, Germany

At 9:30 a.m. the bell at the main gate rang persistently. I opened the door. About 50 men stormed into the house, many of them with their coat-or jacket-collars turned up. At first they rushed into the dining room, which fortunately was empty, and there they began their work of destruction, which was carried out with the utmost of precision. The frightened and fearful cries of the children resounded through the building. In a stentorian voice I shouted: "Children, go out into the street immediately!" This advice was certainly contrary to the order of the Gestapo. I thought however that in the street, in a public place, we might be in less danger than inside the house. The children immediately ran

down a small staircase at the back, most of them without hat or coat – despite the cold and wet weather. We tried to reach the next street crossing, which was close to Dinslaken's Town Hall, where I intended to ask for police protection. About ten policemen were stationed here, reason enough for a sensation seeking mob to await the next development. This was not very long in coming; the senior police officer, Freihahn, shouted at us: "Jews do not get protection from us! Vacate the area together with your children as quickly as possible!" Freihahn then chased us back to the side street in the direction of the backyard of the orphanage. As I was unable to hand over the key to the back gate, the policeman drew his bayonet and forced open the door. I then said to Freihahn: "The best thing is to kill me and children, then our ordeal will be over quickly!" The officer responded to my "suggestion" merely with cynical laughter. Facing the back of the building, we were able to watch how everything in the house was being systematically destroyed under the supervision of the men of law and order - the police. At short intervals we could hear the crunching of broken glass or the hammering against wood as windows and doors were broken. Books, chairs, beds, tables, linen, chests, parts of a piano, a radiogram, and maps were thrown through apertures in the wall, which, a short while ago, had been windows or doors.

In the meantime, the mob standing around the building had grown to several hundred. Among these people I recognized some familiar faces, suppliers of the orphanage or tradespeople who, only a day or a week earlier had been happy to deal with us as customers. This time they were passive, watching the destruction without emotion.

At 10:15 A.M. we heard the wailing of sirens! We noticed a heavy cloud of smoke billowing upward. It was obvious from the direction it was coming from that the Nazis had set the synagogue on fire. Very soon we saw smoke clouds rising up, mixed with sparks of fire. Later I noticed that some Jewish houses, close to the synagogue, had also been set alight under the expert guidance of the fire brigade. Its presence was a necessity, since the firemen had to save the homes of the non-Jewish neighborhood.

*Herz, Yitzhak S. "Kristallnacht at the Dinslaken Orphanage." In : Gutman, Israel and Schtzker, Chaim. The Holocaust and Its Significance. Jerusalem : The Zalman Shazar Center, The Historical Society of Israel, 1984, pages 47-48.*

#### **6. Potsdam (suburban metropolitan Berlin), Germany**

(Lionel Kochan recalled the morning of November 10, 1938)

I shall never forget the sound of that bell. I knew at once what it meant. Scantily dressed, I opened the door and my fear was confirmed. Five men in mufti faced me. The leader said he was a Gestapo official and put me under arrest. Any attempt at escape would be met by the use of arms, he warned. At that moment my son came out of his room. He too was arrested. We had to dress under the supervision of the officials and then they ordered me to hand over the keys of the synagogue and of the community records. When I replied that the keys were kept by an Aryan janitor and that the records were with the Treasurer, we were both taken out to the car....

The main synagogue door had resisted the attack of between twenty and twenty-five men, so that I was forced to show the leaders a side entrance.... They smashed the door down and I led the ringleader through the back entrance into the synagogue.... "We want to see the Holy of Holies!..."

In a few minutes the whole interior of the synagogue was transformed into a heap of ruins... the Scrolls of Law ripped into shreds, the great Menorah used as a battering ram.

*In: Kochan, Lionel. Pogrom, 10 November 1938. London: Andre Deutsch, 1957 pages 74-75.*

7. **Vienna, Austria** narrated by Dauna Moore.  
Memories of Edith Rechter Levy.

A child, they told her. A Jewish child was beaten unconscious by Nazi soldiers. She stared, but only for a moment. She was in danger. Her mother grabbed her hand and dragged her away. They ran, desperately searching for a safe place amid the fires, the shouting, the hysteria. Edith Rechter's 8-year-old legs could barely keep up. There was beatings in the street and soldiers were dragging families out of their beds. Bodies on the ground, Torahs thrown from burning synagogues, shattered glass in the street. Sirens broke through the shouting, gunfire and madness, as an ambulance rushed to rescue the little boy next to the bicycle.

"I didn't understand what was happening or why it was happening." The soldiers killed during the day, went home and were loving parents, went to church on Sunday, then went out and killed again Monday morning. They didn't think what they were doing was wrong." Edith and her mother and brothers were smuggled into Belgium in 1939, shortly after Kristallnacht, where a German woman sheltered them until they found a safe place to hide from Nazi soldiers. Her father was taken to the Auschwitz concentration camp where he died. Kristallnacht marked the beginning of the end of a normal childhood.

## Nechama Tec

Born in Lublin, Poland, in 1931, Nechama enjoyed a pleasant childhood in comfortable surroundings. Her father was the owner of a large factory and provided his family with a large, elegant apartment. Nechama and her sister had tutors so that they had the opportunity to learn to speak Polish more fluently than their parents, who had not had the same educational advantages.

The outbreak of war in 1939 brought about immediate changes for Nechama. Although her family had been assimilated with the non-Jewish population of Lublin in the prewar years, Nazi legislation made Nechama's family acutely aware of their Jewish identity. First, the family was forced to surrender its spacious apartment and move into a cramped apartment in a Lublin Ghetto. Soon thereafter, Nechama and her sister were separated from their parents and placed in Christian homes for protection. These arrangements did not work out, and Nechama and her sister rejoined their parents in the ghetto at the very time that life became increasingly dangerous for the Jews.

In 1942 Nechama's father was able to arrange to pay for his entire family to find asylum with a Christian family in Kielce, a town several hundred miles from Lublin, where they would not be recognized. In this hiding place, Nechama's parents remained "hidden" inside the apartment of the host family all the time because their manner of speaking Polish would have betrayed their Jewish identity. Nechama and her sister had blond hair and blue eyes, and proficiency in the Polish language; they "passed" as relatives of the host family as Polish Christians. They assumed Christian names, learned the rituals of Catholicism, and memorized the genealogy and biographical details of their new family. They attended school daily with non-Jews and served as links between their parents and the outside world.

During these months of "passing," Nechama and her sister had to remain silent about their true identity even when they heard slurs about Jewish people. Nechama was so troubled by negative remarks she heard about Jews that on one occasion she asked her father to explain how Christians could believe such things.

Nechama, her sister, and her parents all survived the war and returned to their native Lublin before deciding to leave Poland. There were only three Jewish families in Lublin that managed to survive intact; Nechama's family was one of the three. Although they would have chosen to resume their life in Lublin, the omnipresent signs of anti-Semitism that had survived the war years and Nazi occupation made life so intolerable for Jews that Nechama's family decided to emigrate.

For many years Nechama refused to think or talk about her childhood during the Holocaust. She married, raised a family, and began her career as a sociology professor without ever discussing the subject or conducting research on the Holocaust. Then, in the late 1970's, her memories began to stir: as stirrings became sharper, she decided to write her memoirs, *Dry Tears*, which appeared in 1982 (a second edition, with an added epilogue, was published in 1984).

As she worked on her personal reminiscences, she became increasingly interested in what motivated people to save Jews. In a systematic survey of several hundred rescuers of Polish Jewry, Nechama developed a profile of the characteristics these individuals have in common. She discussed her findings in her recent monograph, *When Light Pierced the Darkness*. In Kielce, where Nechama and her family "passed" with a Polish family, there had been 19,000 Jews, which represented a third of the total population before the war; 123 Jewish survivors returned to Kielce after the war and forty three Jews were killed in the pogrom of July 3-4, 1945.

*Holocaust Testimony; Facing History and Ourselves* Page 45

## Rachel G.

I was born in Brussels, Belgium.... I had a very happy childhood until the Nazis came in. I remember just happiness, just a beautiful family... going to school very happily until one day I had to come home from school with a note that I had to show my parents. And that's when the whole thing started.... The note said...that Jewish children could not go to school anymore.

This portrait centers on the story of a Belgian Jewish child survivor who spent the three years between 1942 and 1945 among Catholics, separated from her parents.

Born in 1934, the only daughter of Jewish parents, Rachel remembers a happy childhood in which she mingled with Jewish and non-Jewish children. This changed when the Germans came, and she remembers the day in 1941 (she was seven years old) when she came home with a note saying that Jews were no longer allowed to attend school. Things got steadily worse for Belgian Jews, and one-day Rachel's mother went to the landlady and pleaded for help. "They are taking away the children. All Rachel's little friends are going. Can you do something about my daughter? Can you take her, hide her somewhere?"

The landlady did help, calling upon her nephew, a priest, to arrange for Rachel's hiding. Only once after Rachel went into hiding did she see her father—he managed to come to the priest's house with a birthday present for her.

The priest arranged for Rachel to attend a convent school. She adjusted quite well to the Catholic community and remembers enjoying the prayers and routine of the school, although she missed having her parents come on Sundays as other parents did to visit the non-Jewish students. While Rachel was becoming accustomed to her new life, the landlady betrayed her parents to the Gestapo, who sent them to the transit camp at Malines and eventually deported them to Auschwitz. Rachel's father did not survive the camp years; her mother did not see Rachel until after the war.

During the next three years Rachel moved many times. Each time the local officials grew suspicious that the nuns were harboring Jewish children; Rachel and the other Jewish children were walked to another location and

given new names. On one occasion the Gestapo almost discovered Rachel, but the nuns quickly stashed their Jewish ward in a large laundry basket so the officials could not detect her presence.

Toward the close of the war Rachel hid with a childless couple in the Ardennes. The husband belonged to the resistance and had an abiding hatred for Nazis and all totalitarian regimes. The couple lavished love on Rachel, whom they called "Marie Rose." After liberation, they wanted to adopt Rachel and began the proceedings. However, regulations required that there be a ten-month waiting period and that children return to the first convent they entered. Thus, if parents survived, they would be able to locate their children.

Nine months after the war, while Rachel was in the convent school, her mother returned. Rachel found it difficult to understand her mother since she felt that her mother had abandoned her. Gradually, however, she grew to realize the tremendous sacrifice her mother and father had made by sending her away. She also learned the full story of the landlady who had turned her parents in to the Gestapo only a short time after arranging to help Rachel go into hiding.

One interesting feature is Rachel's discussion of her identity. She acknowledges her Jewish origins and recognized the suffering of her parents and millions of other Jews. She also holds considerable respect for the Christians who took enormous risks to save her. Today she has mixed emotions about her Jewish identity, and loves and admires the priests, nuns, and Catholic laity who came to her rescue.

Another important element is Rachel's feelings toward her mother after the war. As with other child survivors, Rachel believed that her parents failed to protect her and therefore sent her away. These feelings of neglect and abandonment did not subside quickly after the war and it took her a long time to "understand" and "thank" her mother.

*Holocaust Testimony; Facing History and Ourselves* Page 49.

## EXCERPT FROM JANUSZ KORCZAK'S DIARY

August 4, 1942

I am watering the flowers, my bald head in the window.  
What a splendid target.

He has a rifle. Why is he standing and looking on calmly?

He has no orders to shoot.

And perhaps he was a village teacher in civilian life, or a notary, a street  
sweeper in Leipzig, a waiter in Cologne?

What would he do if I nodded to him?  
Wave my hand in a friendly gesture?

Perhaps he doesn't even know that things are—  
as they are?

He may have arrived only yesterday, from far away...

Janusz Korczak: The Ghetto Years 1939-1942 (Ghetto Fighters' House) p. 211-212

# THE BRIEFCASE

BY EDITH RECHTER LEVY

**M**ore than 50 years have passed, yet I can still sense the fear. I can still see it all before my eyes as if it were yesterday. I remember leaning my head against the cool brick wall, closing my eyes and allowing myself, for a brief instant, to listen to the pounding of my heart. I had safely turned the corner and was now out of vision of the Gestapo. But, was I out of danger? Still too close, I told myself, and standing there, I felt terribly vulnerable. A few steps ahead I caught a glimpse of some stairs leading to a recessed doorway. I took refuge, seating myself high on the steps, out of sight, the briefcase beside me.

Once, I had been a sheltered child, but that seemed a very long time ago. Living beneath the shadow of the death camps, aware of what awaited me if caught, with hunger and fear my steady companions, I had learned to draw on unknown resources and had developed street smarts and cunning far beyond my age. On my ability to keep a cool head depended the fates of my mother and brothers and, at this moment, possibly the lives of others whom I did not even know.

We were in Brussels, having fled Vienna with nothing but the clothes on our backs. My father had already been deported; he died in Auschwitz. When he was taken, my mother was left with three children, one only three months old. My older brother was still with us before being hidden by the Belgian Resistance

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Movement, but he was over 15, and needed identity papers to leave the house. I, a child of 12, did not.

To support us, my mother decided we should knit sweaters. Both she and I were proficient knitters. But wool yarn was nearly unavailable in stores, and the black market variety was out of our budget. My mother hit upon the idea of buying used sweaters at the open-air flea market held daily on a square in the old section of the city. The square, surrounded by narrow winding streets and alleys, was frequented by members of the underground, the small passageways providing quick cover and easy getaways.

I would have the best chances in the outside world. Small for my age, with my dark blond hair in long braids, blue eyes and a high forehead, all considered typical "Aryan" features, I did not look at all Jewish. Moreover, I could distinguish between handknitted sweaters, which could be unravelled and the wool reused, and machine-made sweaters, which could not. Machine-made sweaters were wasted money. As an extra measure of protection, I ventured out only during the hours when children would be walking to and from school. This is how

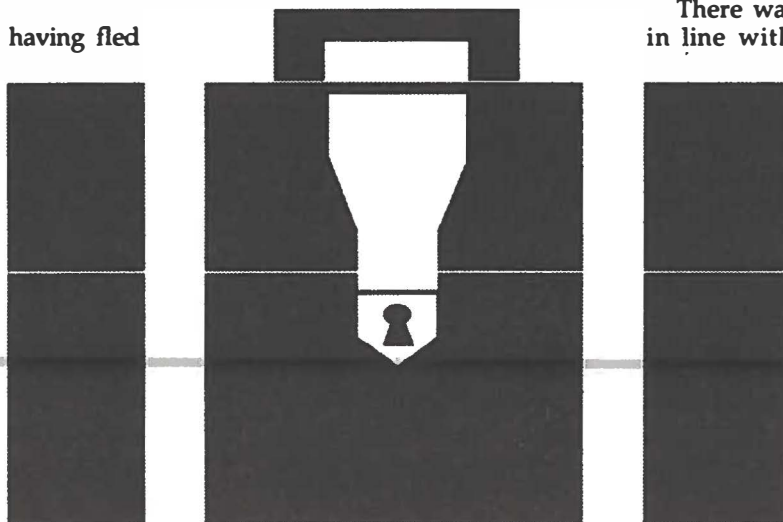
I became the lifeline of my family.

From my point of view, it actually was not so bad. The freedom to move about in the fresh air was a welcome change from our hiding place. And, in spite of frequent Gestapo raids, it was easy to get away. The flea market was a hub of resistance support; most vendors were covert sympathizers of the *brigade blanche*. At the approach of German uniforms, a whispered alarm was passed, allowing partisans a hasty retreat into the multitude of alleys. I quickly would look for other children, pretend to be one of them, and walk off in the direction they were going.

On this particular day, however, the choice of merchandise was exceptionally poor and the Germans quicker than ever. Hardly anything I found would yield a decent amount of wool, and the prices were high. Desperately trying to make the best deal possible, I continued to haggle even though the murmur was spreading. With this added pressure, I thought I could make a better deal. When I realized that the flea market was surrounded, it was too late. Soldiers had sealed off all exits.

There was nothing to do but fall in line with the others waiting to be checked by the Gestapo. As I stood there, amid much taller adults herded closely together, I felt a hand reach for mine. Then my fingers were curved firmly and urgently around some sort of handle. For a split second I froze, then my heart leaped. I dared not look or call out. The queue in which I found myself was flanked by soldiers

*continued on page 26*



## The Briefcase

*continued from page 10*

diers. Being questioned could mean disaster. What to do?

Thoughts raced through my mind. First, I had to know what I was holding. Pretending to stretch and shift my weight from leg to leg, I looked down and saw that I was holding a briefcase, not unlike the type in which children carried their schoolbooks. Was this what the Nazis were after? Was there an informer on the square who would recognize the briefcase? What did it contain? Obviously incriminating material of some sort. Could it possibly contain a list of names, of contacts? How many lives were in jeopardy should this material fall into the wrong hands? And why, of all people, was I given this briefcase? As a Jew, was I not vulnerable enough? Fear and anger were mixing in my brain, a dangerous combination. I forced myself to think rationally.

If the briefcase were entrusted to me, there had to be a reason. Most likely the owner felt that a child had the best chance of passing the checkpoint undetected. Knowing how the underground worked, I felt sure no one would have endangered my life for his or her own safety. The contents of the briefcase *had* to be of prime importance, and it was up to me to keep it safe. Despite the danger, I decided to bluff my way through. Luckily for me, the swiftness of the raid had caught a good many people and the line was long. I had time to compose myself. I convinced myself that I had been near Gestapo raids before (although never in one) and that I could get out of this one, as well. All I had to do was remain calm and look like any other child on the way home from school. Since I looked too young to require identification, I would just walk by without saying anything.

As I neared the end of the line, and saw the Gestapo officer in his infamous boots checking I.D.'s, my heart leaped. I smiled at a soldier next to me, and gave him a friendly *bonjour*. The soldier returned my smile and waved me on, admonishing me in German to "go straight home in the future and not dilly-dally in places like these." I pretended not to understand, keeping a bland look and frozen smile on my face. Was this man human? Did he have children of

his own? Relieved, I walked past, and even looked back and waved. The Gestapo officers ahead, however, had no patience for such niceties. One grabbed me and pushed me forward. Quickly and silently, I walked the rest of the gauntlet, now with the Gestapo, not mere soldiers, on either side.

My legs trembled when I finally stepped off the curb and into the street where there was no more Gestapo. It took a nearly superhuman effort not to run. My feet weighed like lead and I had difficulty lifting them onto the sidewalk once I crossed the street. I forced myself to walk. Any moment I expected a tap on the shoulder and a voice asking, "Wait up! What's in this briefcase?" The block, an ordinary city block, seemed miles long. Finally, I reached the corner and turned. Finally, I was out of sight.

As I was sitting in the recessed doorway, the incriminating briefcase past the enemy, I reviewed my options. I wanted no part of the briefcase. And, suddenly, I wanted no part of the rest of that day, of the freedom of the outdoors. Leaning back, I pushed the briefcase with my body as far away as possible.

Then, I looked around. In front of me there was a narrow street, and at the end of that street I saw Boulevard Poincare with its streetcars. I never rode the streetcars. They were a luxury we could ill afford, and more over, even the streetcars were raided by the Germans. This day, however, instinct took over. I literally flew down the street onto the Boulevard, and onto the tram stop. A streetcar was just leaving; people would think I was racing to catch it. The desire to leave the area overshadowed any fear of danger from the ride. I had to get away.

What would happen to the briefcase? What was in it? How many lives had been in danger? I would never know.

By the time I reached home, I had calmed down. To my mother's question as to what I had bought, I replied: "Nothing."

"Why?" my mother asked.

"There was a Gestapo raid," I replied as a matter of fact. Mother asked no further questions.

Never once did I mention the briefcase, nor that I had been caught in the raid. I knew I would have to return to the flea market, and there was no need to alarm my mother unnecessarily. □



# **A P P E N D I X**

**ANNOTATED VIDEOGRAPHY  
ANNOTATED WEBOGRAPHY**

**THE HOLOCAUST/HISTORICAL SUMMARY  
SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER EDUCATIONAL  
RESOURCE KIT**



**Videography**

**Webography**



## ANNOTATED VIDEOGRAPHY

The videography that follows lists videotapes by topics, beginning with videos that provide a general overview of the Holocaust. The topics are generally arranged in chronological order, beginning with videos on life before the Holocaust and continuing through ghettos and camps, to rescue, resistance, and liberation, to post-Holocaust subjects, including the war crimes trials. The videography concludes with videos on subjects related to but not directly addressing the Holocaust. An index to all annotated videos by title and subject may be found after the annotations.

Key:	D:	Documentary	ST:	Survivor Testimony
	DD:	Docu-Drama	A:	Animation
	DR:	Drama	B/W:	Black and White
	C:	Color	CC:	Closed Captioned

### Overviews of the Holocaust

#### ***Genocide, 1941-1945 (World At War Series)***

D C B/W 00:50:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #SV2

Credits: Produced and directed by Michael Darlow. 1982.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

The story of the destruction of European Jewry is told using archival footage and testimonies of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. This excellent overview has been used effectively by many teachers.

#### ***Shoah***

ST C

(Part 1) 02:00:00; (2) 02:00:00; (3) 01:50:00; (4) 02:00:00; (5) 01:56:00

Source: Available in most video stores and many libraries. Also may be purchased from the Simon Wiesenthal Center, 9760 West Pico Blvd., Yeshiva University of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90035; 310-553-9036.

Credits: Directed by Claude Lanzmann. 1985.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

This powerful film includes interviews with victims, perpetrators, and bystanders, and takes us to the locations of the Holocaust in camps, towns, and railways. The video may be segmented for classroom use.

#### ***Witness to the Holocaust***

D B/W 02:10:00 (Two video set)

Source: ADL, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017.

Credits: Produced by the Holocaust Education Project for Zachor: National Jewish Resource Center. Produced and directed by C.J. Pressma. 1984.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

This video presents a series of seven documentaries which can easily be segmented for specific topical use in the classroom. Each segment is approximately 20 minutes in length. Survivor narration is combined with photos and historic film

footage. The topics include: Rise of the Nazis, Ghetto Life, Deportations, Resistance, The Final Solution, Liberation, Reflections.

### Life before Holocaust

#### ***Image Before My Eyes***

D C B/W 01:30:00

Source: Simon Wiesenthal Center, 9760 West Pico Blvd., Yeshiva University of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90035; 310-553-9036.

Credits: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Produced by Josh Waletzky, Susan Lazarus. 1980. Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Using photographs, drawings, home movies, music, and interviews with survivors, this documentary recreates Jewish life in Poland from the late nineteenth century up to the time of its destruction during the Holocaust. The diversity of the culture is examined as well as its achievements.

#### ***The Camera of My Family. Four Generations in Germany 1845-1945*** D C B/W 00:20:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #ADL45V-J4.

Credits: Anti-Defamation League. 1991. Recommended for Middle School and High School.

Catherine Hanf Noren left Nazi Germany with her Jewish parents shortly after her birth in 1938. This effective film describes her perseverance as an adult to use old family photographs to trace her family roots through several generations. Includes guide.

