

2008-2009 Student Awareness Days



THE HOLOCAUST: The Meaning of Never Again



Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc.
A LIVING MEMORIAL THROUGH EDUCATION

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NEVER AGAIN!

A L I V I N G M E M O R I A L T H R O U G H E D U C A T I O N



Holocaust Documentation & Education Center & Museum, Inc.

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THE HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND EDUCATION CENTER is a nonsectarian, nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to preserve the authentic memory of the Holocaust by creating a permanent and irrefutable record of the testimonies of Survivors, Liberators, and Rescuers. These eyewitness accounts enhance the process of Holocaust education in our effort to create *A Living Memorial Through Education*.



This authentic World War II railcar was used to transport Jews from the ghetto to death and concentration camps during the Holocaust. Many passengers died en route. For most others, the train was a one way passage to death. Jews were killed within hours of their arrival.



Only a few of these cars have survived. After undergoing restoration and preservation, this railcar will be on permanent display on "dead tracks" near our museum. We anticipate that our rail car will be on permanent display in 12 months.



Our **NEW LIBRARY** will provide access to reference and research materials on the Holocaust to teachers, students, researchers, and historians.

In addition to more than 5,000 books, the library subscribes to more than a dozen periodicals and owns more than 100 DVDs on the Holocaust.



The library will also house our **ORAL HISTORY LIBRARY COLLECTION** which has more than 2,200 eyewitness testimonies from Survivors, Liberators, and Rescuers. We anticipate that the library will be open in Fall 2008!

Our **STUDENT AWARENESS DAYS** are prejudice reduction symposia where high school, college, and university students in the tri-county area learn the dangers of racism, hatred, and bigotry through videos, lectures, and round table discussions with Survivors of the Holocaust.

We have received generous donations of memorabilia and photographs for use in our museum, but more items are needed. If you or anyone you know would like to donate items to the museum, please let us know.

Plans for the first **SOUTH FLORIDA HOLOCAUST MUSEUM** are underway, and we hope to have the museum open in 12 to 18 months. The museum will tell the story of the Holocaust in both English and Spanish.

If you would like to support any of our programs, please contact us at (954) 929-5690 or mail your contribution to: **HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION & EDUCATION CENTER, INC.** 2031 Harrison Street, Hollywood, FL 33020. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and American Express.



The Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc. is proud to have authored and led the efforts that resulted in the following legislation in 1994 mandating that every student from K – 20 is to be taught education and the Florida teachers are to be provided with the necessary training and resources. The bill co-sponsors were Senator Ron Silver and State Representative Ron Klein.

REQUIRED PUBLIC SCHOOL INSTRUCTION OF THE HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST

FLORIDA STATUTE 1003.42

- (2) Members of the instructional staff of the public schools, subject to the rules and regulations of the commissioner, the state board, and the school board, shall teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and materials required, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction, the following:
 - (f) The history of the Holocaust (1933 -1945), the systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and protecting democratic values and institutions.

THE HOLOCAUST

DEFINITION OF THE TERM: HOLOCAUST

It is critical that a study of the Holocaust begin with an understanding of definitions. In *Teaching About the Holocaust: A Resource Book for Educators*, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum provides the following explanation:

Define What you Mean by “Holocaust”

The Holocaust refers to a specific genocidal even in twentieth-century history: the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims – 6 million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

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. In the *Days of Remembrance: A Department of Defense Guide for Annual Commemorative Observances* (Second Edition), the Department of Defense and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum explain further the significance of using specific terminology:

Define Terms With Precision

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 was 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 war or all world wars;
- all the terrors of World War II – or all the many civilian deaths associated with that war, in cities throughout Europe.

THE HOLOCAUST: A HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims -- six million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

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 multiparty system -- the Nazis had only won a plurality of 33 percent of the votes in the 1932 elections to the German parliament (Reichstag).



Adolph Hitler

Once in power, Hitler moved quickly to end German democracy. He convinced his cabinet to invoke emergency clauses of the constitution that permitted the suspension of individual freedoms of press, speech, and assembly. Special security forces -- the Special State Police (the *Gestapo*), the Storm Troopers (SA), and the Security Police (SS) -- 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)¹ Race," what they called the "master race."

Jews, who numbered nearly 600,000 in Germany (less than one percent of the total population in 1933), were the principal targets of Nazi hatred. The Nazis mistakenly identified Jews as a race and defined this race as "inferior." They also spewed hate-mongering propaganda that unfairly

¹ 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.

blamed Jews for Germany's economic depression and the country's defeat in World War I (1914-1918).



Anti-Semitism

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 made Jews second-class citizens. These "Nuremberg Laws" defined Jews not by their religion or by how they wanted to identify themselves but by the religious affiliation 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 Austrian² Jews changed into the physical destruction of synagogues and Jewish-owned stores, the arrest of Jewish men, the destruction of homes, and 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 backgrounds³ 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." Some five to fifteen thousand homosexuals were imprisoned in concentration camps; under the 1935 Nazi-revised criminal code, the mere denunciation of a man as "homosexual" could result in arrest, trial, and conviction. Jehovah's Witnesses, who numbered 20,000 in Germany, 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,

² 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).

³ 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.

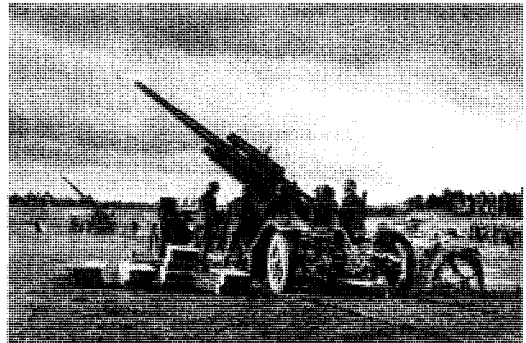
and all social welfare benefits. Many Witnesses were sent to prisons and concentration camps in Nazi Germany, and their children were sent to juvenile detention homes and orphanages.

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.

Between 1933 and 1939, about half the German Jewish population and more than two-thirds of Austrian Jews (1938-39) fled Nazi persecution. They emigrated mainly to Palestine, the United States, Latin America, Shanghai (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 "sub-human." 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.



German anti-aircraft gun

As the war began in 1939, Hitler initialed 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" that 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, the Netherlands, 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 German 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.



Deportation

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.



Concentration camp

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, chosen because of their closeness to rail lines and their location in semi-rural areas, were 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 between 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 people were killed at Auschwitz-Birkenau, 9 out of 10 of them 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 SS. The victims arrived in railroad freight cars and passenger trains, mostly from ghettos and camps in occupied Poland, 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.



Concentration camp

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 boat lift 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 that saved the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews in 1944.



Partisans

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 SS 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 SS guards fled, and the camps ceased to exist as extermination, forced labor, or concentration camps. Some of the concentration camps, including Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, and Landsberg, all in Allied occupied Germany, were turned into camps for displaced persons (DPs), which included former Holocaust victims unable to be repatriated.



After Liberation

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.

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.

HOLOCAUST CHRONOLOGY

1920

February 24: The Nazi party issues a platform.

1923

November 9: In Munich, the Nazis, headed by Adolf Hitler, try to take over the Bavarian government, in what becomes known as the Beer-Hall *Putsch*. Hitler begins a jail term for his role in the plot. During his time in jail, he writes *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*), an autobiography which outlines his racist theories. A sympathetic judge releases Hitler before his jail sentence is over.

1933

January 30: President Hindenburg appoints Adolf Hitler as *Reich* Chancellor after an election in which the Nazis receive approximately 33 percent of the vote.*

February 27: *Reichstag* building destroyed by arson, and the next day a national emergency is declared. The German constitution is suspended; the government takes away freedom of speech, assembly, press, freedom from invasion of privacy, and from house search without warrant.

March 4: Franklin D. Roosevelt is inaugurated as President of the United States.

March 20: Dachau concentration camp, the first in a system which came to include thousands of camps and sub-camps by 1944, is established near Munich, Germany. Its first prisoners are those arrested for political opposition to the regime.