#### ***The Last Chapter***

D B/W 01:25:00

Source: No distributor currently available.

Credits: Produced and directed by Benjamin and Lawrence Rothman. Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

This thorough and artistic documentary traces the history of the earliest Jewish communities in Poland through their destruction during World War II. It also examines the pogroms in the postwar period which occurred as survivors tried to return to Poland and rebuild their lives

### Perpetrators

#### ***Das Leben von Adolf Hitler (The Life of Adolf Hitler)***

D B/W 01:51:00

Source: Video Yesteryear, Box C, Sandy Hook, CT 06482; 800-243-0987. #852.

Credits: Directed by Paul Rotha. 1961.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Using archival footage, this film moves chronologically through the major events from the rise of the Nazis to their defeat by the Allies. It could be segmented for classroom use into three periods: 1933-36, 1936-39, and 1939-45.

***A New Germany 1933-1939 (The World at War Series)***

D B/W C 00:52:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #SV251V-J5.

Credits: Written and directed by Michael Darlow. 1975.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

This video traces the rise of Hitler to power and Nazi racism and antisemitic policies before the war. Photo stills and film footage are complemented by the testimonies of survivors and German perpetrators. The development and role of the Nazis' elite SS corps is highlighted.

***The Wannsee Conference***

DD C 01:26:49

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #SV443V.

Credits: Directed by Heinz Schirk. Co-production of Infafilm GmbH Munich; Manfred Korytowski, Austrian Television O.R.F.; and Bavarian Broadcasting Corporation. 1984.

Recommended for Middle School and High School.

The video dramatizes the famous conference where the leading Nazis discussed the implementation of the "Final Solution" by the German bureaucracy. An excellent film, it is in German with English subtitles.

***Hitler: The Whole Story***

D B/W 00:50:00 / 2:30:00

Source: Discovery Channel. 800-475-6636.

Credits: Produced by Weiner Rieb and directed by Joachim C. Fest and Christian Herrendoerfer. 1989.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Based on Joachim C. Fest's book *Hitler*, the film combines rare footage, photographs, and interviews. This film can be segmented into three parts for classroom use: Germany's quest for land, the "New Man" and Germania -- a vision of the future, and deportations and mass killings.

***Heil Hitler! Confessions of a Hitler Youth***

D B/W C 00:30:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #TL338V-J4.

Credits: HBO. 1991.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Eloquent Alfons Heck, a former member of Hitler Youth and now a U.S. citizen dedicated to Holocaust education, recounts the compelling story of how he became a fanatic supporter of Nazism. Documentary footage vividly demonstrates how songs, youth camps, speeches, and education turned millions of young Germans like Heck into the most fervent and loyal proponents of Nazi racism and militarism. The short length of this highly recommended film makes it especially suitable for classroom use.

***The Democrat and the Dictator***

D B/W C 00:55:00

Source: PBS Videos, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314-1698; 800-344-3337.

Credits: Produced by Betsy McCarthy. 1984.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

This film is a part of *A Second Look with Bill Moyers* and compares the personal history and style of the two major political leaders of the twentieth century, Adolf Hitler and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

**Racism, Antisemitism**

***The Longest Hatred: The History of Anti-Semitism***

D C CC 02:30:00

Source: WGBH, P.O. Box 2284, South Burlington, VT 05407-2284; 800-255-9424

Credits: Thames Television and WGBH Educational Foundation. 1993.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Drawing on interviews with Jews and antisemites as well as prominent scholars in Europe, America, and the Middle East, this excellent video traces antisemitism from its earliest manifestations to recent outbreaks in Germany and Eastern Europe. This film can be segmented for classroom use.

***Shadow on the Cross***

D C 00:52:00

Source: Landmark Media, 3450 Slade Run Drive, Falls Church, VA 22042; 800-342-4336.

Credits: CTVC Production for Channel 4, England. Produced by Ray Bruce. 1990. Recommended for High School and Adult.

This documentary film looks at the tragic story of Jewish-Christian relations over the past 2,000 years and explores the influences of historic Christian antisemitism on the Third Reich. The film is divided into two parts. Part 1 summarizes the history of religious antisemitism over the two thousand years Jews lived in Europe as a religious minority. In Part 2 theologians discuss the implications of the Holocaust for Jewish-Christian relations today. This is useful for college or high school history, political science, religion, or philosophy classes.

***Of Pure Blood***

D B/W C 01:40:00

Source: No distributor currently available.

Credits: Produced by Maryse Addison and Peter Bate. A film by Clarissa Henry and Marc Hillel. 1972.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Using historical film footage and interviews with some of Hitler's victims, this film chronicles the Nazis' attempts to create a "master race." This is an excellent film for examining the whole issue of eugenics and racism. It also helps answer the question, "How was Hitler representative of the master race when he failed to match the ideal of the tall, blond-haired, blue-eyed German?" One segment of this film portrays nudity.

## **Mosaic of Victims**

### ***More Than Broken Glass: Memories of Kristallnacht***

D ST C 00:57:00

Source: Ergo Media Inc., P.O. Box 2037, Teaneck, NJ 07666. 800-695-3746. #616.

Credits: Written, produced, and directed by Chris Pelzer. 1988.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Using archival footage, photographs, and interviews with survivors, Jewish life in Germany prior to and during the Holocaust is described. This is excellent for examining the persecution of German Jews

### ***One Survivor Remembers***

D B/W C 00:36:00

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Shop, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington DC 20024-2150; 202488-6144.

Credits: Home Box Office in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Wentworth Films, Inc. 1995.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Survivor Gerda Weissmann Klein eloquently recounts the personal story of her life before the war in Poland, her Holocaust experiences, including the painful loss of most of her family, and the suffering she endured on a final "death march" near the end of the war. Her story is told in fuller detail in her autobiography *All But My Life*.

### ***Persecuted and Forgotten***

D ST C 00:54:00

Source: EBS Productions, 360 Ritch Street, San Francisco, CA 94107; 415-495-2327.

Credits: Medienwerkstatt Franken. 1989.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

This video follows a group of German Gypsies as they return to Auschwitz after World War II. In personal accounts, Gypsies recall the "Gypsy Police," the Institute for Racial Hygiene, and the genealogical research that led to the imprisonment and murder of Gypsies during the Holocaust. The Gypsies who are interviewed also reveal the discrimination they continue to suffer.

### ***Purple Triangles***

D ST C 00:25:00

Source: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

Credits: Produced and directed by Martin Smith. 1991.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

During the Holocaust, Jehovah's Witnesses were persecuted as a religious group. Their story is told by surviving members of the Kusserow family who describe their arrest and incarceration in concentration camps, where they were identified by their purple triangles.

### ***We Were Marked with a Big "A"***

D C B/W 00:44:00

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Shop, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2150; 202-488-6144.

Credits: Directed by Elke Jeanrond and Joseph Weishaupt. 1991.  
Recommended for High School and Adult.

Little is known about the persecution of homosexuals by the Nazis. For the first time, in this effective documentary, three gay survivors tell the story of their arrests and incarceration in concentration camps. In German, with subtitles.

**Korczak**

DD B/W 02:00:00

Source: New York Films Video, 16 W, 61 st Street, New York, NY 10023; 212-247-6110. Attn.: John Montague. Rental, 16 and 35mm.

Credits: Directed by Andrzej Wajda. 1990.  
Recommended for High School and Adult.

Nominated for Best Foreign Film, this movie is based on the true story of a doctor who cared for 200 orphans in the Warsaw ghetto. Korczak refused offers of rescue for himself and insisted on remaining with the children as they were deported to their deaths at the Treblinka extermination camp. In Polish, with subtitles.

**Ghettos**

**Lodz Ghetto**

D C B/W 01:43:00

Source: Alan Adelson, Exec. Dir., Jewish Heritage Project, Inc., 150 Franklin Street, #1W, New York, NY 10003; 212-925-9067.

Credits: Produced by Alan Adelson. Directed by Alan Adelson and Kathryn Taverna. 1989.  
Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

This documentary recounts the history of one of the last ghettos to be liquidated. The film draws on written accounts by Jews in the Lodz ghetto and on photographs, slides, and rare film footage. The book *Lodz Ghetto: Inside a Community Under Siege* may be effectively paired with the video.

**The Warsaw Ghetto**

00:51:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #BVI03V.

Credits: B.B.C. Production. 1969.  
Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Narrated by a ghetto survivor, this documentary uses historic film footage made by the Nazis and shows the creation of the ghetto, early Nazi propaganda, scenes from everyday life, and the final weeks of resistance before the ghetto was liquidated.

**Camps**

**Auschwitz: If You Cried, You Died**

D C B/W 00:28:00

Source: Impact America Foundation, Inc. c/o Martin J. Moore, 9100 Keystone at the Crossing, Suite 390, Indianapolis, IN 46240-2158; 317-848-5134.

Credits: Impact America Foundation. 1991, 1993.  
Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Two survivors recount their experiences in Auschwitz after returning there with family members. Combined with historic footage, this is a moving commentary on prejudice. It also discusses Holocaust deniers. Teacher's guide available.

***Night and Fog***

D B/W 00:32:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #VY I OOV

Credits: Directed by Alain Resnais. 1955.

Recommended for Adult.

This award-winning, highly artistic documentary uses historic footage shot inside Nazi concentration camps and contrasts them with contemporary color scenes. The film includes very graphic footage. Attempting to universalize the Holocaust, the film never identifies the victims as Jews. In French, with English subtitles.

***Triumph of Memory***

D ST C 00:30:00

Source: PBS Video, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314-1698; 800-344-3337.

Credits: Produced and directed by Robert Gardner. Executive Producers, Sister Carol Rittner, R.S.M., and Sondra Myers. 1972.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Non-Jewish resistance fighters sent to Nazi concentration camps bear witness to the atrocities that took place in Mauthausen, Buchenwald, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. This film is divided into three parts, which can be segmented for classroom use: initiation to the camps, daily life in the camps, and genocide. This is an excellent film for increased understanding of the Holocaust and life in the camps. It also includes a discussion of the victimization of Gypsies in the camp.

**Resistance**

***Flames in the Ashes***

D ST B/W 01:30:00

Source: Ergo Media, Inc., P.O. Box 2037, Teaneck, NJ 07666; 800-695-3746.

Credits: A Ghetto Fighters' House Release. Produced by Monia Avrahami. 1986.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Historic, seldom seen footage tells the story of the variety of ways that Jews resisted the Nazis. Both murderers and resistance fighters tell the story. In Hebrew, Yiddish, French, Italian, and Polish, with subtitles.

***Partisans of Vilna***

D C B/W 02:10:00

Source: National Center for Jewish Film, Brandeis University, Lown 102, Waltham, MA 02254; 617-899-7044. #M5053.

e-mail: ncjf@logos.cc.brandeis.edu

website: [www.brandeis.edu/jewishfilm/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/jewishfilm/index.html).

Credits: Produced by Aviva Kempner. Directed by Josh Waletzky. 1987.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Featuring 40 interviews with survivors, this moving, informative film tells the story of Jewish resistance in the Vilna ghetto. Music sung in the ghetto and resistance, as well as interesting archival film footage, add greatly to the production. The film documents well the moral dilemmas and difficulties the resisters faced both inside the ghetto and later, in relations with non-Jews in partisan camps in the forests. It also shows the prominent role women played in the Vilna resistance. An important film best suited for more advanced students of the Holocaust. In Hebrew, Yiddish, and English, with subtitles.

### **Rescue**

#### ***The Courage to Care***

D C B/W 00:28:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #ADLI50V.

Credits: Produced and directed by Robert Gardner; Executive Producers, Sister Carol Rittner, R.S.M., and Sondra Meyers. 1986.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Nominated in 1986 for an Academy Award for best short documentary film, the film encounters ordinary people who refused to succumb to Nazi tyranny and reached out to help victims of the Holocaust.

#### ***The Other Side of Faith***

D ST C 00:27:00

Source: Documentaries International Film and Video Foundation, 1800 K Street, N.W., Suite 1120, Washington, DC 20006; 202-429-9320.

Credits: Produced by Sy Rotter. 1990.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Filed on location in Przemsyl, Poland, this first-person narrative tells of a courageous sixteen-year-old Catholic girl who, for two-and-a-half years, hid thirteen Jewish men, women, and children in the attic of her home.

#### ***Raoul Wallenberg: Between the Lines***

D ST C B/W 01:25:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #SV996V.

Credits: Written and directed by Karin Altmann. 1985.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat, was responsible for saving thousands of lives. Friends, family, and former members of his staff describe Wallenberg's efforts to confront the Nazi destruction of Hungarian Jewry. The video also examines the controversy surrounding his arrest and imprisonment in 1945 by the Soviets. Historic film footage is used.

#### ***Au Revoir Les Enfants (Goodbye, Children)***

DD C 01:03:00

Source: Orion Home Video, 1888 Century Park East, Los Angeles, CA 90067; 310-282-2576

Credits: Produced and directed by Louis Malle. 1987.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Based on Malle's own experiences in a French boarding school during the German occupation, this moving film documents the friendship between a 12 year-old Catholic boy and a Jewish youngster being sheltered at the school by a priest. The movie ends with the betrayal of the hidden child's identity to the Gestapo and his arrest, along with the priest. In French, with subtitles.

***Schindler's List***

DD B/W C 03:17:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #MCA172V-J5.

Credits: Directed by Steven Spielberg. Adapted from Thomas Keneally's fictionalized account of a true story. 1993.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

Shot on location in Poland in stark black-and-white, this compelling Oscar-winning film tells the story of German businessman Oskar Schindler who saved more than 1000 Jews from deportation and death. The book *Schindler's List* by Thomas Keneally chronicles the story more fully and with the greater nuance that a written account allows. Contains graphic violence, strong language, and nudity.

***Weapons of the Spirit***

D C 00:38:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #ADL156V.

Credits: Written, produced, and directed by Pierre Sauvage. 1988.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

This is the story of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, a small Protestant village in south-central France, and how its predominantly Protestant citizens responded to the Nazi threat against the Jews. Residents of the area hid and cared for 5,000 Jews, many of them children.

**American and International Responses**

***Auschwitz and the Allies***

D ST C B/W 01:53:00

Source: No distributor currently available.

Credits: B.B.C. Production. Martin Gilbert, Consultant. 1980.

Recommended for High School and Adult. Could be segmented for use in Middle School.

This film examines the responses of Allied governments as well as those of the International Red Cross, the Jewish community, and the victims. There are also many interviews with historic figures. This excellent film can be segmented for classroom use.

***Safe Haven***

D ST C 00:57:40

Source: No distributor currently available.

Credits: VMI-TV, Rochester, NY. Produced and directed by Paul Lewis. 1987.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

*Safe Haven* tells the story of America's only refugee camp for victims of Nazi terror. Nearly 1,000 refugees were brought to Oswego, N.Y., and incarcerated in a camp known as Fort Ontario for eighteen months.

***Who Shall Live and Who Shall Die?***

D B/W 01:30:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-4214246. #KN103V-J4.

Credits: Produced by James R. Kurth and Laurence Jarvik; directed by Laurence Jarvik. 1982.  
Recommended for High School and Adult.

This film examines American responses to the Holocaust with particular attention to the actions (or failures to act) of American Jewish leaders. It is a detailed, informative presentation of a complex topic, with oral testimony from a wide range of Jews and non-Jews involved with the issue of Jewish rescue. Indispensable for more advanced students of the Holocaust. Graphic images.

***America and the Holocaust: Deceit and Indifference***

D B/W C 01:00:00

Source: PBS Video, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314-1698; 800-344-3337.

Credits: Produced by Marty Ostrow. 1994.  
Recommended for High School and Adult.

This film focuses mostly on the responses of Roosevelt, the State Department, and other U.S. government leaders to the Nazis' persecution and mass murder of European Jews. Weaving together interviews, official photos and documents, home movies, and archival footage, the production is especially good at tracing the complex social and political factors that shaped American responses to the Holocaust. The history is interwoven with the moving personal story of Jewish refugee Kurt Klein, who failed in his efforts to obtain visas for his parents to follow him to the United States.

***The Double Crossing. The Voyage of the St. Louis***

D B/W C 00:29:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802. 8004214246. #ER 11 OV-J4.

Credits: A production of the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois and Loyola University of Chicago. Produced by Elliot Lefkowitz and Nancy Partos, 1992.  
Recommended for High School and Adult.

More than 900 Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany in 1939 on the luxury cruise ship the SS *St. Louis* were denied entry to Cuba and the United States and forced to return to Europe. In interviews interwoven with archival footage and photos, surviving passengers relive their voyage. The general issues this highly recommended film addresses – racism, quota systems for refugees, and immigration policies – remain urgent ones today.

***The Boat is Full***

DR B/W 01:44:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #FJIOOV-J4.

Credits: Produced by George Reinhart, Limbo Films, Inc., in coproduction with SRG, ZDF, ORE  
Directed by Markus Imhoo. 1980.  
Recommended for High School and Adult.

In 1942 the Swiss government, alarmed at the vast numbers of people fleeing Nazi Germany, established stringent immigration policies as they declared the country's

"lifeboat" full. Nominated for an Academy Award for best foreign film, this suspenseful drama tells the story of a group of refugees forced back to the border by ordinary citizens too frightened or indifferent to take them in. In German, with English subtitles.

### **Liberation**

#### ***Holocaust: Liberation of Auschwitz***

D B/W C 00:18:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #EBE 296 V.

Credits: Encyclopedia Britannica. 1990.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

The liberation of Auschwitz is filmed by Soviets, who linger on the faces of the inmates. Commentary describes the selection process, medical experiments, and daily life at Auschwitz. Soviet cameraman Alexander Vorontsov shares his impressions of the liberation. Highly graphic footage is included.

#### ***Liberation 1945: Testimony***

D B/W C 01:16:00

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, Washington, DC 20024-2150; 202-488-6144.

Credits: Produced by Sandy Bradley, Wentworth Films, in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. 1995.

This film includes expanded eyewitness testimony produced for the Museum's special exhibition *Liberation 1945*. Jewish survivors and Allied liberators recall how they felt at liberation and describe conditions inside the camps, including difficulties faced by medical relief teams working in the liberated camps. Survivors interned in displaced persons camps describe the organization of those camps and their efforts both to find surviving family members and, by marrying, to establish new families.

#### ***Opening the Gates of Hell***

D B/W C 00:45:00

Source: Ergo Media Inc., P.O. Box 2037, Teaneck, NJ 07666; 800-695-3746.

Credits: Production of the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois and Loyola University of Chicago. Directed by Timothy Roberts. 1992.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

American liberators of the Nazi concentration camps share their memories of what they saw. Interviews are effectively combined with historic photos and footage showing the camps that were liberated by Americans: Buchenwald, Nordhausen, Dachau, Landsberg, and Mauthausen. The video includes graphic footage.

### **Post-Holocaust**

#### ***The Last Sea***

D B/W 01:30:00

Source: Ergo Media Inc., P.O. Box 2037, Teaneck, NJ 07666; 800-695-3746.

Credits: A Ghetto Fighters' House Release. Film by Haim Gouri, Jacquot Ehrlich, and David Bergman. 1987.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

The dramatic story of the postwar Jewish exodus from Europe to Israel is told using historic film footage. Finding themselves without family or homes to return to, many chose to make the hazardous journey by truck, by train, on foot, and finally on overcrowded boats.

***Murderers Among Us: The Simon Wiesenthal Story***

DR C 02:57:55

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #Yv1V I 17V.

Credits: HBO Pictures, Robert Cooper Production. Produced by John Kemeny and Robert Cooper. 1988.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

This is the true story of a Holocaust survivor who committed himself in the years after liberation to the task of hunting Nazis and bringing them to justice. This video can be effectively paired with the book *The Sunflower*. It is also useful for examining the response to the Holocaust in the postwar period.

***Nazi War Crime Trials***

D B/W 01:07:00

Source: Video Images, Box C, Sandy Hook, CT 06482; 800-243-0987.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

This vintage film made in 1945 uses newsreels and documentary footage to show the fate of Goering, Hess, Schacht, Streicher, Keitel, and other Nazis who were brought to trial after the war.

**Related Films**

***The Hangman***

A C 00:12:00

Source: CRM, 2215 Faraday, Suite F, Carlsbad, CA 92008; 800-421-0833.

Credits: Melrose Productions. 1964.

Recommended for Middle School and High School.

Animation is used to illustrate the poem by Maurice Ogden about a town in which the people are hanged one by one by a mysterious hangman while the town stands by rationalizing each victimization. This may be useful in introducing the subject of individual responsibility and the role of the bystander in the Holocaust.

***Obedience***

D B/W 00:45:00

Source: Penn State Audio-Visuals Service; 800-826-0132. Rent or purchase.

Credits: Produced by Stanley Milgram. 1962.

Recommended for Middle School and High School.

This documentary shows the experiment conducted at Yale University testing the willingness of people to follow orders which required inflicting pain on another. This film may be used to provoke discussions on morality and responsibility. It has been used effectively with films on the Nuremberg Trials or the trial of Adolf Eichmann, where the standard defense was that the criminals had only been following orders.

***The Wave***

DR C 00:46:00

Source: Zenger Video, 10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232-0802; 800-421-4246. #FLM252V

Credits: Embassy Films. 1984.

Recommended for Middle School and High School.

This film recreates a classroom experiment done by a high school teacher who set up strict rules and behavior codes in an effort to show how peer pressure, conformity, and loyalty could work in a classroom the same way they had in Nazi Germany. This film may be used together with lessons on the rise of Nazism.

***The Forgotten Genocide***

D ST B/W C CC 00:28:00

Source: Atlantis Productions, 1252 La Granada Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362; 805-495-2790.

Credits: Written, produced, and directed by J. Michael Hagopian, Ph.D. 1975.

Recommended for Middle School, High School, and Adult.

Nominated for an Emmy, this is a shortened version of *The Armenian Case*, which documents the Armenian genocide that took place during and after World War I. Personal narrative is included with historic photos and film footage.

**United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

***For the Living***

D C 01:00:00

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, Washington, DC 20024-2150; 202-488-6144.

Credits: Produced by WETA, Washington. 1993.

Recommended for High School and Adult.

This film documents the creation, design, and building of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Combining archival film footage and photos with on-location scenes at former Nazi camps in Poland, the video shows how the Museum's exhibits tell the story of both victims and survivors of the Holocaust. This film works best as an orientation for visitors to the Museum.

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. *Teaching About the Holocaust: A Resource Book for Educators*. Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Reprinted by permission of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.



## ANNOTATED WEBOGRAPHY OF THE HOLOCAUST

<http://holocaust.fiu.edu>

*State of Florida Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education Web Site.* Includes links to Florida District Holocaust Coordinators and Holocaust Task Force affiliated centers in Florida. Task Force mission is to assist school district professional and support staff in the implementation of Florida Statute 233.061, Required Public School Instruction of the History of the Holocaust.

<http://www.ushmm.org/> [for the Student Outreach Site (authorization required) -- <http://www.ushmm.org/outreach/>]

*The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum homepage.* Includes information about: background history and statistics of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, how to plan a visit to the Museum, Museum membership, community programs, films and lectures, conferences for educators, guidelines for teaching about the Holocaust, historical summaries, a videography for teachers, answers to five frequently asked questions about the Holocaust, Holocaust Resource Centers nationwide, and a searchable database of the Research Institute's archives and Library.

<http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/>

*Yad Vashem.* Homepage for Israel's Museum and Memorial to the victims of the Holocaust. Currently under construction, and contains primarily general information, some photographs and excerpts from survivor testimony transcripts. There are educational materials available in Hebrew.

<http://www.wiesenthal.com/>

*The Simon Wiesenthal Center homepage.* Headquartered in Los Angeles, the Simon Wiesenthal Center is an international center for Holocaust remembrance, and the defense of human rights and the Jewish people. Contains answers to thirty-six frequently asked questions about the Holocaust, biographies of children who experienced the Holocaust, updates on current events, information on hate groups on the Net, and information about the Center and the Museum of Tolerance. Much of this information is available in several languages including Spanish, German and Italian.

<Http://wahoo.netrunner.net/~holomem/>

*Homepage of the Holocaust Memorial Garden in Miami Beach, Florida.* This site is a virtual tour of the *Holocaust Memorial Garden*, designed by Kenneth Treister. It serves as a memorial to those who died in the Holocaust and have no formal graves.

<http://www.facing.org/>

*Facing History and Ourselves Homepage.* Facing History and Ourselves is a national educational and professional development organization whose mission is to engage



<http://www.hooked.net/users/rgreene/>

*The Holocaust Album: A Collection of Historical and Contemporary Photographs.* is a homepage of rotating collections by Dr. Ron Greene that presently contains two main sections. One is called Visas For Life: The Remarkable Story of Chiune and Yukiko Sugihara which recreates a major exhibition of photos and text that tells the story of Sugihara's rescue of European Jews. The other is an exhibit with text that tells the story of liberation of the camps accompanied by photos of survivors revisiting Germany 50 years later.

<http://sorrel.humboldt.edu/~rescuers/>

*To Save a Life--Stories of Jewish Rescue.* Written and maintained by Ellen Land-Weber, this site contains excerpts from an unpublished book about the rescue of Jews during the Holocaust. It features personal narratives and photographs of rescuers.

<http://www.vhf.org/>

*Survivors of the Shoah.* The Visual History Foundation created by Steven Spielberg has recorded more than 25,000 videotaped interviews with Holocaust survivors. These are being recorded electronically for computer distribution to museums, CD-ROMs and other sites. You can find out more about it at this web site.

<http://www.logos.com/holocaust/main.html>

*Lest We Forget-- A History of the Holocaust.* This web site is about a CD-ROM from Logos Research Systems documenting the historical events. The CD-ROM costs \$59.95 and can be ordered by calling 1(800)87-LOGOS.

<http://www.annefrank.com/>

*Anne Frank Online.* This site is dedicated to everything about the Nazis' most famous victim.

<http://www.intrescom.org>

Founded in 1933 at the request of Albert Einstein, the *International Rescue Committee* (IRC) is the leading nonsectarian voluntary organization providing relief, protection, and resettlement service for refugees and victims of oppression or violent conflict. The IRC is committed freedom, human dignity, and self-reliance.

<http://www2.ca.nizkor.org/~klewis>

A history of the Einsatzgruppen killing units as seen through documents, images, and testimonies of victims and perpetrators.

<http://www3.umassd.edu/cybered/usersuite/>

Click on Current Courses; click on the Holocaust. *CyberEd Course on the Holocaust.* From the University of Massachusetts, this course includes online sites as part of the course of study about the Holocaust.

students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and antisemitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry. At the present time, their homepage offers basic information about their programs and resources.

<http://www.remember.org>

Homepage of the *Cybrary of the Holocaust*. At the time of this writing, The Cybrary is probably the largest web site on the Holocaust. It contains a collection of Encyclopedic information, answers to frequently asked questions, curriculum outlines (including a lesson plan on Anne Frank), excerpts from survivor testimony, transcripts of Nazi speeches and official documents, artifact photos, historical photos, artwork, poetry, books written by survivors, links to other Holocaust sites, and more. Both audio clips and transcripts of survivor testimony and interviews with scholars are available. Some of the recent additions to this site include photo tours of Auschwitz, genealogy tracing information, and online chats with scholars. As is the case with most servers on the Web, this one is under continuous construction and continues to grow.

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~baustin/holo.html>

*Ben Austin's Holocaust Page*. Ben Austin of Middle Tennessee State University put together this web site which contains a large amount of historical information, including sections specifically on Roma (Gypsies), homosexuals, and the International Military Tribunal. Austin frequently cites sources for his information which may aid students who decide to search for sources outside of the Internet.

<http://www.charm.net/~rbennett/l'chaim.html>

*L'Chaim: A Holocaust Web Project*. Developed and maintained by Robert J. Bennett, a graduate student at the University of Baltimore, this site highlights a virtual tour of Dachau which incorporates photographs and text from primary sources, excerpts from the survivor's book, and links to other major sites on the Holocaust. Still under construction.

<http://www.tulane.edu/~so-inst/>

*Southern Institute for Education and Research at Tulane University*. This impressive web site highlights antibias education training resources for combating prejudice. It includes: information about diversity training workshops, Holocaust education and civil rights workshops and lesson plans (including excerpts from an on-line lesson plan on *Schindler's List* and one on "everyday people" during the Holocaust), transcripts of Holocaust survivor testimony, and links to other sites on civil rights, human rights, the Holocaust, Judaism/Jewish history, and African-American history/culture.

<http://www.library.yale.edu/testimonies/homepage.html>

*Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies*. Contains general information about the archive and how to use it, as well as audio and video clips of several testimonies from survivors, liberators, rescuers and bystanders.

[http://www.yahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/History/20th\\_Century/Holocaust\\_The/](http://www.yahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/History/20th_Century/Holocaust_The/)

*Yahoo's Holocaust Listings.* Here's a pointer to many Holocaust resources.

<news:soc.culture.jewish.holocaust>

An Internet discussion group (not a web site) about the Holocaust.

<http://www.fcit.coedu.usf.edu/Holocaust/>

*A Teacher's Guide To The Holocaust.* An Overview for Teachers which includes a timeline, people, the arts, student activities, teacher resources.

<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~holoweb>

*H-Holocaust.* Allows scholars of the Holocaust to communicate with each other. Makes available diverse bibliographical, research and teaching aids.

<http://www.adl.org/>

*Anti-Defamation League*, an organization founded in 1913 to fight antisemitism through programs and services that counteract hatred, prejudice and bigotry. The mission of the ADL is "to stop the defamation of Jewish people, to secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike."

<http://www.spectacle.org/695/ausch.html>

*An Auschwitz Alphabet.* Vocabulary of the Holocaust.

<http://www.historychannel.com>

*History Channel.*

<http://www.holocaust.miningco.com> [<http://www.holocaust.miningco.com/msub5.htm> contains educational resources]

*The Mining Company.* Includes Holocaust vocabulary, timeline, links to other sites, bulletin boards, chatrooms, bookstore, photographs, poetry.

<http://www.annefrank.nl>

*The Anne Frank House* in Amsterdam.

<http://www.raoul-wallenberg.com/>

The official site about *Raoul Wallenberg*, one of the greatest rescuers during the Holocaust.

<http://www.qfh.org.il/>

*Ghetto Fighters' House.* Holocaust and Jewish Resistance Heritage Museum in Israel.

<http://www.ellisland.org>

*Ellis Island Home Page.*

<http://www.socialstudies.com>

*Social Studies School Service.* An on-line catalog.

<http://www.iearn.org/hgp/>

*I\*EARN Holocaust/Genocide Project.* An international nonprofit telecommunications project focusing on the study of the Holocaust and other genocides. Involves participating schools around the world.

<http://www.splcenter.org/teachingtolerance.html>

*Southern Poverty Law Center. Teaching Tolerance project* started in 1991 in response to alarming increase in hate crime among youth. Offers free or low-cost resources to educators at all levels.

<http://www.maven.co.il/subjects/idx178.htm>

*Holocaust and Antisemitism.*

<http://www.hatewatch.org>

*Hate Watch* is a web-based organization that monitors the growing and evolving threat of hate group activity on the Internet.

<http://www.mol.org>

Official website of the *March of the Living*.

<http://www.hrusa.org>

*Human Rights USA* suggests ideas and tools for advocating and protecting human rights. Encourages community-based action.

**Sources:**

Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc.  
Dr. Miriam Klein Kassenoff, Holocaust Specialist, Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
The Miami Herald  
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

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## **Holocaust Enrichment and the Internet**

Below are eleven web sites about the Holocaust and World War II. Click on any link that may interest you, take notes, and write a report or do an oral presentation about what you have learned.

### **1. Hitler**

(<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/riseofhitler/index.htm>)

This site offers a wealth of information about Hitler and his rise to power.

### **2. Anne Frank: Her Life and Times**

(<http://www.annefrank.com/anne/anne.html>)

This site tells about the story of Anne's diary, the publishing of the diary, and the authenticity of the diary. It also gives selected entries of the diary to read. \*Select and read the topics above. Present information to the class.

### **3. Holocaust and Children**

([http://www.ushmm.org/misc-bin/add\\_goback/education/children.html](http://www.ushmm.org/misc-bin/add_goback/education/children.html))

This site is about children and the Holocaust.

### **4. Soldiers of WW II**

(<http://www.surfsouth.com/~the70th/wingen2.txt>)

This site has an account of John A. Hallers of a battle in France.

\*Read and complete the activity sheet. Present information to class.

### **5. Women Photographers of World War II 1**

(<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/wcf/wcf0002.html>)

This site gives some background information about women journalists. \*Read, take notes, and write a brief summary of what you have learned. Present to the class.

### **6. Women Photographers of World War II 2**

(<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/wcf/wcf0007.html>)

This site features information about photographer Therese Booney. Examine some of her work.

\*Scroll down through the site until you find the title of the photographs listed on the activity sheet.

View the photos and complete the activity sheet. Present what you have learned to the class.

### **7. Women Photographers of World War II 3**

(<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/wcf/wcf0013.html>)

This site features information about photographer Dorothea Lange. Examine some of her work.

\*Scroll down through the site until you find the title of the photographs listed on the activity sheet.

View the photos and complete the activity sheet. Present what you have learned to the class.

Below are four web sites with different images to look at. The last is a glossary of Holocaust terms.

**8. Holocaust 1 (<http://remember.org/courage/pictures.html>)**

Pictures from Warsaw Ghetto (places all Jews were forced to live surrounded by barbed wire or walls)

Click on pictures to bring the image up close.

**9. Holocaust 2 (<http://remember.org/jacobs/index.html>)**

Auschwitz~Birkenau (concentration camp in Poland) images

Scroll down and click on first image. Read and follow direction arrows to the end.

**10. Holocaust 3 (<http://www.remember.org/image/images.html>)**

Images of Concentration Camps in Europe

Click on links to view images. There are lots of links here and are in this order:

- \*Before the Storm (election of Hitler - 1932)
- \*It Starts (the beginnings of the Holocaust)
- \*Shoah (Hebrew word for catastrophe)
- \*Liberation (the end and what the world found)

**11. Holocaust 4 (<http://www.wiesenthal.com/resource/gloss.htm>)**

This is a Holocaust glossary of terms, places, and personalities. It is great to look up any word that is new to you while reading Holocaust literature.

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### Anne Frank Online

URL: <http://www.annefrank.com/>

Here you will find information about a traveling exhibit detailing the life and times of Anne Frank. There is also a growing set of exhibits. One can read excerpts from Anne's diary or see photos of her early childhood and life during the war.

### Anti-Defamation League

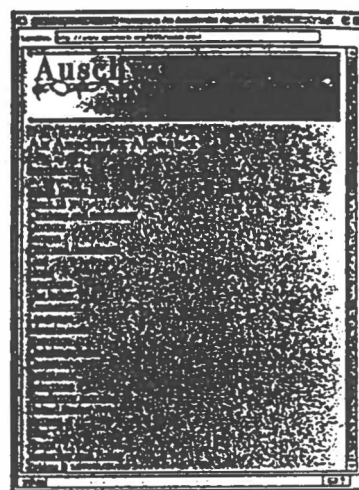
URL: <http://www.adl.org/>

This organization devoted to combating anti-Semitism, discrimination, and bias in general publishes a wide range of resources for teaching about diversity and prejudice reduction. Find out more about their World of Difference Institute — a diversity training and consulting organization, specializing in anti-bias education.

### An Auschwitz Alphabet

URL: <http://www.spectacle.org/695/ausch.html>

Written by an American Jew whose grandparents immigrated to the United States before the Holocaust, this alphabet represents the author's "own selection . . . of the most significant facets of life and death in Auschwitz." For each letter of the alphabet, one Auschwitz-related term or concept has been selected and described. For example, *N* stands for nutrition and describes the prisoners' meager diet and the desperate measures they took in the attempt to keep themselves nourished. Assign each student a letter; they can research the letters' topics and report to the class on that aspect of Auschwitz.



### The Beast Within — An Interdisciplinary Unit

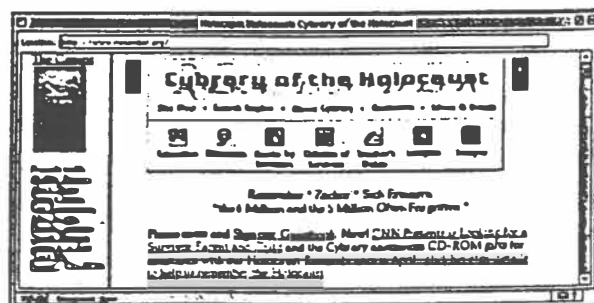
URL: <http://www.fred.net/nhhs/html/beast.htm>

This unit involves a study of the darker side of human nature as explored by the literature and history of the 20th century. Includes sample essay questions and ideas for a thematic unit which will bring your faculty together. Here is a great way to introduce important issues for your students at the same time that you integrate their study of math, science, social studies, and language arts.

### Cybrary of the Holocaust

URL: <http://www.remember.org>

A collaborative project rich in original content. Includes survivors' journals and excerpted books which can be ordered online. Also see the hypertext journal of Stuart Nichols' visit to Auschwitz. Have



## Appendix A Annotated Web Sites with Integration Ideas

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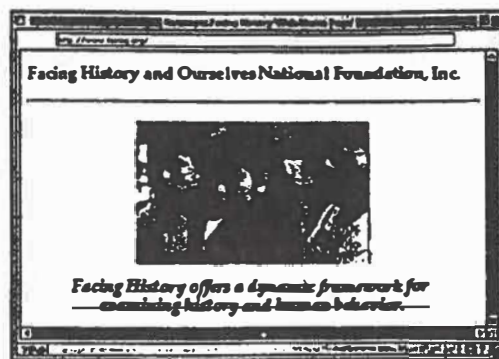


students take the virtual tour "Abe's Story" to gain insight on the Holocaust from a first-hand point of view.

### The Ernest and Elisabeth Cassutto Memorial Page — Survivors of the Holocaust

URL: <http://www.fred.net/nhhs/html3/dadmom.htm>

The son of two Holocaust survivors created this site in memory of his parents. It includes brief accounts of their experiences, two of his own poems, and links to other Holocaust sites. Have students compare the story of Elisabeth Cassutto to that of Anne Frank or use Elisabeth's story as an introduction to research on hiding places during the Holocaust. Write to the author to find out why his parents converted to Christianity after living through the war as Jews.



### Facing History and Ourselves

URL: <http://www.facing.org>

Facing History and Ourselves is a national organization whose mission is to engage students and teachers of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and anti-Semitism. Facing History provides teachers with staff development in the form of workshops, institutes, and seminars.

### Hate Watch

URL: <http://hatewatch.org/>

This organization monitors the growing and evolving threat of hate group activity on the Internet. It has become a leading authority noted for its objectivity, currency, and bibliographic completeness. Have students read the definition of a hate group at the bottom of the "What Is Hate Watch" page and explain how that applies to one of the groups linked from these pages. Do the students agree that the Internet allows these groups to proliferate?

### The History Place — The Rise of Adolf Hitler

URL: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/riseofhitler/index.htm>

Hitler's life from birth until his rise to dictatorship is chronicled in a clickable timeline. Each segment describes Hitler's role in German political life and illustrates the steps that led to his rise to power. Ask students to list all the points in Hitler's life when they think something could have been done to stop his ascendancy and to state why he wasn't stopped. Have students read about Hitler's boyhood (the first three or four sections) and list the incidents or traits that hint at his malicious personality later in life.



## Appendix A Annotated Web Sites with Integration Ideas





### **The Holocaust Album: Historical and Contemporary Photographs**

URL: <http://www.hooked.net/users/rgreene/index.html>

Features two photo-essays including "Visas For Life: The Remarkable Story of Chiune and Yukiko Sugihara" and "The Death March of 1945." Have students read about the death march and view the photographs of survivors who returned 50 years later. They can write essays on the photos which they find most moving/intriguing/interesting. Make sure they explain the rationale for their choices.

### **Holocaust Pictures Exhibition**

URL: <http://modb.oe.ac.be/schmitz/holocaust.html>

This site contains many high-quality photographs, but many of them are too graphic and disturbing for young children, and should only be used at the teacher's discretion. Others, however, subtly but poignantly illustrate the day-to-day humiliations that Jews faced. Ask students to write essays on their reactions to a photograph.

### **Holocaust/Shoah**

URL: <http://www.igc.org/ddickerson/holocaust.html>

This site provides links to numerous Holocaust sources on the Internet. Students can use this site as a starting point for research.



### **Holocaust Studies Center (Bronx High School)**

URL: <http://www.bxscience.edu/orgs/holocaust/index.html>

This site has many image resources for student projects. You can view the original artwork of a Holocaust survivor and look into the center's vast collection of propaganda posters. Have your students write a brief essay on the forms of symbolism used in these posters.

### **The Holocaust —The View From the Heartland**

URL: <http://www.staff.uiuc.edu/~jkelly1/holohome.html>

The documentary film featured in this site explores the question of how much people in small-town Illinois in the late 1930s and early 1940s knew about the Holocaust. The site includes a portion of the film's script, reviews of the film, and interviews with several Illinois residents who remember the Holocaust era. After exploring this site, students can research their local newspapers from the 1930s to see what mention was made, if any, of the German persecution of Jews.



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## Holocaust — Understanding and Prevention

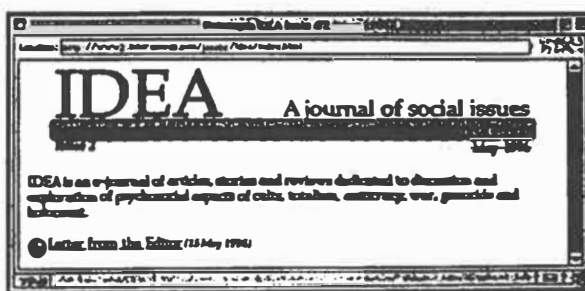
URL: <http://haven.ios.com/~kimel19/>

Organized and written by a Holocaust survivor, this moving site is filled with firsthand insights and stories. Have your students read through some of his personal reflections like "I almost killed the Angel of Death" and compose a thoughtful email response to the author.

## IDEA — A Journal of Social Issues

URL: <http://www2.interaccess.com/jacobs/idea/index.html>

An electronic publication created for the exchange of ideas related mainly to cults, mass movements, autocratic power, war, genocide, holocaust, and murder. Advanced students can read Alan Jacob's May 1996 article on "Autocratic Power" and then compose a letter to the author with their own comments and reflections.



## I\*EARN Holocaust Genocide Project

URL: <http://www.igc.apc.org/iearn/hgp/>

An international, nonprofit, telecommunications project focusing on study of the Holocaust and other incidents of genocide. It brings together schools in the United States, Israel, Australia, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Cambodia, Argentina, Romania, Russia, and South Africa, and includes information on how to become involved. Have students read what it is like to be the child of a survivor in the May 1995 issue of their online journal *An End to Intolerance*. Then have them interview a relative about a traumatic event in that person's life.



## L'Chaim A Holocaust Web Project

URL: <http://www.charm.net/~rbennett/l'chaim.html>

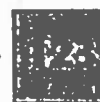
Links to other interesting Web sites including François Schmaltz's online gallery of Holocaust photographs. Students can take the Virtual Tour of Dachau to learn more about the design and function of the camp.

## Literature of the Holocaust

URL: <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/Holocaust/holhome.html>

Resources for teaching about the Holocaust including original documents, images, recent news events, links to other sites, and a reading list for a university level course on the subject. Students can link to the page of recent news and write a brief summary of a current event related to the Holocaust.

## Appendix A Annotated Web Sites with Integration Ideas

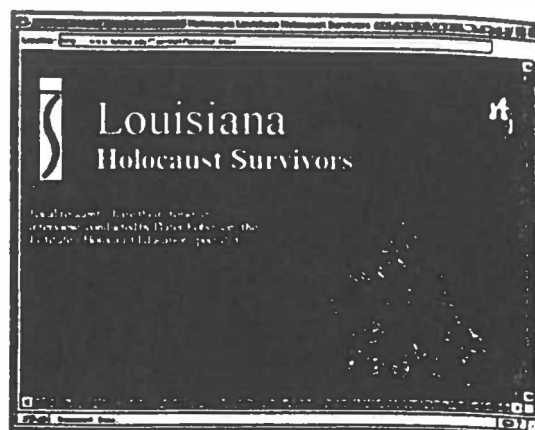




### Louisiana Holocaust Survivors

URL: <http://www.tulane.edu/~so-inst/laholsur.html>

A subsection of the Southern Institute for Education and Research Web site, these pages link to interviews with Holocaust survivors. Have students choose one of the five individuals, read through their story, and make a presentation to the rest of the class "as if" they were that person.



### The Making of a Skinhead

URL: <http://www.wiesenthal.com/tj/index.html>

The Simon Wiesenthal Center hosts this Web page about T.J. Leyden, a former skinhead who now talks to children and adults about his years as a white supremacist, about the psychology of hate groups, and about how to avoid the influence of these groups. The viewer can read T.J.'s personal story, articles about him, students' questions to him, and ask questions via email. Have students read T.J.'s testimony and prepare pamphlets, public service announcements, or other media presentations encouraging young people not to get involved with hate groups.

### March of the Living

URL: <http://www.bonder.com/march.html>

The March of the Living is an annual journey where thousands of teens from around the world travel to Poland and Israel. The purpose of this trip is to give students a firsthand look at history and the evils of mankind. Your students can take the "virtual tour" and read other student essays, poems, and reflections about their visits to the Nazi concentration camps. Have them prepare a class presentation on a poem or story that they found moving or interesting.