March 24: "Enabling Act" is passed by the German *Reichstag* (parliament). The Act is used by Hitler to establish his Nazi dictatorship and makes suspension of civil liberties legal.

April 1: An official, nationwide, one-day boycott of Jewish-owned businesses in Germany is called by the Nazi party leadership.

April 7: The German "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service" excludes "non-Aryans" from government employment. Jewish civil servants, including university professors and school teachers, are fired in Germany.

April 26: Official formation of the Gestapo, the Nazi Secret State Police. The Gestapo was given powers to arrest and interrogate without reference to any other authority of the state.

May 10: Books written by Jews and political opponents of Nazism are burned during public rallies throughout Germany.

- July 14: Nazi Party proclaimed by law to be the only legal political party in Germany. Any individuals holding non-Nazi political meetings are subject to arrest and imprisonment.
- Law passed in Germany permitting the forced sterilization of Gypsies, the mentally and physically disabled, African-Germans, and others considered "inferior" or "unfit."
- July 20: Concordat signed in Rome between the Vatican and the Third Reich.
- Fall: Placards declaring "Jews Not Wanted" appear on cafes, stadiums, shops, and roads leading to German towns and villages.
- October 14: Germany withdraws from the League of Nations.
- December 1: Hitler declares legal unity of the German State and Nazi party.
- 1934**
- January 26: Germany and Poland sign a ten-year non-aggression pact.
- June 30: Hitler orders the SS, under Heinrich Himmler, to purge the SA leadership. Approximately seventy Nazi leaders and civilians are murdered during the "Night of the Long Knives." Ernst Röhm, former head of the SA and member of Hitler's cabinet, is killed in the purge.
- August 2: German President Paul von Hindenburg dies, leaving the way open for Hitler to establish a dictatorship. Hitler declares himself Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. Members of the armed forces are now required to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler.
- October: First major wave of arrests of homosexuals occurs throughout Germany, continuing into November.
- 1935**
- March 16: In violation of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany resumes military conscription. World powers do not respond.
- April: Jehovah's Witnesses are prohibited from religious activity and publication, banned from civil service jobs, and arrested throughout Germany.
- June 28: German officials strengthen Paragraph 175 of the German legal code to introduce more stringent punishment for homosexual behavior; the paragraph is widened to punish all "indecent" acts between men, even those not sexual in nature.
- Summer: *Juden Verboten* (Jews Forbidden) signs increase in number outside towns, villages, restaurants and stores. More than seventy-five thousand Jews emigrate or flee Germany by the end of August.
- September 15: *Reichstag* passes antisemitic citizenship and racial laws at Nazi party rally in Nuremberg. The "*Reich* Citizenship Law" and its corollaries exclude Jews and other "non-Aryans" from full *Reich* citizenship. The "Law for the

- Protection of German Blood and German Honor" forbids marriage or sexual relations between German "Aryans" and Jews.
- November 14: Following the passage of the "Regulation to the *Reich* Citizenship Law," categories are established which define a Jew according to the number of Jewish grandparents a person has.
- 1936**
- March 3: Jewish doctors are no longer allowed to practice in government institutions in Germany.
- March 7: German army enters the area of the Rhineland, violating the Treaty of Versailles. World powers do not respond.
- July: First German Gypsies are arrested and deported to Dachau concentration camp.
- August 1-16: Olympic Games are held in Berlin, Germany. Antisemitic signs are removed from most public places until the Games are over.
- October 25: Hitler and Mussolini form Rome-Berlin Axis pact.
- November 25: Germany and Japan sign military and political pact.
- 1937**
- January 30: Hitler addresses the *Reichstag* and proclaims "the withdrawal of the German signature" from the Treaty of Versailles.
- July 16: Buchenwald concentration camp opens.
- November 16: Jewish passports are declared invalid for foreign travel.
- 1938**
- March 13: Germany incorporates Austria into the Third *Reich* (*Anschluss*). Nazis apply all antisemitic laws to Austria.
- June 25: German Jewish physicians are permitted to treat only Jewish patients.
- July 6-15: Representatives from 32 countries meet at Evian, France to discuss refugee policies. Most of the countries refuse to let in more German Jews.
- August 17: A decree to be effective January 1, 1939 makes it mandatory for Jews to insert the middle names "Israel" and "Sarah" into all official documents. Jews are thus always identifiable.
- September 29: Munich Agreement is signed. Britain, France and Italy accept German incorporation of Sudetenland, part of Czechoslovakia. Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, is the architect of the policy of "appeasement." No Czech representative is present at the conference.
- October 5: At the request of the Swiss government, passports of German Jews are marked with the letter "J" for *Jude* (Jew).