### The Nizkor Project

URL: <http://nizkor.org/>

This site is dedicated to discussion of the Holocaust and Holocaust denial. It includes FAQs (frequently asked questions) on Holocaust denial, a discussion and refutation of the deniers' claims, an FTP archive of Holocaust-related documents, and links to other sites. Have students read information on Holocaust denial, such as The Leuchter FAQ, and then hold a class discussion on the issue of why some people are attempting to deny that the Holocaust happened.



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### Raoul Wallenberg

URL: <http://www.algonet.se/~hatikva/wallenberg/>

This site honors the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Nazi occupation, but who disappeared at the end of the war never to be heard from since. Have your students read through this thoughtful online biography and write a brief report on the man and his deeds.



### Reach and Teach — Worldwide Holocaust Education

URL: <http://rio.com/~holcaust/>

A group of Holocaust survivors, their offspring, and educators whose "primary aim is to reach out to individuals, particularly the younger generation, and to teach, educate, and inform them about the Holocaust, the *Kindertransport* and related World War II historical facts. This is done both via computer as well as by personal appearances." Students interested in the situation of "children in the Holocaust" should view the information here on the *Kindertransport*.

### The Simon Wiesenthal Center

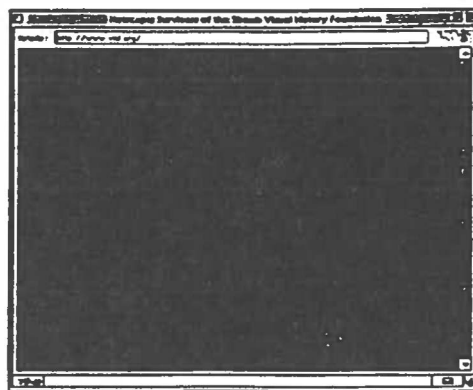
URL: <http://www.wiesenthal.com/index.html>

This site highlights the Wiesenthal Center's various activities and projects, including the Museum of Tolerance, CyberWatch (a watchdog monitoring hate groups on the Web), its film and radio division, its bookstore, and recent news releases. "36 Questions About the Holocaust" provides excellent background information on the Holocaust, while the section on Simon Wiesenthal is a good introduction to this man's life and contributions. Have students read the "36 Questions" at the beginning of the Holocaust unit to familiarize themselves with the basic background of the Holocaust. Advanced students can read the CyberWatch report and debate their opinions on whether and how the Internet should be monitored to prevent hate messages.

### Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

URL: <http://www.vhf.org/>

Founded by Steven Spielberg, this nonprofit organization is dedicated to videotaping and archiving interviews of Holocaust survivors. Little original content is available through the Web site itself, but you can find out about the release of recent documentaries and forthcoming CD-ROMs.



## Appendix A Annotated Web Sites with Integration Ideas



## Teaching the Holocaust

URL: <http://socialstudies.com/holo.html>

Online catalog of supplementary educational materials for teaching about the Holocaust, including Web-based activities, videocassettes, charts, posters, books, and CD-ROMs.

## To Save a Life — Stories of Jewish Rescue

URL: <http://sorrel.humboldt.edu/~rescuers/>

This site provides first-person accounts of six rescuers who assisted Holocaust victims. Synopses of the rescuers' stories are also provided. Also very helpful are the descriptions of Jewish life under German occupation in the countries where the rescuers lived, including Holland, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Divide the class into six groups and have each group read one rescuer's story and prepare a report on that person, plus any additional topics that are mentioned in the account.



## The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

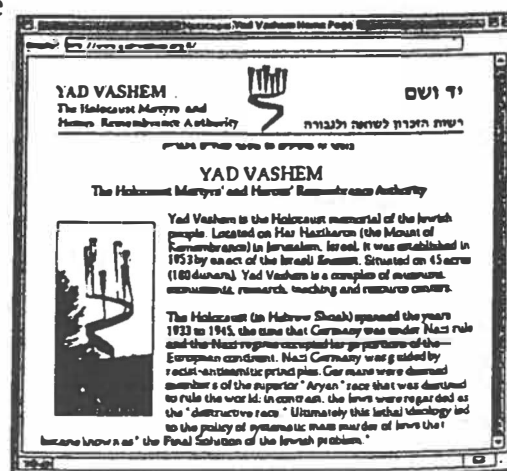
URL: <http://www.ushmm.org>

America's national institution for the documentation, study, and interpretation of Holocaust history, this site includes an online database, featured multimedia exhibits, links for educators, and information about the museum itself. A special exhibit includes excerpts from the Nuremberg prosecution of Nazi medical doctors. Have your students review the exhibit and then write an essay on the ethics of using information gleaned from these experiments. What if that information could save lives today?

## Yad Vashem

URL: <http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/>

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, Jerusalem, Israel. One of the principal world authorities on the documentation of, study of, and education about the Holocaust. You will find information about the Museum's activities and research departments as well as images and special exhibits. Have students visit "The Anguish of Liberation" and read first-hand excerpts written by survivors about their liberation.



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## **THE HOLOCAUST**

### **A HISTORICAL SUMMARY**

The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic annihilation of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and their collaborators as a central act of state during World War II. In 1933 approximately nine million Jews lived in the 21 countries of Europe that would be occupied by Germany during the war. By 1945 two out of every three European Jews had been killed. Although Jews were the primary victims, hundreds of thousands of Roma (Gypsies) and at least 250,000 mentally or physically disabled persons were also victims of Nazi genocide. As Nazi tyranny spread across Europe from 1933 to 1945, millions of other innocent people were persecuted and murdered. More than three million Soviet prisoners of war were killed because of their nationality. Poles, as well as other Slavs, were targeted for slave labor, and as a result tens of thousands perished. Homosexuals and others deemed "anti-social" were also persecuted and often murdered. In addition, thousands of political and religious dissidents such as communists, socialists, trade unionists, and Jehovah's Witnesses were persecuted for their beliefs and behavior and many of these individuals died as a result of maltreatment.

The concentration camp is most closely associated with the Holocaust and remains an enduring symbol of the Nazi regime. The first camps opened soon after the Nazis took power in January 1933; they continued as a basic part of Nazi rule until May 8, 1945, when the war, and the Nazi regime, ended.

The events of the Holocaust occurred in two main phases: 1933-1939 and 1939-1945.

#### **I. 1933-1939:**

On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler was named Chancellor, the most powerful position in the German government, by the aged President Hindenburg who hoped Hitler could lead the nation out of its grave political and economic crisis. Hitler was the leader of the right-wing National Socialist German Workers Party (called the Nazi Party for short); it was, by 1933, one of the strongest parties in Germany, even though – reflecting the country's multi-party system – the Nazis had only won a plurality of 33 percent of the votes in the 1932 elections to the German parliament (*Reichstag*).

Once in power, Hitler moved quickly to end German democracy. He convinced his cabinet to invoke emergency clauses of the Constitution which permitted the suspension of individual freedoms of the press, speech, and assembly. Special

security forces – the Special State Police (the *Gestapo*), the Storm Troopers (S.A.), and the Security Police (S.S.) – murdered or arrested leaders of opposition political parties (communists, socialists, and liberals). The Enabling Act of March 23, 1933, forced through a Reichstag already purged of many political opponents, gave dictatorial powers to Hitler.

Also in 1933, the Nazis began to put into practice their racial ideology. Echoing ideas popular in Germany as well as most other western nations well before the 1930s, the Nazis believed that the Germans were "racially superior" and that there was a struggle for survival between them and "inferior races." They saw Jews, Roma (Gypsies), and the handicapped as a serious biological threat to the purity of the "German (Aryan<sup>1</sup>) Race," what they called the "master race."

Jews, who numbered around 500,000 in Germany (less than one percent of the total population in 1933), were the principal target of Nazi hatred. The Nazis mistakenly identified Jews as a race and defined this race as "inferior." They also spewed hatemongering propaganda which unfairly blamed Jews for Germany's economic depression and the country's defeat in World War I (1914-1918).

In 1933, new German laws forced Jews to quit their civil service jobs, university and law court positions, and other areas of public life. In April 1933, a boycott of Jewish businesses was instituted. In 1935, laws proclaimed at Nuremberg stripped German Jews of their citizenship even though they retained limited rights. These "Nuremberg Laws" defined Jews not by their religion or by how they wanted to identify themselves but by the blood of their grandparents. Between 1937 and 1939, new anti-Jewish regulations segregated Jews further and made daily life very difficult for them: Jews could not attend public schools, go to theaters, cinemas, or vacation resorts, or reside, or even walk, in certain sections of German cities.

Also between 1937 and 1939, Jews were forced from Germany's economic life: the Nazis either seized Jewish businesses and properties outright or forced Jews to sell them at bargain prices. In November 1938, this economic attack against German and Austrian<sup>2</sup> Jews changed into the physical destruction of synagogues and Jewish-owned stores, the arrest of Jewish men, the destruction of homes, and

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<sup>1</sup> The term "Aryan" originally referred to peoples speaking Indo-European languages. The Nazis perverted its meaning to support racist ideas by viewing those of Germanic background as prime examples of Aryan stock, which they considered racially superior. For the Nazis, the typical Aryan was blond, blue-eyed, and tall.

<sup>2</sup> On March 11, 1938, Hitler sent his army into Austria and on March 13 the incorporation (*Anschluss*) of Austria with the German empire (*Reich*) was proclaimed in Vienna. Most of the population welcomed the *Anschluss* and expressed their fervor in widespread riots and attacks against the Austrian Jews numbering 180,000 (90 percent of whom lived in Vienna).

the murder of individuals. This centrally organized riot (pogrom) became known as *Kristallnacht* (the "Night of Broken Glass").

Although Jews were the main target of Nazi hatred, the Nazis persecuted other groups they viewed as racially or genetically "inferior." Nazi racial ideology was buttressed by scientists who advocated "selective breeding" (eugenics) to "improve" the human race. Laws passed between 1933 and 1935 aimed to reduce the future number of genetic "inferiors" through involuntary sterilization programs: about 500 children of mixed (African/German) racial backgrounds<sup>3</sup> and 320,000 to 350,000 individuals judged physically or mentally handicapped were subjected to surgical or radiation procedures so they could not have children. Supporters of sterilization also argued that the handicapped burdened the community with the costs of their care. Many of Germany's 30,000 Gypsies were also eventually sterilized and prohibited, along with Blacks, from intermarrying with Germans. Reflecting traditional prejudices, new laws combined traditional prejudices with the new racism of the Nazis which defined Gypsies, by race, as "criminal and asocial."

Another consequence of Hitler's ruthless dictatorship in the 1930s was the arrest of political opponents and trade unionists and others the Nazis labeled "undesirables" and "enemies of the state." Many homosexuals, mostly male, were arrested and imprisoned in concentration camps; under the 1935 Nazi-revised criminal code, the mere denunciation of an individual as "homosexual" could result in arrest, trial, and conviction. Jehovah's Witnesses were banned as an organization as early as April 1933, since the beliefs of this religious group prohibited them from swearing any oath to the state or serving in the German military. Their literature was confiscated, and they lost jobs, unemployment benefits, pensions, and all social welfare benefits. Many Witnesses were sent to prisons and concentration camps in Nazi Germany and their children were sent to juvenile detention homes and orphanages.

Between 1933 and 1936, thousands of people, mostly political prisoners and Jehovah's Witnesses, were imprisoned in concentration camps while several thousand German Gypsies were confined in special municipal camps. The first systematic round-ups of German and Austrian Jews occurred after *Kristallnacht*, when approximately 30,000 Jewish men were deported to Dachau and other concentration camps and several hundred Jewish women were sent to local jails. At the end of 1938, the waves of arrests also included several thousand German and Austrian Gypsies.

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<sup>3</sup> These children, called "the Rhineland bastards" by Germans, were the offspring of German women and African soldiers from French colonies who were stationed in the 1920s in the Rhineland, a demilitarized zone the Allies established after World War I as a buffer between Germany and western Europe.

Between 1933 and 1939, about half the German Jewish population and more than two-thirds of Austrian Jews (1938-1939) fled Nazi persecution. They emigrated mainly to Palestine, the United States, Latin America, China (which required no visa for entry), and eastern and western Europe (where many would be caught again in the Nazi net during the war). Jews who remained under Nazi rule were either unwilling to uproot themselves, or unable to obtain visas, sponsors in host countries, or funds for emigration. Most foreign countries, including the United States, Canada, Britain, and France, were unwilling to admit very large numbers of refugees.

## **II. 1939-1945:**

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland and World War II began. Within days, the Polish army was defeated and the Nazis began their campaign to destroy Polish culture and enslave the Polish people, whom they viewed as "subhuman." Killing Polish leaders was the first step: German soldiers carried out massacres of university professors, artists, writers, politicians, and many Catholic priests. To create new living space for the "superior Germanic race," large segments of the Polish population were resettled, and German families moved into the emptied lands. Thousands of other Poles, including Jews, were imprisoned in concentration camps. The Nazis also "kidnapped" as many as 50,000 "Aryan-looking" Polish children from their parents and took them to Germany to be adopted by German families. Many of these children were later rejected as not capable of Germanization and sent to special children's camps where some died of starvation, lethal injection, and disease.

As the war began in 1939, Hitler initialled an order to kill institutionalized, handicapped patients deemed "incurable." Special commissions of physicians reviewed questionnaires filled out by all state hospitals and then decided if a patient should be killed. The doomed were then transferred to six institutions in Germany and Austria, where specially constructed gas chambers were used to kill them. After public protests in 1941, the Nazi leadership continued this euphemistically termed "euthanasia" program in secret. Babies, small children, and other victims were thereafter killed by lethal injection and pills and by forced starvation.

The "euthanasia" program contained all the elements later required for mass murder of European Jews and Gypsies in Nazi death camps: an articulated decision to kill, specially trained personnel, the apparatus for killing by gas, and the use of euphemistic language like "euthanasia" which psychologically distanced the murderers from their victims and hid the criminal character of the killings from the public.

In 1940 German forces continued their conquest of much of Europe, easily defeating Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. On June 22, 1941, the German army invaded the Soviet Union and by September, was approaching Moscow. In the meantime, Italy, Romania, and Hungary had joined the Axis powers led by Germany and opposed by the Allied Powers (British Commonwealth, Free France, the United States, and the Soviet Union).

In the months following Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, Jews, political leaders, communists, and many Gypsies were killed in mass executions. The overwhelming majority of those killed were Jews. These murders were carried out at improvised sites throughout the Soviet Union by members of mobile killing squads (*Einsatzgruppen*) who followed in the wake of the invading Germany army. The most famous of these sites was Babi Yar, near Kiev, where an estimated 33,000 persons, mostly Jews, were murdered. German terror extended to institutionalized handicapped and psychiatric patients in the Soviet Union; it also resulted in the mass murder of more than three million Soviet prisoners of war.

World War II brought major changes to the concentration camp system. Large numbers of new prisoners, deported from all German-occupied countries, now flooded the camps. Often, entire groups were committed to the camps, such as members of underground resistance organizations who were rounded up in a sweep across western Europe under the 1941 "Night and Fog" decree. To accommodate the massive increase in the number of prisoners, hundreds of new camps were established in occupied territories of eastern and western Europe.

During the war, ghettos, transit camps, and forced labor camps, in addition to the concentration camps, were created by the Germans and their collaborators to imprison Jews, Gypsies, and other victims of racial and ethnic hatred, as well as political opponents and resistance fighters. Following the invasion of Poland, three million Polish Jews were forced into approximately 400 newly established ghettos where they were segregated from the rest of the population. Large numbers of Jews were also deported from other cities and countries, including Germany, to ghettos in Poland and German-occupied territories further east.

In Polish cities under Nazi occupation, like Warsaw and Lodz, Jews were confined in sealed ghettos where starvation, overcrowding, exposure to cold, and contagious diseases killed tens of thousands of people. In Warsaw and elsewhere, ghettoized Jews made every effort, often at great risk, to maintain their cultural, communal, and religious lives. The ghettos also provided a forced labor pool for the Germans, and many forced laborers (who worked on road gangs, in construction, or other hard labor related to the German war effort) died from exhaustion or maltreatment.

Between 1942 and 1944, the Germans moved to eliminate the ghettos in occupied Poland and elsewhere, deporting ghetto residents to "extermination camps," killing centers equipped with gassing facilities, located in Poland. After the meeting of senior German government officials in late January 1942 at a villa in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee, the decision to implement "the final solution of the Jewish question" became formal state policy and Jews from western Europe were also sent to killing centers in the East.

The six killing sites were chosen because of their closeness to rail lines and their location in semi-rural areas, at Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Chelmno, Majdanek, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Chelmno was the first camp in which mass executions were carried out by gas, piped into mobile gas vans; 320,000 persons were killed there between December 1941 and March 1943, and June to July 1944. A killing center using gas vans and later gas chambers operated at Belzec where more than 600,000 persons were killed between May 1942 and August 1943. Sobibor opened in May 1942 and closed one day after a rebellion of the prisoners on October 14, 1943; up to 200,000 persons were killed by gassing. Treblinka opened in July 1942 and closed in November 1943; a revolt by the prisoners in early August 1943 destroyed much of the facility. At least 750,000 persons were killed at Treblinka, physically the largest of the killing centers. Almost all of the victims at Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka were Jews; a few were Gypsies. Very few individuals survived these four killing centers, where most victims were murdered immediately after arrival.

Auschwitz-Birkenau, which also served as a concentration camp and slave labor camp, became the killing center where the largest numbers of European Jews and Gypsies were killed. After an experimental gassing there in September 1941 of 250 malnourished and ill Polish prisoners and 600 Russian POWs, mass murder became a daily routine; more than 1.25 million were killed at Auschwitz-Birkenau, 9 out of 10 were Jews. In addition, Gypsies, Soviet POWs, and ill prisoners of all nationalities died in the gas chambers. Between May 14 and July 8, 1944, 437,402 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz in 48 trains. This was probably the largest single mass deportation during the Holocaust. A similar system was implemented at Majdanek, which also doubled as a concentration camp and where at least 275,000 persons were killed in the gas chambers or died from malnutrition, brutality, and disease.

The methods of murder were the same in all the killing centers, which were operated by the S.S. The victims arrived in railroad freight cars and passenger trains, mostly from Polish ghettos and camps, but also from almost every other eastern and western European country. On arrival, men were separated from women and children. Prisoners were forced to undress and hand over all valuables. They were then driven naked into the gas chambers, which were disguised as shower rooms, and either carbon monoxide or Zyklon B (a form of

crystalline prussic acid, also used as an insecticide in some camps) was used to asphyxiate them. The minority selected for forced labor were, after initial quarantine, vulnerable to malnutrition, exposure, epidemics, medical experiments, and brutality; many perished as a result.

The Germans carried out their systematic murderous activities with the active help of local collaborators in many countries and the acquiescence or indifference of millions of bystanders. However, there were instances of organized resistance. For example, in the fall of 1943, the Danish resistance, with the support of the local population, rescued nearly the entire Jewish community in Denmark from the threat of deportation to the East, by smuggling them via a dramatic boatlift to safety in neutral Sweden. Individuals in many other countries also risked their lives to save Jews and other individuals subject to Nazi persecution. One of the most famous was Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who led the rescue effort which saved the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews in 1944.

Resistance movements existed in almost every concentration camp and ghetto of Europe. In addition to the armed revolts at Sobibor and Treblinka, Jewish resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto led to a courageous uprising in April-May, 1943, despite a predictable doomed outcome because of superior German force. In general, rescue or aid to Holocaust victims was not a priority of resistance organizations whose principal goal was to fight the war against the Germans. Nonetheless, such groups and Jewish partisans (resistance fighters) sometimes cooperated with each other to save Jews. On April 19, 1943, for instance, members of the National Committee for the Defense of Jews in cooperation with Christian railroad workers and the general underground in Belgium, attacked a train leaving the Belgian transit camp of Malines headed for Auschwitz and succeeded in assisting several hundred Jewish deportees to escape.

After the war turned against Germany and the Allied armies approached German soil in late 1944, the S.S. decided to evacuate outlying concentration camps. The Germans tried to cover up the evidence of genocide and deported prisoners to camps inside Germany to prevent their liberation. Many inmates died during the long journeys on foot known as "death marches." During the final days, in the spring of 1945, conditions in the remaining concentration camps exacted a terrible toll in human lives. Even concentration camps never intended for extermination, such as Bergen-Belsen, became death traps for thousands (including Anne Frank who died there of typhus in March 1945).

In May 1945, Nazi Germany collapsed, the S.S. guards fled, and the camps ceased to exist as extermination, forced labor, or concentration camps. (However, some of the concentration camps were turned into camps for displaced persons (DPs), which included former Holocaust victims. Nutrition, sanitary conditions, and

accommodations often were poor. DPs lived behind barbed wire, and were exposed to humiliating treatment, and, at times, to antisemitic attacks.)

The Nazi legacy was a vast empire of murder, pillage, and exploitation that had affected every country of occupied Europe. The toll in lives was enormous. The full magnitude, and the moral and ethical implications, of this tragic era are only now beginning to be understood more fully.

## *Section 1*

### ***The Internet and Hate Groups***

The following are some Internet sites that show hate is alive and well. I must caution you the graphics are explicit on some of these websites. Some of these sites are for adults only and would be inappropriate for students.

<http://www.hatewatch.org/> Work your way past the intro pages then when you get to the main page look to the left and click *Online Bigotry*. Click on *Hate by Category* and start surfing the different links. Caution: The anti- women site is pornographic!

<http://www.resist.com/> This is the classic aryan neo-nazi group headed by Tom and John Metzger. You have seen these guys on the talk shows like Geraldo and the old Phil Donahue Show.

<http://www.zdnet.com/zdnn/stories/news/0,4586,2281133,00.html> Sorry for the long address on this one. This is an article from ZDNET and talks about how the hate groups are using the internet to spread their word and are targeting the children with fancy graphics and in some cases online games.

<http://news.cnet.com/news/0-1005-200-327035.html> Another page about the use of the web by hate groups.

<http://www.bcpl.net/~rfrankli/hatedir99.htm#CH> A link to most of the best anti-hate groups on the web. If you scroll up from this page there are more links to many sites and e-mail addresses.

<http://www-2.realaudio.com/webactive/sotw/hate.html> This is a real audio site which talks about hate groups on the web.



## **Simon Wiesenthal Center**

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<http://motlc.wiesenthal.com>  
<http://tst.wiesenthal.com>

# **The Holocaust, 1933 - 1945**

## **Educational Resources Kit**

**Prepared by the Simon Wiesenthal Center Library & Archives**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Simon Wiesenthal Center is an international center for Holocaust remembrance and the defense of human rights and the Jewish people. Headquartered in Los Angeles, the Center's mandate is a unique combination of social action, public outreach, scholarship, education and media projects as it imparts the lessons of the Holocaust, develops educational strategies for tolerance and impacts on issues of the day. Outreach and education are the focal points of this mandate, providing unique educational opportunities to interface with Holocaust survivors and scholars through appropriate seminars, conferences, and programs.