- November 7: Herschel Grynszpan, whose parents were deported from Germany to Poland, assassinates Ernst vom Rath, third undersecretary of the German Embassy in Paris.
- November 9: A pogrom (attack on Jews) begins in Germany, Austria, and the Sudetenland. Over one thousand synagogues are burned, seven thousand shops are looted, Jewish cemeteries, hospitals and homes are destroyed, and more than 90 Jews are killed. Thirty thousand Jewish men are arrested and sent to concentration camps. Many Jewish women are jailed. This is followed by a fine of one billion *Reichmarks* (\$400 million) imposed on the Jewish community. This event becomes known as *Kristallnacht*, the Night of the Broken Glass.
- November 15: All Jewish children are expelled from German public schools. Jews must attend segregated Jewish schools.
- December 2-3: All Gypsies in the *Reich* are required to register with the police.
- December 8: Jews are no longer permitted to attend universities as teachers and/or students.
- December 13: Decree on "Aryanization" (compulsory expropriation of Jewish industries, businesses and shops) is enacted.
- 1939**
- January 30: Hitler predicts the "annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe" in the event of war in a speech to the German *Reichstag* (parliament).
- March 15: Following the annexation of the Sudetenland in October 1938, German troops occupy Prague and the remainder of Czechoslovakia. No response from world powers.
- June: Jewish refugees aboard the S.S. *St. Louis* are denied entry to Cuba and the United States and are forced to return to Europe.
- August 23: Hitler and Stalin sign the Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union (Nazi-Soviet Pact).
- September 1: The German army invades Poland, and World War II begins. A curfew is imposed on Jews in Germany, forbidding them to be outdoors after 8:00 PM.
- September 3: Britain and France declare war on Germany.
- September 17: The Soviet Union invades and occupies parts of Eastern Poland.
- September 28: Partition of Poland between Germany and the Soviet Union. German forces occupy Warsaw.
- October: Hitler extends the power of doctors to kill institutionalized mentally and physically disabled persons in the T-4 program. This secret decree is dated September 1, 1939, to make it appear as if the euthanasia program were associated with the war effort.
- October 8: First Polish ghetto established in Piotrków Trybunalski.

- November 23: Jews in Poland are forced to wear a yellow *Judenstern* (Jewish six-pointed Star of David) on their chests or a blue-and-white Star of David armband.
- 1940**
- April 9: German forces invade Denmark and Norway.
- May 10: Germany offensive begins in Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and France.
- April 30: Ghetto at Lodz, Poland, is sealed off, enclosing 165,000 people in 1.6 square miles.
- June 10: Italy enters the war on Germany's side, declaring war on Great Britain and France, and invading France.
- July 19: Telephones are confiscated from Jews in Germany.
- September 27: Germany, Italy, and Japan sign the ten-year Tripartite Pact. The Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis is established.
- November 15: Warsaw ghetto is sealed off; it ultimately contains 500,000 people.
- November 20-25: Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia become members of the Tripartite Pact.
- 1941**
- March: Adolf Eichmann appointed head of *Gestapo* (Secret State Police) section for Jewish affairs.
- March 1: Himmler orders the construction of a camp at Birkenau (Auschwitz II). Construction begins in October 1941 and continues until March 1942.
- March 3-20: A ghetto in Krakow is decreed, established, and sealed.
- March 11: The United States government approves the Lend-Lease Act (the principal means for providing U.S. military aid to foreign nations during World War II. Britain, the Soviet Union, China, Brazil, and many other countries received weapons under this law).
- March 22: Gypsy and African-German children are expelled from public schools in the *Reich*.
- March-April: Germany, joined by Bulgaria and Italy, invades North Africa, Yugoslavia, and Greece.
- June 22: German invasion of the Soviet Union begins, known as Operation "Barbarossa." *Einsatzgruppen* follow closely behind the combat groups, beginning the wholesale murder of Jews, Gypsies, and Soviet political functionaries.
- July 8: Wearing of the Jewish star is decreed in the German-occupied Baltic states.
- July 21: A memorandum signed by Hermann Göring requests Reinhard Heydrich to prepare a "total solution to the Jewish Question." Historians believe that this directive led directly to the establishment of killing centers and the efforts to murder the Jews of Europe.

- August 24: Hitler orders an end to Operation T-4 as public protest concerning the "secret" program grows. Hereafter, the euthanasia program continues in a more discreet and decentralized manner.
- September 1: German Jews above the age of six are required to wear a Yellow Star of David sewed on the left side of the chest with the word "*Jude*" printed on it in black.
- September 23: Soviet prisoners of war and Polish prisoners are killed in Nazi test of gas chambers at Auschwitz.
- September 29-30: Nearly 34,000 Jews are killed by mobile killing squads at Babi Yar, near Kiev (Ukraine).
- October: Construction begins on Birkenau, an addition to the Auschwitz camp. Birkenau includes a killing center which begins operations in early 1942. Construction also of Majdanek-Lublin killing center.
- October: The systematic deportation of Jews to ghettos begins in Eastern Europe.
- October 10: Theresienstadt ghetto is established in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.
- November 1: In Nazi-occupied Poland, the construction of a killing center at Belzec begins.
- December 7: Japan attacks the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. United States joins the Allies and enters World War II.
- Hitler issues the Night and Fog decree for the suppression of anti-Nazi resistance in occupied western Europe.
- Chelmno, the first killing center in Nazi-occupied Poland, is opened.
- December 11: Germany and Italy declare war on the United States.
- 1942**
- January 20: Fifteen Nazi and German government leaders meet at a villa in Wannsee, on the outskirts of Berlin, to discuss the "Final Solution of the Jewish question." Reinhard Heydrich presides over the meeting.
- February 1: The SS Central Office for Economy and Administration (WVHA) is established under the leadership of Oswald Pohl to manage slave labor in German industry and concentration camps.
- February-March: The "evacuation" of the major Jewish ghettos in the General Government in Poland begins. This marks the launching of the systematic deportation and murder of the Jews in occupied central Poland.
- March: The killing centers located in Nazi-occupied Poland at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Belzec, and Majdanek-Lublin begin mass murders of Jews in gas chambers.
- May: In Poland, Jews are first killed at Sobibor killing center.

- April-June: Jews in the Netherlands, Belgium, and France are required to wear yellow stars.
- June 9: The Czech town of Lidice is razed, and the population either killed or deported in retaliation for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich by agents of the Czech exile government in England several days earlier.
- July 16 – 17: The round up of 12,884 French Jews in Paris by the French police under the supervision of the German occupation.
- November 24: Knowledge of the mass killing of the Jews in Europe is publicly announced in the United States by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.
- December 16: Heinrich Himmler issues a decree for the deportation of “all Roma Gypsies, all part Gypsies, and all non-German Gypsies of Balkan origin” to Auschwitz.
- December 17: Allied nations pledge to punish Germans for its policy of genocide.
- 1943**
- February 2: German Sixth Army surrenders at Stalingrad, marking the turning point in the war.
- March – April: 48,000 Jews from Solonika were deported to Auschwitz.
- April 19: The Warsaw ghetto Uprising begins as Jewish fighters fiercely resist the German attempt to liquidate the ghetto; resistance continues for nearly one month.
- April 19-30: British and American representatives meet in Bermuda about rescue options and fail to come up with significant rescue proposals.
- May 16: Liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto.
- June 11: Himmler orders liquidation of all remaining Jewish ghettos in Nazi-occupied Poland and the Occupied Eastern Territories and the deportation of their inhabitants to killing centers.
- July 5: Heinrich Himmler orders the closing of the Operation Reinhard camps, as most of the Jews in the General Government have already been killed.
- August 2: Jewish prisoners revolt at the Treblinka killing center; although more than 150 prisoners escape, most are caught and killed.
- October 1: Deportations of Danish Jews begin; however, most escape to Sweden with the help of the Danes.
- October 14: Inmates at Sobibor begin armed revolt.
- October 20: United Nations War Crimes Commission is established.
- November 3: Operation “Harvest Festival” begins as the Germans liquidate the last Jews in the Lublin region of occupied Poland. In this single largest German killing operation, 42,000 Jews are shot to death.