Founded in 1977, the Simon Wiesenthal Center established its special library a year later (1978), with fifty books and a part-time librarian. Today, twenty-one years later, the Library's holdings number over 40,000 volumes, 500 periodicals, non-print material, and an extensive Archives. Although it was founded thirty years after the Holocaust, the Simon Wiesenthal Center was the first Holocaust Center in the United States to recognize the need for a Library and Archives meeting professional standards, to educate and disseminate information. With the opening of the Museum of Tolerance in 1993, the mandate broadened to address the challenges of the nineties, *e.g.* human rights, tolerance, social justice, *et al.*

The Library/Archives of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the *Beit Hashoah*/ Museum of Tolerance is a fully-staffed information and multi-media resource center on the Holocaust, twentieth century genocides, antisemitism, racism, multiculturalism, tolerance, and related issues. It services educators, librarians, students, researchers, the public, and the media, responding to queries and information requests from around the world, via e-mail, the Internet, and the SWC/MOT Web Sites, as well as the more traditional telephone, fax and mail.

In addition to its holdings of books, journals, newspapers, tapes, videos, compact discs, CD-ROM and computer programs, the Library regularly subscribes to over 300 journals, newspapers, and newsletters; preserves a multi-lingual special collection of historical and contemporary works of primary antisemitica, Holocaust denial, and racism; maintains an extensive map file and a vertical file of current ephemeral materials.

The Archives is a primary research repository for materials dealing with tolerance and civil rights and with the Holocaust and the pre-World War II Jewish experience. It is comprised of documents, letters, manuscripts, personal narratives, diaries, artifacts, ghetto and concentration camp postage and money, liberation and occupation memorabilia, photographs, magazines, newspapers, maps, posters, rare books, pamphlets and original artwork.

The Library/Archives provides all back-up information for the museum exhibitions and the Multi-Media Learning Center of the Museum of Tolerance. In addition, the Library/Archives also prepares and distributes educational materials, including educational resources kits and a series of graded bibliographies. All of these materials are updated regularly as new materials are published and received.

The work of the Library and Archives is supported by the efforts of a loyal cadre of volunteers and interns. (*Gedenkdienst* interns from Austria fulfill their military obligations through their service.)

They are representative of the multi-ethnic fabric of Southern California society and bring their rich life time experiences to their work. In 1998, to meet the challenges of the next millennium, the Library and Archives moved to the new Simon Wiesenthal Center/ Museum of Tolerance Educational Resource Center with expanded facilities and increased technology, including staff and public Internet access.

Other Public Services of the Library/Archives include:

- A model library of Juvenile and Young Adult Literature, primarily for students and educators
- A monthly "Arts and Lectures" program, usually on the third Wednesday of every month at 3:00pm
- Basic Internet training, by appointment, using the Library/Archives' computer station, funded by an InfoPeople Project grant, under the provisions of the U.S. Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.
- The "Once Upon A World" Children's Book Award, annually honoring the children's book (ages six to ten), which best represents the values of tolerance, diversity, human understanding and social justice, and the "Write to Tolerance" Institute for librarians, children's authors and editors.
- "Contact a Survivor" program whereby students, researchers, and others are able to ask a survivor a question and receive an answer. This e-mail program can be accessed at [www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com).

Educators, researchers, and the public are welcome and the Library has a circulation policy which is available upon request. The Archives are open to *bona fide* researchers by appointment.

If you need reference assistance, please contact the Library/Archives and discuss your needs with a professional librarian:

Simon Wiesenthal Center Library & Archives  
1399 S. Roxbury Drive, Los Angeles, California 90035-4709  
(310)772-7605; FAX: (310)277-6568; E-mail: [library@wiesenthal.net](mailto:library@wiesenthal.net)  
World Wide Web: <http://www.wiesenthal.com>  
<http://motlc.wiesenthal.com> (for Holocaust Educational Resources)  
<http://tst.wiesenthal.com>

Adaire J. Klein      Director of Library & Archival Services

P.S. Please be sure to check for our forthcoming Tolerance Educational Resources Kit

**TIMELINE OF THE HOLOCAUST**  
**1933 - 1945**

**1933**

<b>January 30</b>	Adolf Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany
<b>March 22</b>	Dachau concentration camp opens
<b>April 1</b>	Boycott of Jewish shops and businesses
<b>April 7</b>	Laws for Reestablishment of the Civil Service barred Jews from holding civil service, university, and state positions
<b>April 26</b>	<i>Gestapo</i> established
<b>May 10</b>	Public burnings of books written by Jews, political dissidents, and others not approved by the state
<b>July 14</b>	Law stripping East European Jewish immigrants of German citizenship

**1934**

<b>August 2</b>	Hitler proclaims himself <i>Führer und Reichskanzler</i> (Leader and Reich Chancellor). Armed forces must now swear allegiance to him
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**1935**

<b>May 31</b>	Jews barred from serving in the German armed forces
<b>September 15</b>	"Nuremberg Laws": anti-Jewish racial laws enacted; Jews no longer considered German citizens; Jews could not marry Aryans; nor could they fly the German flag
<b>November 15</b>	Germany defines a "Jew": anyone with three Jewish grandparents; someone with two Jewish grandparents who identifies as a Jew

**1936**

<b>March 3</b>	Jewish doctors barred from practicing medicine in German institutions
<b>March 7</b>	Germans march into the Rhineland, previously demilitarized by the Versailles Treaty
<b>June 17</b>	Himmler appointed the Chief of German Police
<b>July</b>	Sachsenhausen concentration camp opens
<b>October 25</b>	Hitler and Mussolini form Rome-Berlin Axis

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1937

July 15                      Buchenwald concentration camp opens

1938

March 13                      *Anschluss* (incorporation of Austria): all antisemitic decrees immediately applied in Austria

April 26                      Mandatory registration of all property held by Jews inside the Reich

July 6                          Evian Conference held in Evian, France on the problem of Jewish refugees

August 1                      Adolf Eichmann establishes the Office of Jewish Emigration in Vienna to increase the pace of forced emigration

August 3                      Italy enacts sweeping antisemitic laws

September 30                Munich Conference: Great Britain and France agree to German occupation of the Sudetenland, previously western Czechoslovakia

October 5                      Following request by Swiss authorities, Germans mark all Jewish passports with a large letter "J" to restrict Jews from immigrating to Switzerland

October 28                    17,000 Polish Jews living in Germany expelled; Poles refused to admit them; 8,000 are stranded in the frontier village of Zbaszyn

November 7                    Assassination in Paris of German diplomat Ernst vom Rath by Herschel Grynszpan

November 9-10                *Kristallnacht* (Night of Broken Glass): anti-Jewish pogrom in Germany, Austria, and the Sudetenland; 200 synagogues destroyed; 7,500 Jewish shops looted; 30,000 male Jews sent to concentration camps (Dachau, Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen)

November 12                   Decree forcing all Jews to transfer retail businesses to Aryan hands

November 15                   All Jewish pupils expelled from German schools

December 12                   One billion mark fine levied against German Jews for the destruction of property during *Kristallnacht*

1939

January 30                    Hitler in *Reichstag* speech: "If war erupts it will mean the *Vernichtung* (extermination) of European Jews"

March 15                      Germans occupy Czechoslovakia

August 23                      Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed: non-aggression pact between Soviet Union and Germany

September 1                   Beginning of World War II: Germany invades Poland

September 21                Heydrich issues directives to establish ghettos in German-occupied Poland

October 12                    Germany begins deportation of Austrian and Czech Jews to Poland

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<b>October 28</b>	First Polish ghetto established in Piotrków
<b>November 23</b>	Jews in German-occupied Poland forced to wear an armband or yellow star

**1940**

<b>April 9</b>	Germans occupy Denmark and southern Norway
<b>May 7</b>	Lodz Ghetto (Litzmannstadt) sealed: 165,000 people in 1.6 square miles
<b>May 10</b>	Germany invades the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France
<b>May 20</b>	Concentration camp established at Auschwitz
<b>June 22</b>	France surrenders
<b>August 8</b>	Battle of Britain begins
<b>September 27</b>	Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis
<b>November 16</b>	Warsaw Ghetto sealed: ultimately it contained 500,000 people

**1941**

<b>January 21-26</b>	Anti-Jewish riots in Romania, hundreds of Jews butchered
<b>February 1</b>	German authorities begin rounding up Polish Jews for transfer to Warsaw Ghetto
<b>March</b>	Adolf Eichmann appointed head of the department for Jewish affairs of the Reich Security Main Office, Section IV B 4.
<b>April 6</b>	Germany attacks Yugoslavia and Greece; occupation follows
<b>June 22</b>	Germany invades the Soviet Union
<b>July 31</b>	Heydrich appointed by Göring to implement the "Final Solution"
<b>September 28-29</b>	34,000 Jews massacred at Babi Yar outside Kiev
<b>October</b>	Establishment of Auschwitz II (Birkenau) for the extermination of Jews; Gypsies, Poles, Russians, and others were also murdered at the camp
<b>December 7</b>	Japanese attack Pearl Harbor
<b>December 8</b>	Chelmno (Kulmhof) extermination camp begins operations: 340,000 Jews, 20,000 Poles and Czechs murdered by April 1943
<b>December 11</b>	United States declares war on Japan and Germany

**1942**

<b>January 20</b>	Wannsee Conference in Berlin: Heydrich outlines plan to murder Europe's Jews
<b>March 17</b>	Extermination begins in Belzec; by end of 1942 600,000 Jews murdered
<b>May</b>	Extermination by gas begins in Sobibor killing center; by October 1943, 250,000 Jews murdered

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<b>June</b>	Jewish partisan units established in the forests of Byelorussia and the Baltic States
<b>July 22</b>	Germans establish Treblinka concentration camp
<b>Summer</b>	Deportation of Jews to killing centers from Belgium, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, and Poland; armed resistance by Jews in ghettos of Kletzk, Kremenets, Lachva, Mir, and Tuchin
<b>Winter</b>	Deportation of Jews from Germany, Greece and Norway to killing centers; Jewish partisan movement organized in forests near Lublin

**1943**

<b>January</b>	German 6th Army surrenders at Stalingrad
<b>March</b>	Liquidation of Kraków ghetto
<b>April 19</b>	Warsaw Ghetto revolt begins as Germans attempt to liquidate 70,000 inhabitants; Jewish underground fights Nazis until early June
<b>May</b>	Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto. On May 16, 1943 SS and Police Chief Stroop proclaimed, "180 Jews, bandits, and subhumans were destroyed. The Jewish quarter of Warsaw is no more."
<b>June</b>	Himmler orders the liquidation of all ghettos in Poland and the Soviet Union
<b>Summer</b>	Armed resistance by Jews in Bedzin, Bialystok, Czestochowa, Lvov, and Tarnów ghettos
<b>Fall</b>	Liquidation of large ghettos in Minsk, Vilna, and Riga
<b>October 14</b>	Armed revolt in Sobibor extermination camp
<b>October-November</b>	Rescue of the Danish Jewry

**1944**

<b>March 19</b>	Germany occupies Hungary
<b>May 15</b>	Nazis begin deporting Hungarian Jews; by June 27, 380,000 sent to Auschwitz
<b>June 6</b>	D-Day: Allied invasion at Normandy
<b>Spring/Summer</b>	Red Army repels Nazi forces
<b>July 20</b>	Group of German officers attempt to assassinate Hitler
<b>July 24</b>	Russians liberate Majdanek killing center
<b>October 7</b>	Revolt by inmates at Auschwitz; one crematorium blown up
<b>November</b>	Last Jews deported from Terezin to Auschwitz
<b>November 8</b>	Beginning of death march of approximately 40,000 Jews from Budapest to Austria

**1945**

<b>January 17</b>	Evacuation of Auschwitz; beginning of death march
<b>January 25</b>	Beginning of death march for inmates of Stutthof
<b>April 6-10</b>	Death march of inmates of Buchenwald
<b>April 30</b>	Hitler commits suicide
<b>May 8</b>	V-E Day: Germany surrenders; end of Third Reich
<b>August 6</b>	Bombing of Hiroshima
<b>August 9</b>	Bombing of Nagasaki
<b>August 15</b>	V-J Day: Victory over Japan proclaimed.
<b>September 2</b>	Japan surrenders; end of World War II

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS, PLACES, AND PERSONALITIES**

<b><i>AKTION</i></b> (German)	Operation involving the mass assembly, deportation, and murder of Jews by the Nazis during the Holocaust.
<b>ALLIES</b>	The nations fighting Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II; primarily the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union.
<b>ANIELEWICZ, MORDECAI</b> (1919-1943)	Major leader of the Jewish resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto; killed May 8, 1943.
<b><i>ANSCHLUSS</i></b> (German)	Austria acquiesces to its annexation by Germany on March 13, 1938.
<b>ANTISEMITISM</b>	Prejudice or discrimination towards Jews
<b>ARYAN RACE</b>	"Aryan" was originally applied to people who spoke any Indo-European language. The Nazis, however, primarily applied the term to people of Northern European racial background. Their aim was to avoid what they considered the "bastardization of the German race" and to preserve the purity of European blood. (See NUREMBERG LAWS.)
<b>AUSCHWITZ</b>	Concentration and extermination camp in upper Silesia, Poland, 37 miles west of Krakow. Established in 1940 as a concentration camp, it became an extermination camp in early 1942. Originally established for Poles, it became the largest center for Jewish extermination. Eventually, it consisted of three sections: Auschwitz I, the main camp; Auschwitz II (Birkenau), an extermination camp; Auschwitz III (Monowitz), the I.G. Farben labor camp, also known as Buna. In addition, Auschwitz had numerous sub-camps. Originally established for Poles, Auschwitz became the largest center for Jewish extermination.

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**AXIS**

The Axis powers originally included Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan who signed a pact in Berlin on September 27, 1940. They were later joined by Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, and Slovakia.

**BAECK, LEO  
(1873 - 1956)**

Rabbi, philosopher, and community leader in Berlin. In 1933 he became president of the Reich Representation of German Jews, an organization responsible to the Nazi regime concerning Jewish matters. Despite opportunities to emigrate, Baeck refused to leave Germany. In 1943, he was deported to the ghetto of Terezin (Theresienstadt), where he became a member of the Council of Elders and spiritual leader of the Jews imprisoned there. After the liberation of the ghetto he immigrated to England.

**BELZEC**

One of the six extermination camps in Poland. Originally established in 1940 as a camp for Jewish forced labor, the Germans began construction of an extermination camp at Belzec on November 1, 1941, as part of *Aktion Reinhard*. By the time the camp ceased operations in January 1943, more than 600,000 persons had been murdered there.

**CHAMBERLAIN, NEVILLE  
(1869-1940)**

British Prime Minister, 1937-1940. He concluded the Munich Agreement in 1938 with Adolf Hitler, which he mistakenly believed would bring "peace in our time."

**CHELMNO**

An extermination camp established in late 1941 in the Warthegau region of Western Poland, 47 miles west of Lodz. It was the first camp where mass executions were carried out by means of gas. A total of 320,000 people were exterminated at Chelmno.

**CHURCHILL, WINSTON  
(1875-1965)**

British Prime Minister, 1940-1945. He succeeded Chamberlain on May 10, 1940, at the height of Hitler's conquest of Western Europe. Churchill was one of the very few Western politicians who recognized the threat that Hitler posed to Europe. He strongly opposed Chamberlain's appeasement policies.

**CONCENTRATION CAMPS**

Immediately upon their assumption of power on January 30, 1933, the Nazis established concentration camps for the imprisonment of all "enemies" of their regime: actual and potential political opponents (e.g. communists, socialists,

monarchists), Jehovah's Witnesses, gypsies, homosexuals, and other "asocials." Beginning in 1938, Jews were targeted for internment solely because they were Jews. Before then, only Jews who fit one of the earlier categories were interned in camps. The first three concentration camps established were Dachau (near Munich), Buchenwald (near Weimar) and Sachsenhausen (near Berlin).

## **DACHAU**

First concentration camp established in March 1933, ten miles northwest of Munich. The camp held, at first, political prisoners. But, as time went on, the number of Jews rose steadily to about 1/3 of the total. Although no mass murder program existed there, tens of thousands died through starvation, disease, torture, or in cruel medical experiments.

## **DEATH CAMPS**

See **EXTERMINATION CAMPS**

## **EICHMANN, ADOLF (1906-1962)**

SS Lieutenant-colonel and head of the "Jewish Section" of the *Gestapo*. Eichmann participated in the Wannsee Conference (January 20, 1942). He was instrumental in implementing the "Final Solution" by organizing the transportation of Jews to death camps from all over Europe. He was arrested at the end of World War II in the American zone, but escaped, went underground, and disappeared. On May 11, 1960, members of the Israeli Secret Service uncovered his whereabouts and smuggled him from Argentina to Israel. Eichmann was tried in Jerusalem (April-December 1961), convicted, and sentenced to death. He was executed on May 31, 1962.

## **EINSATZGRUPPEN (German)**

Battalion-sized, mobile killing units of the Security Police and SS Security Service that followed the German armies into the Soviet Union in June 1941. These units were supported by units of the uniformed German Order Police and auxiliaries of volunteers (Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian). Their victims, primarily Jews, were executed by shooting and were buried in mass graves from which they were later exhumed and burned. At least a million Jews were killed in this manner. There were four *Einsatzgruppen (A,B,C,D)* which were subdivided into company-sized *Einsatzkommandos*.

**EUTHANASIA**

The original meaning of this term was an easy and painless death for the terminally ill. However, the Nazi euthanasia program took on quite a different meaning: the taking of eugenic measures to improve the quality of the German "race." This program culminated in enforced "mercy" deaths for the incurably insane, permanently disabled, deformed and "superfluous." Three major classifications were developed: 1) euthanasia for incurables; 2) direct extermination by "special treatment"; and 3) experiments in mass sterilization.

**EVIAN CONFERENCE  
(July 6, 1938)**

Conference convened by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in July 1938 to discuss the problem of refugees. Thirty-two countries met at Evian-les-Bains, France. However, not much was accomplished, since most western countries were reluctant to accept Jewish refugees.

**EXTERMINATION CAMPS**

Nazi camps for the mass killing of Jews and others (e.g. Gypsies, Russian prisoners-of-war, ill prisoners). Known as "death camps," these included: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibór, and Treblinka. All were located in occupied Poland.

**FINAL SOLUTION**

The cover name for the plan to destroy the Jews of Europe - the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question." Beginning in December 1941, Jews were rounded up and sent to extermination camps in the East. The program was deceptively disguised as "resettlement in the East."

**FRANK, HANS  
(1900-1946)**

Governor-General of occupied Poland from 1939 to 1945. A member of the Nazi Party from its earliest days and Hitler's personal lawyer, he announced, "Poland will be treated like a colony; the Poles will become slaves of the Greater German Reich." By 1942, more than 85% of the Jews in Poland had been transported to extermination camps. Frank was tried at Nuremberg, convicted, and executed in 1946.

**FRICK, WILHELM  
(1877-1946)**

A dedicated Nazi bureaucrat who was appointed Minister of the Interior in 1933 where he was responsible for enacting Nazi racial laws. In 1946, he was tried at Nuremberg, convicted, and executed.

**GENOCIDE**

The deliberate and systematic destruction of a religious, racial, national, or cultural group.

**GERSTEIN, KURT  
(1905-1945)**

Head of the *Waffen SS* Institute of Hygiene in Berlin. While maintaining ties with the resistance, Gerstein purchased the gas needed in Auschwitz, officially for fumigation purposes, but actually used for the killing of Jews. He passed on information about the killings to Swedish representatives and Vatican papal nuncios. Overwhelmed with remorse he hanged himself in a French jail after the war. He is the author of a widely quoted description of a gassing procedure in Belzec, protagonist of Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy*, and the subject of Saul Friedlander's biography, *The Ambiguity of Good*.

**GESTAPO**

Acronym of *Geheime Staatspolizei*; Secret State Police. The Prussian and, later the Third Reich's, secret state police and the Nazis' main tool of oppression and destruction, led by Hermann Göring.

**GHETTO**

The Nazis revived the medieval ghetto in creating their compulsory "Jewish Quarter" (*Wohnbezirk*). The ghetto was a section of a city where all Jews from the surrounding areas were forced to reside. Surrounded by barbed wire or walls, the ghettos were often sealed so that people were prevented from leaving or entering. Established mostly in Eastern Europe (e.g. Lodz, Warsaw, Vilna, Riga, Minsk), the ghettos were characterized by overcrowding, starvation and forced labor. All were eventually destroyed as the Jews were deported to death camps.

**GOEBBELS, JOSEPH  
(1897-1945)**

Hitler's Minister of propaganda and public information. It was at his prompting that all "un-German" books were burned on May 10, 1933. He was also one of the creators of the "*Führer*" myth, an important element in the Nazis' successful plan for support by the masses. He saw the Jews as the enemy of the people, and instigated the *Kristallnacht* pogrom in November 1938. As Nazi Germany collapsed in 1945, he and his family committed suicide.

**GÖRING, HERMANN  
(1893-1946)**

An early member of the Nazi party, Göring participated in Hitler's "Beer Hall Putsch" in Munich in 1923 (see **HITLER, ADOLF**). After its failure, he went to Sweden,

where he lived (for a time in a mental institution) until 1927. In 1928, he was elected to the *Reichstag* and became its president in 1932. When Hitler came into power in 1933, he made Göring Air Minister of Germany and Prime Minister of Prussia. He was responsible for the rearmament program and especially for the creation of the German Air Force. In 1939, Hitler designated him his successor. During World War II, he was virtual dictator of the German economy and was responsible for the total air war waged by Germany. Convicted at Nuremberg in 1946, Göring committed suicide by taking poison just two hours before his scheduled execution.

**GREATER GERMAN REICH**

Designation of an expanded Germany that was intended to include all German speaking peoples. It was one of Hitler's most important aims. After the conquest of most of Western Europe during World War II, it became a reality for a short time.

**GRYNSZPAN, HERSCHEL  
(1921-1943?)**

A Polish Jewish youth who had emigrated to Paris. He agonized over the fate of his parents who, in the course of a pre-war roundup of Polish Jews living in Germany, were trapped between Germany and Poland and not permitted entry into either country. On November 7, 1938, he went to the German Embassy where he shot and mortally wounded Third Secretary Ernst vom Rath. The Nazis used this incident as an excuse for the *KRISTALLNACHT* (Night of the Broken Glass) pogrom.