1944

- May 15-July 19: The deportation of Jews from recently occupied Hungary is carried out; most are sent to the Auschwitz-Birkenau killing center where they are immediately gassed.
- June 4: Allied troops arrive in Rome.
- June 6: Known as D-Day, the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Western Europe begins on the beaches of Normandy, France.
- June 23: Soviet summer offensive begins.
- July 20: German officers fail in an attempt to assassinate Hitler.
- July 24: Soviet troops liberate the Majdanek killing center; it is the first killing center entered by Allied troops.
- August 2-3: The Gypsy family camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau is liquidated.
- October 6-7: In the *Sonderkommando* uprising at Auschwitz, the prisoners destroy one of the crematoria.
- October 23: Paris is liberated by Allied armies.
- November 24: Himmler orders destruction of Auschwitz crematoria as Nazis try to hide evidence of the death camps.
- November 26: "The Auschwitz Report," detailing the killings at the Auschwitz-Birkenau killing center, is released to the public by the War Refugee Board.

1945

- January 17: Massive forced evacuations ("Death Marches") from the Auschwitz complex begin as Soviet forces draw near. The Death Marches continue from other camps for the next few months.
- January 27: The Auschwitz camp complex is liberated by Soviet troops.
- February 4-11: Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin meet at the Yalta Conference in the Crimea.
- April 11: Buchenwald is liberated by American troops as prisoners start a revolt to forestall the evacuation of the camp.
- April 28: Mussolini is killed by Italian partisans as he tries to escape to Switzerland.
- April 29: American troops liberate Dachau.
- April 30: Adolf Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.
- May 3: Three German ships carrying prisoners evacuated from Neuengamme concentration camp are attacked by Allied aircraft in the bay of Lübeck, Germany. Two ships are sunk; approximately 7,300 prisoners are killed.
- May 5: American troops liberate Mauthausen.
- May 7: Germany surrenders to the Allies.

- May 8: VE-Day (Victory in Europe); the war in Europe is officially over.
- June 26: The United Nations charter is signed; it goes into effect on October 24, 1945.
- August 6: The United States drops the first nuclear bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.
- August 9: The United States drops the second nuclear bomb on Nagasaki, Japan.
- August 14: Japan accepts the Allied terms of surrender. World War II is over.
-
- November 22: Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal commences. The Nuremberg Trials conclude on October 1, 1946, which happened to be the Jewish Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), with a judgment in which twelve defendants are sentenced to death, three to life imprisonment, four to various prison terms and three acquitted.
- 1948**
- May 14: State of Israel is established.