**GYPSIES  
(*Romaszenti*)**

A nomadic people, believed to have come originally from northwest India, from where they immigrated to Persia by the fourteenth century. Gypsies first appeared in Western Europe in the 15th century. By the 16th century, they had spread throughout Europe, where they were persecuted almost as relentlessly as the Jews. The gypsies occupied a special place in Nazi racist theories. It is believed that approximately 500,000 perished during the Holocaust.

**HESS, RUDOLF  
(1894-1987)**

Deputy and close associate of Hitler from the earliest days of the Nazi movement. On May 10, 1941, he flew alone from Augsburg and parachuted, landing in Scotland where he was promptly arrested. The purpose of his flight has

never become clear. He probably wanted to persuade the British to make peace with Hitler as soon as he attacked the Soviet Union. Hitler promptly declared him insane. Hess was tried at Nuremberg, found guilty, and sentenced to life imprisonment. He was the only prisoner in Spandau Prison until he apparently committed suicide in 1987.

**HEYDRICH, REINHARD  
(1904-1942)**

Former naval officer who joined the *SS* in 1932, after his dismissal from the Navy. He headed the *SS* Security Service (*SD*), a Nazi party intelligence agency. In 1933-1934, he became head of the political police (*Gestapo*) and later of the criminal police (*Kripo*). He combined *Gestapo* and *Kripo* into the Security Police (*SIPO*). In 1939, Heydrich combined the *SD* and *SIPO* into the Reich Security Main Office. He organized the *Einsatzgruppen*, which systematically murdered Jews in occupied Russia during 1941-1942. In 1941, he was asked by Göring to implement a "Final Solution to the Jewish Question." During the same year he was appointed protector of Bohemia and Moravia. In January 1942, he presided over the Wannsee Conference, a meeting to coordinate the "Final Solution." On May 29, 1942, he was assassinated by Czech partisans who parachuted in from England. (For consequences of this assassination, see LIDICE).

**HIMMLER, HEINRICH  
(1900-1945)**

Reich leader of the *SS*, head of the *Gestapo* and the *Waffen SS*, minister of the interior, and next to Adolf Hitler, the most powerful man in Nazi Germany. His obsession with "racial purity" led to the idea of killing the Jews. He committed suicide on May 23, 1945, before he could be brought to trial.

**HITLER, ADOLF  
(1889-1945)**

*Führer und Reichskanzler* (Leader and Reich Chancellor). Although born in Austria, he settled in Germany in 1913. At the outbreak of World War I, Hitler enlisted in the Bavarian Army, became a corporal and received the Iron Cross First Class for bravery. Returning to Munich after the war, he joined the newly formed German Workers Party, which was soon reorganized, under his leadership, as the National Socialist German Workers Party (*NSDAP*). In November 1923, he unsuccessfully attempted to forcibly bring Germany under nationalist control. When his coup, known as the "Beer-Hall Putsch," failed, Hitler was

arrested and sentenced to 5 years in prison. It was during this time that he wrote *Mein Kampf*. Serving only 9 months of his sentence, Hitler quickly reentered German politics and soon outpolled his political rivals in national elections. In January 1933, Hindenburg appointed Hitler chancellor of a coalition cabinet. Hitler, who took office on January 30, 1933, immediately set up a dictatorship. In 1934, the chancellorship and presidency were united in the person of the *Führer*. Soon, all other parties were outlawed and opposition was brutally suppressed. In addition, he initiated antisemitic policies and programs. By 1938, Hitler would honor no agreement therefore he implemented his dream of a "Greater Germany," first annexing Austria; then, (with the acquiescence of the western democracies), the Sudetenland (Czech province with ethnic German concentration); and, finally, Czechoslovakia itself. On September 1, 1939, Hitler's armies invaded Poland. By this time the western democracies realized that no agreement with Hitler could be honored and World War II had begun. Although initially victorious on all fronts, Hitler's armies began suffering setbacks shortly after the United States joined the war in December 1941. Although the war was obviously lost by early 1945, Hitler insisted that Germany fight to the death. On April 30, 1945, Hitler committed suicide rather than be captured alive.

## **HOLOCAUST**

The destruction of some 6 million Jews by the Nazis and their followers in Europe between the years 1933-1945. Other individuals and groups were persecuted and suffered grievously during this period, but only the Jews were marked for complete and utter annihilation. The term "Holocaust" - literally meaning "a completely burned sacrifice" - tends to suggest a sacrificial connotation to what occurred. The word *Shoah*, originally a Biblical term meaning widespread disaster, is the modern Hebrew equivalent.

## **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**

A religious sect, originating in the United States, organized by Charles Taze Russell. The Witnesses base their beliefs on the Bible and have no official ministers. Recognizing only the kingdom of God, the Witnesses refuse to salute the flag, to bear arms in war, and to participate in the affairs of

government. This doctrine brought them into conflict with National Socialism. They were considered enemies of the state and were relentlessly persecuted.

**JEWISH BADGE**

A distinctive sign which Jews were compelled to wear in Nazi Germany and in Nazi-occupied countries. It often took the form of a yellow star of David.

**JUDENRAT**  
(PLURAL: *JUDENRÄTE*)

Council of Jewish representatives in communities and ghettos set up by the Nazis to carry out their instructions.

**JUDENREIN**

"Cleansed of Jews," denoting areas where all Jews had been either murdered or deported.

**KAPO**

Prisoner in charge of a group of inmates in Nazi concentration camps.

**KRISTALLNACHT** (German)

Night of the Broken Glass: pogrom unleashed by the Nazis on November 9-10, 1938. Throughout Germany and Austria, synagogues and other Jewish institutions were burned, Jewish stores were destroyed, and their contents looted. At the same time, approximately 35,000 Jewish men were sent to concentration camps. The "excuse" for this action was the assassination of Ernst vom Rath in Paris by a Jewish teenager whose parents had been rounded up by the Nazis. (see GRYNSZPAN, HERSCHEL).

**LIDICE**

Czech mining village (pop. 700). In reprisal for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, the Nazis "liquidated" the village in 1942. They shot the men, deported the women and children to concentration camps, razed the village to the ground, and struck its name from the maps. After World War II, a new village was built near the site of the old Lidice, which is now a national park and memorial. (see HEYDRICH, REINHARD).

**LODZ**

City in western Poland (renamed Litzmannstadt by the Nazis), where the first major ghetto was created in April 1940. By September 1941, the population of the ghetto was 144,000 in an area of 1.6 square miles (statistically, 5.8 people per room). In October 1941, 20,000 Jews from Germany, Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were sent to the Lodz Ghetto. Those deported

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from Lodz during 1942 and June-July 1944 were sent to the Chelmno extermination camp. In August-September 1944, the ghetto was liquidated and the remaining 60,000 Jews were sent to Auschwitz.

**MAJDANEK**

Mass murder camp in eastern Poland. At first a labor camp for Poles and a POW camp for Russians, it was turned into a gassing center for Jews. Majdanek was liberated by the Red Army in July 1944, but not before 250,000 men, women, and children had lost their lives there.

**MAUTHAUSEN**

A camp primarily for men, opened in August 1938, near Linz in northern Austria, Mauthausen was classified by the SS as a camp of utmost severity. Conditions there were brutal, even by concentration camp standards. Nearly 100,000 prisoners of various nationalities were either worked or tortured to death at the camp before liberating American troops arrived in May 1945.

**MEIN KAMPF** (German)

This autobiographical book (*My Struggle*) by Hitler was written while he was imprisoned in the Landsberg fortress after the "Beer-Hall Putsch" in 1923. In this book, Hitler propounds his ideas, beliefs, and plans for the future of Germany. Everything, including his foreign policy, is permeated by his "racial ideology." The Germans, belonging to the "superior" Aryan race, have a right to "living space" (*Lebensraum*) in the East, which is inhabited by the "inferior" Slavs. Throughout, he accuses Jews of being the source of all evil, equating them with Bolshevism and, at the same time, with international capitalism. Unfortunately, those people who read the book (except for his admirers) did not take it seriously but considered it the ravings of a maniac. (see HITLER, ADOLF).

**MENGELE, JOSEF**  
(1911-1978?)

SS physician at Auschwitz, notorious for pseudo-medical experiments, especially on twins and Gypsies. He "selected" new arrivals by simply pointing to the right or the left, thus separating those considered able to work from those who were not. Those too weak or too old to work were sent straight to the gas chambers, after all their possessions, including their clothes, were taken for resale in Germany. After the war, he spent some time in a British internment hospital but disappeared, went underground,

escaped to Argentina, and later to Paraguay, where he became a citizen in 1959. He was hunted by Interpol, Israeli agents, and Simon Wiesenthal. In 1986, his body was found in Embu, Brazil.

**MUSSELMANN (German)**

Concentration camp slang word for a prisoner who had given up fighting for life.

**NAZI PARTY**

Short term for *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP), the National Socialist German Workers Party, a right-wing, authoritarian, nationalistic and antisemitic political party formed on January 5, 1919 and headed by Adolf Hitler as its leader from 1921 to 1945.

**NIGHT AND FOG DECREE**

Secret order issued by Hitler on December 7, 1941, to seize "persons endangering German security" who were to vanish without a trace into night and fog.

**NUREMBERG LAWS**

Two anti-Jewish statutes enacted September 1935 during the Nazi party's national convention in Nuremberg. The first, the *Reich* Citizenship Law, deprived German Jews of their citizenship and all pertinent, related rights. The second, the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor, outlawed marriages of Jews and non-Jews, forbade Jews from employing German females of childbearing age, and prohibited Jews from displaying the German flag. Many additional regulations were attached to the two main statutes, which provided the basis for removing Jews from all spheres of German political, social, and economic life. The Nuremberg Laws carefully established definitions of Jewishness based on bloodlines. Thus, many Germans of mixed ancestry, called "*Mischlinge*," faced antisemitic discrimination if they had a Jewish grandparent.

**PARTISANS**

Irregular troops engaged in guerrilla warfare, often behind enemy lines. During World War II, this term was applied to resistance fighters in Nazi-occupied countries.

**PROTOCOLS OF THE  
ELDERS OF ZION**

A major piece of antisemitic propaganda, compiled at the turn of the century by members of the Russian Secret Police. Essentially adapted from a nineteenth century French polemical satire directed against Emperor Napoleon III, substituting Jewish leaders, the Protocols maintained

that Jews were plotting world dominion by setting Christian against Christian, corrupting Christian morals and attempting to destroy the economic and political viability of the West. It gained great popularity after World War I and was translated into many languages, encouraging antisemitism in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. Long repudiated as an absurd and hateful lie, the book currently has been reprinted and is widely distributed by Neo-Nazis and others.

**RATH, ERNST VOM  
(1909-1938)**

Third secretary at the German Embassy in Paris who was assassinated on November 7, 1938 by Herschel Grynszpan (see GRYNZPAN, HERSCHEL)

**REICH**

German word for "empire."

**RIGHTEOUS AMONG  
THE NATIONS**

Term applied to those non-Jews who, at the risk of their own lives, saved Jews from their Nazi persecutors.

**SA**

(abbreviation: *Sturmabteilung*); the storm troops of the early Nazi party; organized in 1921.

**SELECTION**

Euphemism for the process of choosing victims for the gas chambers in the Nazi camps by separating them from those considered fit to work (see MENGELE, JOSEF).

**SHTETL**

Yiddish term for a small Eastern European Jewish town or village.

**SOBIBOR**

Extermination camp in the Lublin district in Eastern Poland (see BELZEC; EXTERMINATION CAMP). Sobibór opened in May 1942 and closed one day after a rebellion of the Jewish prisoners on October 14, 1943. At least 250,000 Jews were killed there.

**SS**

Abbreviation usually written with two lightning symbols for *Schutzstaffel* (Defense Protective Units). Originally organized as Hitler's personal bodyguard, the SS was transformed into a giant organization by Heinrich Himmler. Although various SS units were assigned to the battlefield, the organization is best known for carrying out the destruction of European Jewry.

**ST. LOUIS**

The steamship St. Louis was a refugee ship that left Hamburg in the spring of 1939, bound for Cuba. When the ship arrived, only 22 of the 1128 refugees were allowed to disembark. Initially no country, including the United States, was willing to accept the others. The ship finally returned to Europe where most of the refugees were finally granted entry into England, Holland, France and Belgium.

**STREICHER, JULIUS  
(1885-1946)**

Nazi politician who, among other positions was the founder and editor of *Der Stürmer*. Streicher specialized in antisemitism and was one of the chief proponents of the Nuremberg Laws. He was one of the major Nazi figures to be tried by the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. He was sentenced and executed on October 16, 1946.

**STRUMA**

Name of a boat carrying 769 Jewish refugees which left Romania late in 1941. It was refused entry to Palestine or Turkey, and was tugged out to the Black Sea where it sank in February 1942, with the loss of all on board except one.

**DER STÜRMER**

(The Attacker) An antisemitic German weekly, founded and edited by Julius Streicher, which was published in Nuremberg between 1923 and 1945.

**TEREZIN (Czech)  
THERESIENSTADT (German)**

Established in early 1942 outside Prague as a "model" ghetto, Terezin was not a sealed section of town, but rather an eighteenth-century Austrian garrison. It became a Jewish town, governed and guarded by the SS. When the deportations from central Europe to the extermination camps began in the spring of 1942, certain groups were initially excluded: invalids; partners in a mixed marriage, and their children; and prominent Jews with special connections. These were sent to the ghetto in Terezin. They were joined by old and young Jews from the Protectorate, and, later, by small numbers of prominent Jews from Denmark and Holland. Its large barracks served as dormitories for communal living; they also contained offices, workshops, infirmaries, and communal kitchens. The Nazis used Terezin to deceive public opinion. They tolerated a lively cultural life of theatre, music, library, lectures, art and sports. Thus, it could be shown to officials of the International Red Cross. In reality, however,

Terezin was only a station on the road to the extermination camps; about 88,000 were deported to their deaths in the East. In April 1945, only 17,000 Jews remained in Terezin, where they were joined by 14,000 Jewish concentration camp prisoners, evacuated from camps threatened by the Allied armies. On May 8, 1945, Terezin was liberated by the Red Army. (see BAECK, LEO).

**TREBLINKA**

Extermination camp in northeast Poland (see EXTERMINATION CAMP). Established in May 1942 along the Warsaw-Bialystok railway line, 870,000 people were murdered there. The camp operated until the fall of 1943 when the Nazis destroyed the entire camp in an attempt to conceal all traces of their crimes.

**UMSCHLAGPLATZ (German)**

Collection point. It was a square in the Warsaw Ghetto where Jews were rounded up for deportation to Treblinka.

**WANNSEE CONFERENCE  
(January 20, 1942)**

Lake near Berlin where the Wannsee Conference was held to discuss and coordinate the "Final Solution." It was attended by many high-ranking Nazis, including Reinhard Heydrich and Adolf Eichmann.

**WALLENBERG, RAOUL  
(1912-19??)**

Swedish diplomat who, in 1944, went to Hungary on a mission to save as many Jews as possible by handing out Swedish papers, passports and visas. He is credited with saving the lives of at least 30,000 people. After the liberation of Budapest, he was mysteriously taken into custody by the Russians and his fate remains unknown.

**WARSAW GHETTO**

Established in November 1940, the ghetto, surrounded by a wall, confined nearly 500,000 Jews. Almost 45,000 Jews died there in 1941 alone, due to overcrowding, forced labor, lack of sanitation, starvation, and disease. From April 19 to May 16, 1943, a revolt took place in the ghetto when the Germans, commanded by General Jürgen Stroop, attempted to raze the ghetto and deport the remaining inhabitants to Treblinka. The uprising, led by Mordecai Anielewicz, was the first instance in occupied Europe of an uprising by an urban population. (See ANIELEWICZ, MORDECAI).

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**WIESENTHAL, SIMON**  
**(1908- )**

Famed Holocaust survivor who has dedicated his life since the war to gathering evidence for the prosecution of Nazi war criminals. (see p. 49)

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### 36 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **When speaking about the "Holocaust," what time period are we referring to?**

**Answer:** The "Holocaust" refers to the period from January 30, 1933, when Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, to May 8, 1945 (V-E Day), the end of the war in Europe.

2. **How many Jews were murdered during the Holocaust?**

**Answer:** While it is impossible to ascertain the exact number of Jewish victims, statistics indicate that the total was over 5,860,000. Six million is the round figure accepted by most authorities.

3. **How many non-Jewish civilians were murdered during World War II?**

**Answer:** While it is impossible to ascertain the exact number, the recognized figure is approximately 5,000,000. Among the groups which the Nazis and their collaborators murdered and persecuted were: Gypsies, Serbs, Polish intelligentsia and priests, resistance fighters from all the nations, German opponents of Nazism, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, habitual criminals, and the "anti-social," e.g. beggars, vagrants, and hawkers.

4. **Which Jewish communities suffered losses during the Holocaust?**

**Answer:** Every Jewish community in occupied Europe suffered losses during the Holocaust. The Jewish communities in North Africa were persecuted, but were not subjected to the same large-scale deportations and mass murder. Some individuals, however, were deported to German death camps where they perished.

5. **How many Jews were murdered in each country and what percentage of the pre-war Jewish population did they constitute?**

**Answer:** (Source: **Encyclopedia of the Holocaust**; Country names as of 1945)

Austria	50,000	27.0%	Italy	7,680	17.3%
Belgium	28,900	44.0%	Latvia	71,500	78.1%
Bohemia/Moravia	78,150	66.1%	Lithuania	143,000	85.1%
Bulgaria	0	0.0%	Luxembourg	1,950	55.7%
Denmark	60	0.7%	Netherlands	100,000	71.4%
Estonia	2,000	44.4%	Norway	762	44.8%
Finland	7	0.3%	Poland	3,000,000	90.9%
France	77,320	22.1%	Romania	287,000	47.1%
Germany	141,500	25.0%	Slovakia	71,000	79.8%
Greece	67,000	86.6%	Soviet Union	1,100,000	36.4%
Hungary	569,000	69.0%	Yugoslavia	63,300	81.2%

6. **What is a death camp? How many were there? Where were they located?**

**Answer:** A death (or mass murder) camp is a concentration camp with special apparatus specifically designed for systematic murder. Six such camps existed: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibór, Treblinka. All were located in Poland.

7. **What does the term "Final Solution" mean and what is its origin?**

**Answer:** The term "Final Solution" (*Endlösung*) refers to Germany's plan to murder all the Jews of Europe. The term was used at the Wannsee Conference (Berlin; January 20, 1942) where German officials discussed its implementation.

8. **When did the "Final Solution" actually begin?**

**Answer:** While thousands of Jews were murdered by the Nazis or died as a direct result of discriminatory measures instituted against Jews during the initial years of the Third Reich, the systematic murder of Jews did not begin until the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941.

9. **How did the Germans define who was Jewish?**

**Answer:** On November 14, 1935, the Nazis issued the following definition of a Jew: Anyone with three Jewish grandparents; someone with two Jewish grandparents who belonged to the Jewish community on September 15, 1935, or joined thereafter; was married to a Jew or Jewess on September 15, 1935, or married one thereafter; was the offspring of a marriage or extramarital liaison with a Jew on or after September 15, 1935.

10. **How did the Germans treat those who had some Jewish blood but were not classified as Jews?**

**Answer:** Those who were not classified as Jews but who had some Jewish blood were categorized as *Mischlinge* (hybrids) and were divided into two groups:

*Mischlinge* of the first degree--those with two Jewish grandparents;  
*Mischlinge* of the second degree--those with one Jewish grandparent.

The *Mischlinge* were officially excluded from membership in the Nazi Party and all Party organizations (e.g. SA, SS, etc.). Although they were drafted into the Germany Army, they could not attain the rank of officers. They were also barred from the civil service and from certain professions. (Individual *Mischlinge* were, however, granted exemptions under certain circumstances.) Nazi officials considered plans to sterilize *Mischlinge*, but

this was never done. During World War II, first-degree *Mischlinge*, incarcerated in concentration camps, were deported to death camps.

**11. What were the first measures taken by the Nazis against the Jews?**

**Answer:** The first measures against the Jews included:

April 1, 1933: A boycott of Jewish shops and businesses by the Nazis.

April 7, 1933: The law for the Re-establishment of the Civil Service expelled all non-Aryans (defined on April 11, 1933 as anyone with a Jewish parent or grandparent) from the civil service. Initially, exceptions were made for those working since August 1914; German veterans of World War I; and, those who had lost a father or son fighting for Germany or her allies in World War I.

April 7, 1933: The law regarding admission to the legal profession prohibited the admission of lawyers of non-Aryan descent to the Bar. It also denied non-Aryan members of the Bar the right to practice law. (Exceptions were made in the cases noted above in the law regarding the civil service.) Similar laws were passed regarding Jewish law assessors, jurors, and commercial judges.

April 22, 1933: The decree regarding physicians' services with the national health plan denied reimbursement of expenses to those patients who consulted non-Aryan doctors. Jewish doctors who were war veterans or had suffered from the war were excluded.

April 25, 1933: The law against the overcrowding of German schools restricted Jewish enrollment in German high schools to 1.5% of the student body. In communities where they constituted more than 5% of the population, Jews were allowed to constitute up to 5% of the student body. Initially, exceptions were made in the case of children of Jewish war veterans, who were not considered part of the quota. In the framework of this law, a Jewish student was a child with two non-Aryan parents.

**12. Did the Nazis plan to murder the Jews from the beginning of their regime?**

**Answer:** This question is one of the most difficult to answer. While Hitler made several references to killing Jews, both in his early writings (*Mein Kampf*) and in various speeches during the 1930s, it is fairly certain that the Nazis had no operative plan for the systematic annihilation of the Jews before 1941. The decision on the systematic murder of the Jews was apparently made in the late winter or the early spring of 1941 in conjunction with the decision to invade the Soviet Union.

13. **When was the first concentration camp established and who were the first inmates?**

**Answer:** The first concentration camp, Dachau, opened on March 22, 1933. The camp's first inmates were primarily political prisoners (e.g. Communists or Social Democrats); habitual criminals; homosexuals; Jehovah's Witnesses; and "anti-socials" (beggars, vagrants, hawkers). Others considered problematic by the Nazis (e.g. Jewish writers and journalists, lawyers, unpopular industrialists, and political officials) were also included.

14. **Which groups of people in Germany were considered enemies of the state by the Nazis and were, therefore, persecuted?**

**Answer:** The following groups of individuals were considered enemies of the Third Reich and were, therefore, persecuted by the Nazi authorities: Jews, Gypsies, Social Democrats, other opposing politicians, opponents of Nazism, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, habitual criminals, and "anti-socials" (e.g. beggars, vagrants, hawkers), and the mentally ill. Any individual who was considered a threat to the Nazis was in danger of being persecuted.

15. **What was the difference between the persecution of the Jews and the persecution of other groups classified by the Nazis as enemies of the Third Reich?**

**Answer:** The Jews were the only group singled out for total systematic annihilation by the Nazis. To escape the death sentence imposed by the Nazis, the Jews could only leave Nazi-controlled Europe. Every single Jew was to be killed according to the Nazis' plan. In the case of other criminals or enemies of the Third Reich, their families were usually not held accountable. Thus, if a person were executed or sent to a concentration camp, it did not mean that each member of his family would meet the same fate. Moreover, in most situations the Nazis' enemies were classified as such because of their actions or political affiliation. In the case of the Jews, it was because of their racial origin, which could never be changed.

16. **Why were the Jews singled out for extermination?**

**Answer:** The explanation of the Nazis' implacable hatred of the Jew rests on their distorted worldview, which saw history as a racial struggle. They considered the Jews a race whose goal was world domination and who, therefore, were an obstruction to Aryan dominance. They believed that all of history was a fight between races which should culminate in the triumph of the superior Aryan race. Therefore, they considered it their duty to eliminate the Jews, whom they regarded as a threat. Moreover, in their eyes, the Jews' racial origin made them habitual criminals who could never be rehabilitated and were, therefore, hopelessly corrupt and inferior.

There is no doubt that other factors contributed toward Nazi hatred of the Jews and their distorted image of the Jewish people. These included the centuries-old tradition of Christian antisemitism which propagated a negative stereotype of the Jew as a Christ-killer, agent of the devil, and practitioner of witchcraft. Also significant was the political antisemitism of the latter half of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries, which singled out the Jew as a threat to the established order of society. These combined to point to the Jew as a target for persecution and ultimate destruction by the Nazis.

**17. What did people in Germany know about the persecution of Jews and other enemies of Nazism?**

**Answer:** Certain initial aspects of Nazi persecution of Jews and other opponents were common knowledge in Germany. Thus, for example, everyone knew about the Boycott of April 1, 1933, the Laws of April, and the Nuremberg Laws, because they were fully publicized. Moreover, offenders were often publicly punished and shamed. The same holds true for subsequent anti-Jewish measures. *Kristallnacht* (The Night of the Broken Glass) was a public pogrom, carried out in full view of the entire population. While information on the concentration camps was not publicized, a great deal of information was available to the German public, and the treatment of the inmates was generally known, although exact details were not easily obtained.

As for the implementation of the "Final Solution" and the murder of other undesirable elements, the situation was different. The Nazis attempted to keep the murders a secret and, therefore, took precautionary measures to ensure that they would not be publicized. Their efforts, however, were only partially successful. Thus, for example, public protests by various clergymen led to the halt of their euthanasia program in August of 1941. These protests were obviously the result of the fact that many persons were aware that the Nazis were killing the mentally ill in special institutions.

As far as the Jews were concerned, it was common knowledge in Germany that they had disappeared after having been sent to the East. It was not exactly clear to large segments of the German population what had happened to them. On the other hand, there were thousands upon thousands of Germans who participated in and/or witnessed the implementation of the "Final Solution" either as members of the SS, the *Einsatzgruppen*, death camp or concentration camp guards, police in occupied Europe, or with the *Wehrmacht*.

**18. Did all Germans support Hitler's plan for the persecution of the Jews?**

**Answer:** Although the entire German population was not in agreement with Hitler's persecution of the Jews, there is no evidence of any large scale protest regarding their treatment. There were Germans who defied the April 1, 1933 boycott and purposely bought in Jewish stores, and there were those who aided Jews to escape and to hide, but

their number was very small. Even some of those who opposed Hitler were in agreement with his anti-Jewish policies. Among the clergy, *Dompfropst* Bernhard Lichtenberg of Berlin publicly prayed for the Jews daily and was, therefore, sent to a concentration camp by the Nazis. Other priests were deported for their failure to cooperate with Nazi antisemitic policies, but the majority of the clergy complied with the directives against German Jewry and did not openly protest.

19. **Did the people of occupied Europe know about Nazi plans for the Jews? What was their attitude? Did they cooperate with the Nazis against the Jews?**

**Answer:** The attitude of the local population vis-a-vis the persecution and destruction of the Jews varied from zealous collaboration with the Nazis to active assistance to Jews. Thus, it is difficult to make generalizations. The situation also varied from country to country. In Eastern Europe and especially in Poland, Russia, and the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), there was much more knowledge of the "Final Solution" because it was implemented in those areas. Elsewhere, the local population had less information on the details of the "Final Solution."

In every country they occupied, with the exception of Denmark and Bulgaria, the Nazis found many locals who were willing to cooperate fully in the murder of the Jews. This was particularly true in Eastern Europe, where there was a long-standing tradition of virulent antisemitism, and where various national groups, which had been under Soviet domination (Latvians, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians), fostered hopes that the Germans would restore their independence. In several countries in Europe, there were local fascist movements, which allied themselves with the Nazis and participated in anti-Jewish actions; for example, the Iron Guard in Romania and the Arrow Guard in Slovakia. On the other hand, in every country in Europe, there were courageous individuals who risked their lives to save Jews. In several countries, there were groups which aided Jews, e.g. Joop Westerweel's group in the Netherlands, *Zegota* in Poland, and the Assisi underground in Italy.

20. **Did the Allies and the people in the Free World know about the events going on in Europe?**

**Answer:** The various steps taken by the Nazis prior to the "Final Solution" were all taken publicly and were, therefore, reported in the press. Foreign correspondents commented on all the major anti-Jewish actions taken by the Nazis in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia prior to World War II. Once the war began, obtaining information became more difficult, but reports, nonetheless, were published regarding the fate of the Jews. Thus, although the Nazis did not publicize the "Final Solution," less than one year after the systematic murder of the Jews was initiated, details began to filter out to the West. The first report which spoke of a plan for the mass murder of Jews was smuggled out of Poland by the *Bund* (a Jewish socialist political organization) and reached England

in the spring of 1942. The details of this report reached the Allies from Vatican sources as well as from informants in Switzerland and the Polish underground. (Jan Karski, an emissary of the Polish underground, personally met with Franklin Roosevelt and British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden). Eventually, the American Government confirmed the reports to Jewish leaders in late November 1942. They were publicized immediately thereafter. While the details were neither complete nor wholly accurate, the Allies were aware of most of what the Germans had done to the Jews at a relatively early date.

**21. What was the response of the Allies to the persecution of the Jews? Could they have done anything to help?**

**Answer:** The response of the Allies to the persecution and destruction of European Jewry was inadequate. Only in January 1944 was an agency, the War Refugee Board, established for the express purpose of saving the victims of Nazi persecution. Prior to that date, little action was taken. On December 17, 1942, the Allies issued a condemnation of Nazi atrocities against the Jews, but this was the only such declaration made prior to 1944.

Moreover, no attempt was made to call upon the local population in Europe to refrain from assisting the Nazis in their systematic murder of the Jews. Even following the establishment of the War Refugee Board and the initiation of various rescue efforts, the Allies refused to bomb the death camp of Auschwitz and/or the railway lines leading to that camp, despite the fact that Allied bombers were at that time engaged in bombing factories very close to the camp and were well aware of its existence and function.

Other practical measures which were not taken concerned the refugee problem. Tens of thousands of Jews sought to enter the United States, but they were barred from doing so by the stringent American immigration policy. Even the relatively small quotas of visas which existed were often not filled, although the number of applicants was usually many times the number of available places. Conferences held in Evian, France (1938) and Bermuda (1943) to solve the refugee problem did not contribute to a solution. At the former, the countries invited by the United States and Great Britain were told that no country would be asked to change its immigration laws. Moreover, the British agreed to participate only if Palestine were not considered. At Bermuda, the delegates did not deal with the fate of those still in Nazi hands, but rather with those who had already escaped to neutral lands. Practical measures which could have aided in the rescue of Jews included the following:

- Permission for temporary admission of refugees
- Relaxation of stringent entry requirements
- Frequent and unequivocal warnings to Germany and local populations all over Europe that those participating in the annihilation of Jews would be held strictly accountable
- Bombing the death camp at Auschwitz.

**22. Who are the "Righteous Among the Nations"?**

**Answer:** "Righteous Among the Nations," or "Righteous Gentiles," refers to those non-Jews who aided Jews during the Holocaust. There were "Righteous Among the Nations" in every country overrun or allied with the Nazis, and their deeds often led to the rescue of Jewish lives. *Yad Vashem*, the Israeli national remembrance authority for the Holocaust, bestows special honors upon these individuals. To date, after carefully evaluating each case, *Yad Vashem* has recognized approximately 10,000 "Righteous Gentiles" in three different categories of recognition. The country with the most "Righteous Gentiles" is Poland. The country with the highest proportion (per capita) is the Netherlands. The figure of 10,000 is far from complete as many cases were never reported, frequently because those who were helped have died. Moreover, this figure only includes those who actually risked their lives to save Jews, and not those who merely extended aid.

**23. Were Jews in the Free World aware of the persecution and destruction of European Jewry and, if so, what was their response?**

**Answer:** The news of the persecution and destruction of European Jewry must be divided into two periods. The measures taken by the Nazis prior to the "Final Solution" were all taken publicly and were, therefore, in all the newspapers. Foreign correspondents reported on all major anti-Jewish actions taken by the Nazis in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia prior to World War II. Once the war began, obtaining information became more difficult, but, nonetheless, reports were published regarding the fate of the Jews.

The "Final Solution" was not openly publicized by the Nazis, and thus it took longer for information to reach the "Free World." Nevertheless, by December 1942, news of the mass murders and the plan to annihilate European Jewry was publicized in the Jewish press.

The response of the Jews in the "Free World" must also be divided into two periods, before and after the publication of information on the "Final Solution." Efforts during the early years of the Nazi regime concentrated on facilitating emigration from Germany (although there were those who initially opposed emigration as a solution) and combating German antisemitism. Unfortunately, the views on how to best achieve these goals differed and effective action was often hampered by the lack of internal unity. Moreover, very few Jewish leaders actually realized the scope of the danger. Following the publication of the news of the "Final Solution," attempts were made to launch rescue attempts via neutral states and to send aid to Jews under Nazi rule. These attempts, which were far from adequate, were further hampered by the lack of assistance and obstruction from government channels. Additional attempts to achieve internal unity during this period failed.

**24. Did the Jews in Europe realize what was going to happen to them?**

**Answer:** Regarding the knowledge of the "Final Solution" by its potential victims, several key points must be kept in mind. First of all, the Nazis did not publicize the "Final Solution," nor did they ever openly speak about it. Every attempt was made to fool the victims and, thereby, prevent or minimize resistance. Thus, deportees were always told that they were going to be "resettled." They were led to believe that conditions "in the East" (where they were being sent) would be better than those in ghettos. Following arrival in certain concentration camps, the inmates were forced to write home about the wonderful conditions in their new place of residence. The Germans made every effort to ensure secrecy. In addition, the notion that human beings--let alone the civilized Germans--could build camps with special apparatus for mass murder seemed unbelievable in those days. Since German troops liberated the Jews from the Czar in World War I, Germans were regarded by many Jews as a liberal, civilized people. Escapees who did return to the ghetto frequently encountered disbelief when they related their experiences. Even Jews who had heard of the camps had difficulty believing reports of what the Germans were doing there. Inasmuch as each of the Jewish communities in Europe was almost completely isolated, there was a limited number of places with available information. Thus, there is no doubt that many European Jews were not aware of the "Final Solution," a fact that has been corroborated by German documents and the testimonies of survivors.

**25. How many Jews were able to escape from Europe prior to the Holocaust?**

**Answer:** It is difficult to arrive at an exact figure for the number of Jews who were able to escape from Europe prior to World War II, since the available statistics are incomplete. From 1933-1939, 355,278 German and Austrian Jews left their homes. (Some immigrated to countries later overrun by the Nazis.) In the same period, 80,860 Polish Jews immigrated to Palestine and 51,747 European Jews arrived in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. During the years 1938-1939, approximately 35,000 emigrated from Bohemia and Moravia (Czechoslovakia). Shanghai, the only place in the world for which one did not need an entry visa, received approximately 20,000 European Jews (mostly of German origin) who fled their homelands. Immigration figures for countries of refuge during this period are not available. In addition, many countries did not provide a breakdown of immigration statistics according to ethnic groups. It is impossible, therefore, to ascertain the exact number of Jewish refugees.

26. **What efforts were made to save the Jews fleeing from Germany before World War II began?**

**Answer:** Various organizations attempted to facilitate the emigration of the Jews (and non-Jews persecuted as Jews) from Germany. Among the most active were the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, HICEM, the Central British Fund for German Jewry, the *Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden* (Reich Representation of German Jews), which represented German Jewry, and other non-Jewish groups such as the League of Nations High Commission for Refugees (Jewish and other) coming from Germany, and the American Friends Service Committee. Among the programs launched were the "Transfer Agreement" between the Jewish Agency and the German government whereby immigrants to Palestine were allowed to transfer their funds to that country in conjunction with the import of German goods to Palestine. Other efforts focused on retraining prospective emigrants in order to increase the number of those eligible for visas, since some countries barred the entry of members of certain professions. Other groups attempted to help in various phases of refugee work: selection of candidates for emigration, transportation of refugees, aid in immigrant absorption, etc. Some groups attempted to facilitate increased emigration by enlisting the aid of governments and international organizations in seeking refugee havens. The League of Nations established an agency to aid refugees but its success was extremely limited due to a lack of political power and adequate funding.

The United States and Great Britain convened a conference in 1938 at Evian, France, seeking a solution to the refugee problem. With the exception of the Dominican Republic, the nations assembled refused to change their stringent immigration regulations, which were instrumental in preventing large-scale immigration. In fact, Australia remarked, "as we have no real racial problem, we are not desirous of importing one."

In 1939, the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, which had been established at the Evian Conference, initiated negotiations with leading German officials in an attempt to arrange for the relocation of a significant portion of German Jewry. However, these talks failed. Efforts were made for the illegal entry of Jewish immigrants to Palestine as early as July 1934, but were later halted until July 1938. Large-scale efforts were resumed under the *Mosad le-Aliya Bet*, Revisionist Zionists, and private parties. Attempts were also made, with some success, to facilitate the illegal entry of refugees to various countries in Latin America.

27. **Why were so few refugees able to flee Europe prior to the outbreak of World War II?**

**Answer:** The key reason for the relatively low number of refugees leaving Europe prior to World War II was the stringent immigration policies adopted by the prospective host countries. In the United States, for example, the number of immigrants was limited to

153,744 per year, divided by country of origin. Moreover, the entry requirements were so stringent that available quotas were often not filled. Schemes to facilitate immigration outside the quotas never materialized as the majority of the American public consistently opposed the entry of additional refugees. Other countries, particularly those in Latin America, adopted immigration policies that were similar or even more restrictive, thus closing the doors to prospective immigrants from the Third Reich.

Great Britain, while somewhat more liberal than the United States on the entry of immigrants, took measures to severely limit Jewish immigration to Palestine. In May 1939, the British issued a "White Paper" stipulating that only 75,000 Jewish immigrants would be allowed to enter Palestine over the course of the next five years (10,000 a year, plus an additional 25,000). This decision prevented hundreds of thousands of Jews from escaping Europe.

The countries most able to accept large numbers of refugees consistently refused to open their gates. Although a solution to the refugee problem was the agenda of the Evian Conference, only the Dominican Republic was willing to approve large-scale immigration. The United States and Great Britain proposed resettlement havens in under-developed areas (e.g. Guyana, formerly British Guyana, and the Philippines), but these were not suitable alternatives.

Two important factors should be noted. During the period prior to the outbreak of World War II, the Germans were in favor of Jewish emigration. At that time, there were no operative plans to kill the Jews. The goal was to induce them to leave, if necessary, by the use of force. It is also important to recognize the attitude of German Jewry. While many German Jews were initially reluctant to emigrate, the majority sought to do so following *Kristallnacht* (The Night of Broken Glass), November 9-10, 1938. Had havens been available, more people would certainly have emigrated.

**28. What was Hitler's ultimate goal in launching World War II?**

**Answer:** Hitler's ultimate goal in launching World War II was the establishment of an Aryan empire from Germany to the Urals. He considered this area the natural territory of the German people, an area to which they were entitled by right, the *Lebensraum* (living space) that Germany needed so badly for its farmers to have enough soil. Hitler maintained that these areas were needed for the Aryan race to preserve itself and assure its dominance.

There is no question that Hitler knew that, by launching the war in the East, the Nazis would be forced to deal with serious racial problems in view of the composition of the population in the Eastern areas. Thus, the Nazis had detailed plans for the subjugation of the Slavs, who would be reduced to serfdom status and whose primary function would be to serve as a source of cheap labor for Aryan farmers. Those elements of the local

population, who were of higher racial stock, would be taken to Germany where they would be raised as Aryans.

In Hitler's mind, the solution of the Jewish problem was also linked to the conquest of the eastern territories. These areas had large Jewish populations and they would have to be dealt with accordingly. While at this point there was still no operative plan for mass annihilation, it was clear to Hitler that some sort of comprehensive solution would have to be found. There was also talk of establishing a Jewish reservation either in Madagascar or near Lublin, Poland. When he made the decisive decision to invade the Soviet Union, Hitler also gave instructions to embark upon the "Final Solution," the systematic murder of European Jewry.

**29. Was there any opposition to the Nazis within Germany?**

**Answer:** Throughout the course of the Third Reich, there were different groups who opposed the Nazi regime and certain Nazi policies. They engaged in resistance at different times and with various methods, aims, and scope.

From the beginning, leftist political groups and a number of disappointed conservatives were in opposition; at a later date, church groups, government officials, students and businessmen also joined. After the tide of the war was reversed, elements within the military played an active role in opposing Hitler. At no point, however, was there a unified resistance movement within Germany.

**30. Did the Jews try to fight against the Nazis? To what extent were such efforts successful?**

**Answer:** Despite the difficult conditions to which Jews were subjected in Nazi-occupied Europe, many engaged in armed resistance against the Nazis. This resistance can be divided into three basic types of armed activities: ghetto revolts, resistance in concentration and death camps, and partisan warfare.

The Warsaw Ghetto revolt, which lasted for about five weeks beginning on April 19, 1943, is probably the best-known example of armed Jewish resistance, but there were many ghetto revolts in which Jews fought against the Nazis.

Despite the terrible conditions in the death, concentration, and labor camps, Jewish inmates fought against the Nazis at the following sites: Treblinka (August 2, 1943); Babi Yar (September 29, 1943); Sobibór (October 14, 1943); Janowska (November 19, 1943); and Auschwitz (October 7, 1944).

Jewish partisan units were active in many areas, including Baranovichi, Minsk, Naliboki Forest, and Vilna. While the sum total of armed resistance efforts by Jews was not militarily overwhelming and did not play a significant role in the defeat of Nazi Germany, these acts of resistance did lead to the rescue of an undetermined number of Jews, Nazi casualties, and untold damage to German property and self-esteem.

**31. What was the *Judenrat*?**

**Answer:** The *Judenrat* was the council of Jews, appointed by the Nazis in each Jewish community or ghetto. According to the directive from Reinhard Heydrich of the SS on September 21, 1939, a *Judenrat* was to be established in every concentration of Jews in the occupied areas of Poland. They were led by noted community leaders. Enforcement of Nazi decrees affecting Jews and administration of the affairs of the Jewish community were the responsibilities of the *Judenrat*. These functions placed the *Judenrat* in a highly responsible, but controversial position, and many of their actions continue to be the subject of debate among historians. While the intentions of the heads of councils were rarely challenged, their tactics and methods have been questioned. Among the most controversial were Mordechai Rumkowski in Lodz and Jacob Gens in Vilna, both of whom justified the sacrifice of some Jews in order to save others. Leaders and members of the *Judenrat* were guided, for the most part, by a sense of communal responsibility, but lacked the power and the means to successfully thwart Nazi plans for annihilation of all Jews.

**32. Did international organizations, such as the Red Cross, aid victims of Nazi persecution?**

**Answer:** During the course of World War II, the International Red Cross (IRC) did very little to aid the Jewish victims of Nazi persecution. Its activities can basically be divided into three periods:

1. September, 1939 - June 22, 1941:

The IRC confined its activities to sending food packages to those in distress in Nazi-occupied Europe. Packages were distributed in accordance with the directives of the German Red Cross. Throughout this time, the IRC complied with the German contention that those in ghettos and camps constituted a threat to the security of the Reich and, therefore, were not allowed to receive aid from the IRC.

2. June 22, 1941 - Summer 1944:

Despite numerous requests by Jewish organizations, the IRC refused to publicly protest the mass annihilation of Jews and non-Jews in the camps, or to intervene on their behalf. It maintained that any public action on behalf of those under Nazi rule would ultimately prove detrimental to their welfare. At the same time, the IRC attempted to send food parcels to those individuals whose addresses it possessed.

3. Summer 1944 - May 1945:

Following intervention by such prominent figures as President Franklin Roosevelt and the King of Sweden, the IRC appealed to Miklós Horthy, Regent of Hungary, to stop the deportation of Hungarian Jews.

The IRC did insist that it be allowed to visit concentration camps, and a delegation did visit the "model ghetto" of Terezin (Theresienstadt). The IRC request came following the receipt of information about the harsh living conditions in the camp.

The IRC requested permission to investigate the situation, but the Germans only agreed to allow the visit nine months after submission of the request. This delay provided time for the Nazis to complete a "beautification" program, designed to fool the delegation into thinking that conditions at Terezin were quite good and that inmates were allowed to live out their lives in relative tranquility.

The visit, which took place on July 23, 1944, was followed by a favorable report on Terezin to the members of the IRC which Jewish organizations protested vigorously, demanding that another delegation visit the camp. Such a visit was not permitted until shortly before the end of the war. In reality, the majority were subsequently deported to Auschwitz where they were murdered.

**33. How did Germany's allies, the Japanese and the Italians, treat the Jews in the lands they occupied?**

**Answer:** Neither the Italians nor the Japanese, both of whom were Germany's allies during World War II, cooperated regarding the "Final Solution." Although the Italians did, upon German urging, institute discriminatory legislation against Italian Jews, Mussolini's government refused to participate in the "Final Solution" and consistently refused to deport its Jewish residents. Moreover, in their occupied areas of France, Greece, and Yugoslavia, the Italians protected the Jews and did not allow them to be deported. However, when the Germans overthrew the Badoglio government in 1943, the Jews of Italy, as well as those under Italian protection in occupied areas, were subject to the "Final Solution."

The Japanese were also relatively tolerant toward the Jews in their country as well as in the areas which they occupied. Despite pressure by their German allies urging them to take stringent measures against Jews, the Japanese refused to do so. Refugees were allowed to enter Japan until the spring of 1941, and Jews in Japanese-occupied China were treated well. In the summer and fall of 1941, refugees in Japan were transferred to Shanghai but no measures were taken against them until early 1943, when they were

forced to move into the Hongkew Ghetto. While conditions were hardly satisfactory, they were far superior to those in the ghettos under German control.

34. **What was the attitude of the churches vis-a-vis the persecution of the Jews? Did the Pope ever speak out against the Nazis?**

**Answer:** The head of the Catholic Church at the time of the Nazi rise to power was Pope Pius XI. Although he stated that the myths of "race" and "blood" were contrary to Christian teaching (in a papal encyclical, March 1937), he neither mentioned nor criticized antisemitism. His successor, Pius XII (Cardinal Pacelli) was a Germanophile who maintained his strict neutrality throughout the course of World War II. Although, as early as 1942, the Vatican received detailed information on the murder of Jews in concentration camps, the Pope confined his public statements to broad expressions of sympathy for the victims of injustice and to calls for a more humane conduct of the war.

Despite the lack of response by Pope Pius XII, several papal nuncios played an important role in rescue efforts, particularly the nuncios in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Turkey. It is not clear to what, if any, extent they operated upon instructions from the Vatican. In Germany, the Catholic Church did not oppose the Nazis' antisemitic campaign. Church records were supplied to state authorities which assisted in the detection of people of Jewish origin, and efforts to aid the persecuted were confined to Catholic non-Aryans. While Catholic clergymen protested the Nazi euthanasia program, few, with the exception of Bernhard Lichtenberg, spoke out against the murder of the Jews.

In Western Europe, Catholic clergy spoke out publicly against the persecution of the Jews and actively helped in the rescue of Jews. In Eastern Europe, however, the Catholic clergy was generally more reluctant to help. Dr. Jozef Tiso, the head of state of Slovakia and a Catholic priest, actively cooperated with the Germans as did many other Catholic priests.

The response of Protestant and Eastern Orthodox churches varied. In Germany, for example, Nazi supporters within Protestant churches complied with the anti-Jewish legislation and even excluded Christians of Jewish origin from membership. Pastor Martin Niemöller's Confessing Church defended the rights of Christians of Jewish origin within the church, but did not publicly protest their persecution, nor did it condemn the measures taken against the Jews, with the exception of a memorandum sent to Hitler in May 1936.

In occupied Europe, the position of the Protestant churches varied. In several countries (Denmark, France, the Netherlands, and Norway) local churches and/or leading clergymen issued public protests when the Nazis began deporting Jews. In other countries (Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia), some Orthodox church leaders intervened on behalf of the Jews and took steps which, in certain cases, led to the rescue of many Jews.

35. **How many Nazi criminals were there? How many were brought to justice?**

**Answer:** We do not know the exact number of Nazi criminals since the available documentation is incomplete. The Nazis themselves destroyed many incriminating documents and there are still many criminals who are unidentified and/or unindicted.

Those who committed war crimes include those individuals who initiated, planned and directed the killing operations, as well as those with whose knowledge, agreement, and passive participation the murder of European Jewry was carried out.

Those who actually implemented the "Final Solution" include the leaders of Nazi Germany, the heads of the Nazi Party, and the Reich Security Main Office. Also included are hundreds of thousands of members of the Gestapo, the SS, the *Einsatzgruppen*, the police and the armed forces, as well as those bureaucrats who were involved in the persecution and destruction of European Jewry. In addition, there were thousands of individuals throughout occupied Europe who cooperated with the Nazis in killing Jews and other innocent civilians.

We do not have complete statistics on the number of criminals brought to justice, but the number is certainly far less than the total of those who were involved in the "Final Solution." The leaders of the Third Reich, who were caught by the Allies, were tried by the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg from November 20, 1945 to October 1, 1946. Afterwards, the Allied occupation authorities continued to try Nazis, with the most significant trials held in the American zone (the Subsequent Nuremberg Proceedings). In total, 5,025 Nazi criminals were convicted between 1945-1949 in the American, British and French zones, in addition to an unspecified number of people who were tried in the Soviet zone. In addition, the United Nations War Crimes Commission prepared lists of war criminals who were later tried by the judicial authorities of Allied countries and those countries under Nazi rule during the war. The latter countries have conducted a large number of trials regarding crimes committed in their lands. The Polish tribunals, for example, tried approximately 40,000 persons, and large numbers of criminals were tried in other countries. In all, about 80,000 Germans have been convicted for committing crimes against humanity, while the number of local collaborators is in the tens of thousands. Special mention should be made of Simon Wiesenthal, whose activities led to the capture of over one thousand Nazi criminals.

Courts in Germany began, in some cases, to function as early as 1945. By 1969, almost 80,000 Germans had been investigated and over 6,000 had been convicted. In 1958, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG; West Germany) established a special agency in Ludwigsburg to aid in the investigation of crimes committed by Germans outside Germany, an agency which, since its establishment, has been involved in hundreds of major investigations. One of the major problems regarding the trial of war criminals in the

FRG (as well as in Austria) has been the fact that the sentences have been disproportionately lenient for the crimes committed. Some trials were also conducted in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR; East Germany), yet no statistics exist as to the number of those convicted or the extent of their sentences.

**36. What were the Nuremberg Trials?**

**Answer:** The term "Nuremberg Trials" refers to two sets of trials of Nazi war criminals conducted after the war. The first trials were held November 20, 1945 to October 1, 1946, before the International Military Tribunal (IMT), which was made up of representatives of France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States. It consisted of the trials of the political, military and economic leaders of the Third Reich captured by the Allies. Among the defendants were: Göring, Rosenberg, Streicher, Kaltenbrunner, Seyss-Inquart, Speer, Ribbentrop and Hess (many of the most prominent Nazis -- Hitler, Himmler, and Goebbels -- committed suicide and were not brought to trial). The second set of trials, known as the Subsequent Nuremberg Proceedings, was conducted before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals (NMT), established by the Office of the United States Government for Germany (OMGUS). While the judges on the NMT were American citizens, the tribunal considered itself international. Twelve high-ranking officials were tried, among whom were cabinet ministers, diplomats, doctors involved in medical experiments, and SS officers involved in crimes in concentration camps or in genocide in Nazi-occupied areas. Publications of the trial proceedings are available.

# DIRECTORY OF MAJOR ADMINISTRATIVE CENTERS AND CONCENTRATION CAMPS

CONCENTRATION CAMP	LOCATION	TYPE OF CAMP	OPERATION	CLOSURE	PRESENT STATUS
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU	Poland	Annihilation; Forced Labor	April 1940 - January 1945	Liberated by USSR	Camp Preserved
BELZEC	Poland	Annihilation	March 1942 - June 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
BERGEN-BELSEN	Germany	Holding Center	April 1943 - April 1945	Liberated by UK	Graveyard
BUCHENWALD	Germany	Forced Labor	July 1937 - April 1945	Liberated by USA	Camp preserved; Museum
CHELMNO	Poland	Annihilation	December 1944 - April 1943; April 1944 - January 1945	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
DACHAU	Germany	Forced Labor	March 1933 - April 1945	Liberated by USA	Camp preserved; Museum
DORA/ MITTELBAU	Germany	Forced Labor	September 1943 - April 1945	Liberated by USA	Memorial Sculpture Plaza
FLOSSENBUERG	Germany	Forced Labor	May 1938 - April 1945	Liberated by USA	Buildings; Monument

<b>CONCENTRATION CAMP</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>TYPE OF CAMP</b>	<b>OPERATION</b>	<b>CLOSURE</b>	<b>PRESENT STATUS</b>
<b>GROSS-ROSEN</b>	Poland	Forced Labor	August 1940 - February 1945	Liberated by USSR	Camp Preserved; Museum
<b>JANÓWSKA</b>	Ukraine	Forced Labor; Annihilation	September 1941 - November 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Not Maintained
<b>KAISERWALD</b>	Latvia	Forced Labor	March 1943 - September 1944	Liquidated by Germany	Not Maintained
<b>MAJDANEK</b>	Poland	Annihilation	July 1941 - July 1944	Liberated by USSR	Camp Preserved; Monument
<b>MAUTHAUSEN</b>	Austria	Forced Labor	August 1938 - May 1945	Liberated by USA	Buildings; Monument
<b>NATZWEILER/ STRUTHOF</b>	France	Forced Labor	May 1941 - September 1944	Liquidated by Germany	Camp Preserved
<b>NEUENGAMME</b>	Germany	Forced Labor	June 1940 - May 1945	Liberated by UK	Used as Prison; Monument
<b>ORANIENBURG</b>	Germany	Holding Center	March 1933 - March 1935	Liquidated by Germany	Not Maintained
<b>PLASZOW</b>	Poland	Forced Labor	December 1942 - January 1945	Liquidated by Germany	Not Maintained

41	CONCENTRATION CAMP	LOCATION	TYPE OF CAMP	OPERATION	CLOSURE	PRESENT STATUS
	RAVENSBRÜCK	Germany	Forced Labor	May 1939 - April 1945	Liberated by USSR	Buildings; Monument
	SACHSENHAUSEN	Germany	Forced Labor	July 1936 - April 1945	Liberated by USSR	Museum; Buildings
	SOBIBOR	Poland	Annihilation	May 1942 - October 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
	STUTTHOF	Poland	Forced Labor	September 1939 - May 1945	Liberated by USSR	Buildings; Museum
	TEREZIN (THERESIENSTADT)	Czech Republic	"Model Camp" Holding Center Transit Ghetto	November 1941 - May 1945	Liberated by USSR	Buildings; Monument
	TREBLINKA	Poland	Annihilation	July 1942 - November 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
	WESTERBORK	Netherlands	Transit Camp	October 1939 - April 1945	Liberated by Canada	Monument

**Important Sub-Camps  
And Their Main Camps**

<b>Sub-Camp</b>	<b>Main Camp</b>	<b>Sub-Camp</b>	<b>Main Camp</b>
1. Berga	Buchenwald	13. Kaufering	Dachau
2. Birkenau	Auschwitz	14. Landsberg	Dachau
3. Blechhammer	Auschwitz	15. Mielec	Plaszow
4. Ebensee	Mauthausen	16. Monowitz	Auschwitz
5. Gelsenkirchen	Buchenwald	17. Nordhausen	Dora-Mittelbau
6. Gleiwitz I	Auschwitz	18. Ohrdruf	Buchenwald
7. Görlitz	Gross Rosen	19. Quedlinburg	Buchenwald
8. Gunskirchen	Mauthausen	20. Salzwedel	Neuengamme
9. Gusen	Mauthausen	21. St. Georgen	Mauthausen
10. Janinagrube	Auschwitz	22. Trawniki	Lublin-Majdanek
11. Jaworzno	Auschwitz	23. Vaihingen	Natzweiler
12. Kattowitz	Auschwitz	24. Weisswasser	Gross Rosen
		25. Wöbbelin	Neuengamme

**Concentration Camps  
Operated by German Collaborators**

<b>Camp</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Camp</b>	<b>Location</b>
1. Bor	Podolia (now Ukraine)	8. Lagedi	Estonia
2. Djakovo	Croatia	9. Loborgrad	Croatia
3. Danica	Croatia	10. Malines	Belgium
4. Gradiska	Croatia	11. Noe	France
5. Gurs	France	12. Salaspils	Latvia
6. Jadovno	Croatia	13. Tartu	Estonia
7. Jasenovac	Croatia	14. Transnistria (complex of many camps)	Romania (now Ukraine)

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**Media Productions  
by the  
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Videorecording, **Genocide.** Winner of the 1981 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. Genocide combines historical narrative with actual stories of ordinary people caught up in the Nazis' reign of terror. Narrated by Orson Welles and Elizabeth Taylor. 1981. 83 minutes.

Videorecording, **Liberation.** Using archival film footage, Liberation depicts both the battles and the human tragedy of World War II, from 1942, when Hitler was at the height of his power, to the dramatic liberation of Paris in 1945. Narrated by Ben Kingsley, Miriam Margolyes, Patrick Stewart, Jean Boht and Whoopi Goldberg. Premiered at the 1995 Berlin Film Festival. 1994. 100 minutes.

Videorecording, **The Long Way Home.** Winner of the 1997 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, **The Long Way Home** examines the critical post-World War II period between 1945 and 1948 and the struggle of the tens of thousands of displaced Jewish refugees to find dignity and renewal in the aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust. Narrated by Morgan Freeman. 1997. 90 minutes.

Poster Series: **The Courage to Remember: The Holocaust 1933-1945**  
On March 13, 1988, as Austria looked back on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Anschluss*, the Simon Wiesenthal Center won critical acclaim with the world debut of its travelling exhibition, **THE COURAGE TO REMEMBER**, in Vienna's Palais Palfy. This 40-panel visual narrative on the Holocaust is available in a series of full-color posters, which can be used as an educational display, or as a personal exhibition.

This series is ideal for commemorative or educational use in community centers, high schools and universities; libraries, synagogues, and churches; and, by other interested organizations and individuals. See posters and curriculum at <http://motlc.wiesenthal.com>

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## Simon Wiesenthal Center Library & Archives

### **Websites**

1. **[www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com)**

#### **Simon Wiesenthal Center**

The Simon Wiesenthal Center is a 400,000 member international center for Holocaust remembrance, the defense of human rights and the Jewish People.

2. **[motlc.wiesenthal.com](http://motlc.wiesenthal.com)**

#### **Museum of Tolerance**

The Museum of Tolerance is a high-tech, interactive exhibit museum that focuses on the dynamics of racism and prejudice in America and the history of the Holocaust. This site contains numerous educational materials including maps, photographs, and the Encyclopedia of the Holocaust.

3. **[tst.wiesenthal.com](http://tst.wiesenthal.com)**

#### **Teaching Steps to Tolerance**

The Teaching Steps to Tolerance program serves as an aid to educators in integrating the teaching of tolerance and human behavior into their schools' curricula.

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**HOLOCAUST DENIAL  
BIGOTRY IN THE GUISE OF SCHOLARSHIP  
(excerpt)**

by Sol Littman

**INTRODUCTION**

Between 1939 and 1945, the Nazis killed some six million Jews, two thirds of the Jewish population of Europe. Close to 1.5 million of those murdered were children. Tens of thousands of families – fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles, and cousins – were wiped out without a trace. The unspeakable horror of what was to become known as the Holocaust was documented in photographs taken covertly by German soldiers, and in the captured reports and sworn testimonies of Nazis who participated actively in the destruction of European Jewry. There are also the diaries of Jewish victims that were recovered from their secret hiding places after the war as well as the memoirs of hundreds of Holocaust survivors, recounting their own tragic experiences. Despite this irrefutable body of evidence, a pervasive, insidious international movement has sprung up which brazenly claims that “the Holocaust never happened.”

Viewed in perspective, these efforts to “deny the Holocaust” are readily recognizable as the latest in a long series of calumnies and anti-Jewish myths dating back to the Middle Ages. But as Canadian critic and journalist Robert Fulford writes, never before in the long history of anti-Semitism has anyone produced such a “titanic lie.”

Holocaust deniers have borrowed freely from the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a nefarious antisemitic tract written in the mid-nineteenth century and repeatedly reworked in the twentieth. Seized upon by hatemongers worldwide, this virulent, deceitful instrument of hate propaganda portrays Jews as ceaselessly plotting to take over the world in partnership with communists, capitalists, international financiers and occult satanic forces. As the contemporary version of the “devious, conniving Jew,” Holocaust denial threatens to be an equally powerful and destructive weapon in the hands of professional hate peddlers.

Most directly and personally affected by Holocaust denial are the remnants of the European Jewish community that managed – by sheer chance in most cases – to escape the Nazis’ mobile killing squads, gas vans and gas chambers. To deny their suffering and degradation is the ultimate cruelty (Lipstadt, 1993). Vidal-Naquet, writing in France, refers to Holocaust deniers as “assassins of memory” whose deceits and distortions seek to rob Holocaust survivors of the sacred memory of their families and friends consumed in the flames (Vidal-Naquet, 1992).

It is important to recognize that Holocaust denial, while an important social issue, offers no grounds for academic controversy. Its importance lies not in the substance of its claims, but in society's unfortunate susceptibility to far-fetched conspiracy theories. There is considerable evidence to show that people, lacking a knowledge and understanding of history, tend to seize upon these far-fetched notions no matter how irrational and fallacious they may be. Holocaust deniers, in particular, have taken lessons from Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels who proved that any lie offered with an air of assurance and repeated loudly and often enough is bound to be believed.

And herein lies the greatest danger. This assault on historic truth, this attempt to whitewash the Nazis' crimes, portends a tragic price to a society apathetic to its implications. As the Spanish philosopher George Santayana put it: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." An awareness of the facts concerning the annihilation of millions of Jews, Gypsies, Poles, Russians, homosexuals, mentally impaired and physically handicapped at the hands of the Nazis is the only way of ensuring that this great human tragedy never happens again.

#### **WHAT IS HISTORICAL REVISIONISM?**

History is not carved in stone and facts do not stand alone. To make sense they must be related to other facts. History, therefore, is constantly being revised. North and South saw the American Civil War from different perspectives. For the North, the war was a crusade to free the slaves and preserve the Union; to the South it was a gallant effort to preserve the Southern way of life and retain the right of states to determine their own destiny. American historians have analyzed and re-analyzed these competing claims and found considerable evidence that neither side was as innocent of avarice as it pretended.

Obviously, revising history is not the same as denying events actually took place. However, those who style themselves "Holocaust revisionists" do not revise history but invent it to suit their own purposes. They pick and choose the facts they will consider, ignoring and discarding whatever runs contrary to their thesis. It is precisely this *rejection of history* that makes Holocaust denial so intellectually and morally repugnant in a society that places a high value on truth and knowledge.

Holocaust denial can best be defined as that expression of anti-Jewish hate whose central thesis is that the Holocaust is a hoax, a massive deception on a global scale. Holocaust denial pretends to be legitimate history and takes the guise of historical scholarship. It employs the trappings of academic journals, scholarly conferences and footnoted articles to deny the historical genocide of the Jews. The deniers aim to reshape and distort history in order to "rehabilitate the perpetrator and demonize the victims." (Lipstadt, 1993) It defames the memory of those millions who perished in Hitler's death camps.

By pretending to engage in serious research, quoting seemingly authoritative sources, and by flaunting an occasional document or statistic, the Holocaust deniers hope to persuade their

audience of the authenticity of their scholarship. Once they have gained a measure of credibility they will be in a position to gain ready access to the press, political institutions, student bodies and university classrooms.

## **WHEN DID HISTORICAL REVISIONISM BEGIN?**

Repudiation of the Holocaust as an historical fact dates back to the writings of Paul Rassinier in the late forties in France. Holocaust denial, however, evolved concurrently in the U.S., France, and Canada. Within a decade, the Holocaust denial movement emerged as a force in other countries. The crystallization of the movement to deny the Holocaust did not occur until the early 1970s. Arthur Butz's *Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, is the document which first outlined the conspiracy theory which suggests that the Zionist Jews invented the Holocaust to extort monies from Germany to establish Jewish control from Israel over the entire world.

## **WHAT IS THE AIM OF HOLOCAUST REVISIONISM?**

Underlying the broad claims of Holocaust deniers is the aim of restoring the image and credibility of Adolf Hitler's ideology and reputation. Holocaust revisionists have shared several assumptions. These include:

### **Revisionist Assumptions**

1. There was no genocide and the chief instrument in its realization, the gas chamber, never existed;
2. There was never a premeditated genocidal plan for the Jews; the "Final Solution" was a notion conceived by Jews to gain world sympathy;
3. The number of Jewish victims of Nazism is infinitesimally smaller than has been claimed;
4. The Holocaust was an invention of Zionist propaganda motivated by the Jewish vice: love of money. Israel has been the main beneficiary of the financial reparations paid by Germany, "the milk cow for Israel" (Rassinier).

The various components of the ideology of Holocaust denial include: German nationalism, neo-Nazism, anti-communism, anti-Zionism and antisemitism. Deniers subscribe to an ideological framework which contains at least three components:

- racial determinism (i.e., biological race determines culture, intellectual capacity and moral worth);
- the doctrine of White superiority;
- the rehabilitation of Nazism and its leaders.

## **WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HOLOCAUST REVISIONISTS AND OTHER HATE GROUPS?**

A hate group can be defined as an organization whose main purpose is to promote hatred, animosity, hostility and malice against identifiable racial, ethnic and religious groups. Their ultimate aim is the annihilation of the group's members.

The upper-echelons of the Holocaust denial movement may wear three-piece suits, and sport stylish haircuts rather than shave their heads and wear 24-notch Doc Martens, but they are just as much hatemongers as any other neo-Nazi group. Even though they may put it more politely, they share much the same ideology as the Ku Klux Klan, Heritage Front, Aryan Resistance Movement, Church of the Creator and other hate groups. They hold the view that the Aryan or White race is superior to all others and that they are destined by "blood" to dominate society. They have embraced the myth that Jews control the banks, the media, governments and ultimately, the world.

Well-financed, and in some cases well educated, the leaders of the Holocaust denial movement can afford to travel. As a result, they have established strong international links that join the National Front in Britain with skinheads in Germany to right wing publishing houses in the United States and Ernst Zundel in Canada. English writer David Irving tours Canada at the invitation of a series of local neo-Nazi groups including Zundel. In return, Zundel speaks at a fascist rally in London organized by Irving.

In the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Norway, Hungary, Brazil, Slovakia and Australia, newly renascent Nazi groups have adopted Holocaust denial as a prime propaganda instrument. In almost every case, the deniers seek to maintain a facade of respectability and intellectuality, however, being haters at heart, they are seldom able to maintain the pose for long. Sooner or later the facade crumbles and their real intentions are revealed.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READINGS**

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Edith Rechter Levy is a Holocaust survivor who lost her entire extended family to the fanatical hatred of the Nazi regime. She, her mother and brothers were saved when a German woman in Belgium provided them with a hiding place and cared for them.

Besides being a survivor, Dr. Levy is a Holocaust educator and published scholar who has devoted nearly twenty years to teaching the Holocaust and the consequences of bias and prejudice. In 1996 Levy organized a Holocaust education committee, composed of herself and other faculty members, clergy, teachers and concerned citizens. Levy petitioned the state Board of Education, the legislature and ultimately the governor himself who, on April 16, 1998, granted her a Holocaust Commission by Executive Order and named her Chairperson of that commission. When a new governor was elected in 2000, Levy once more approached the legislature with a proposal to have the commission officially sanctioned by having it legislated. When the new governor signed the senate bill into law, Levy finally saw her dream come true.

The present text approaches the study of the Holocaust as seen through the eyes of a child trapped in such a world. It deals with circumstances and human behavior that allowed the Holocaust to happen, be they ancient prejudices or apathy and indifference. As such, it serves as a lesson for the present and the future.

Intended as a reader for middle and junior high school students as an introduction to the more in-depth study of the Holocaust on the high school level, this text has been welcomed and embraced by many high school teachers as well, who find it provides them additional insight and background information alongside the usually strictly data-based historical high school texts.

\$22.50  
ISBN 978-1-4243-1066-1



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