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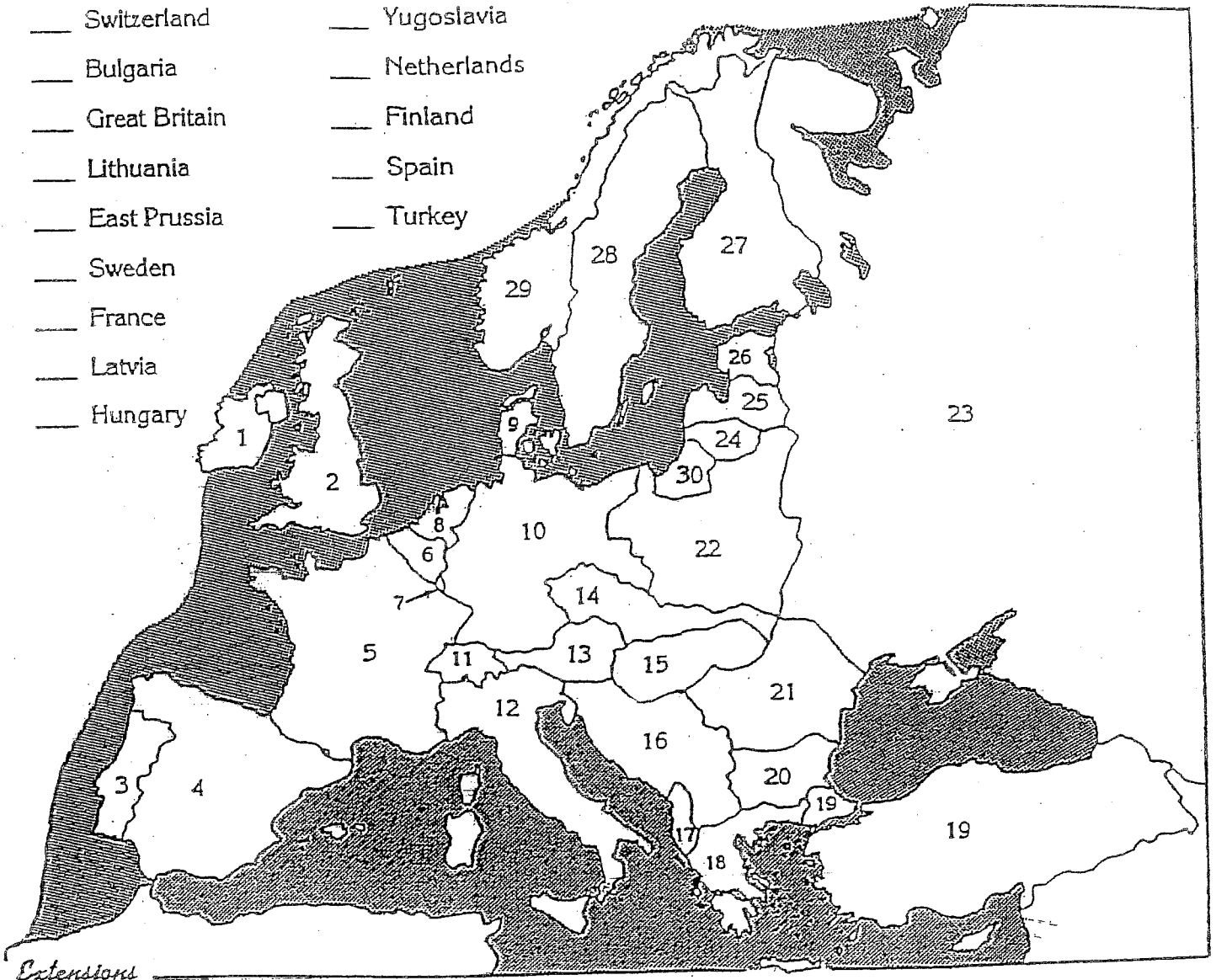
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Europe: Beginning of World War II

After World War I, the map of Europe was redrawn. The territories of some nations such as Germany and Austria-Hungary were reduced while others such as France and Romania were enlarged. In addition, new nations such as Poland and Czechoslovakia were created.

Identify the following nations by writing each country's number from the map beside its name.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| ___ Greece | ___ Poland | ___ Italy | ___ Belgium |
| ___ Ireland | ___ Luxembourg | ___ Portugal | ___ Soviet Union |
| ___ Romania | ___ Albania | ___ Norway | ___ Denmark |
| ___ Czechoslovakia | ___ Germany | ___ Austria | ___ Estonia |
| ___ Switzerland | ___ Yugoslavia | | |
| ___ Bulgaria | ___ Netherlands | | |
| ___ Great Britain | ___ Finland | | |
| ___ Lithuania | ___ Spain | | |
| ___ East Prussia | ___ Turkey | | |
| ___ Sweden | | | |
| ___ France | | | |
| ___ Latvia | | | |
| ___ Hungary | | | |



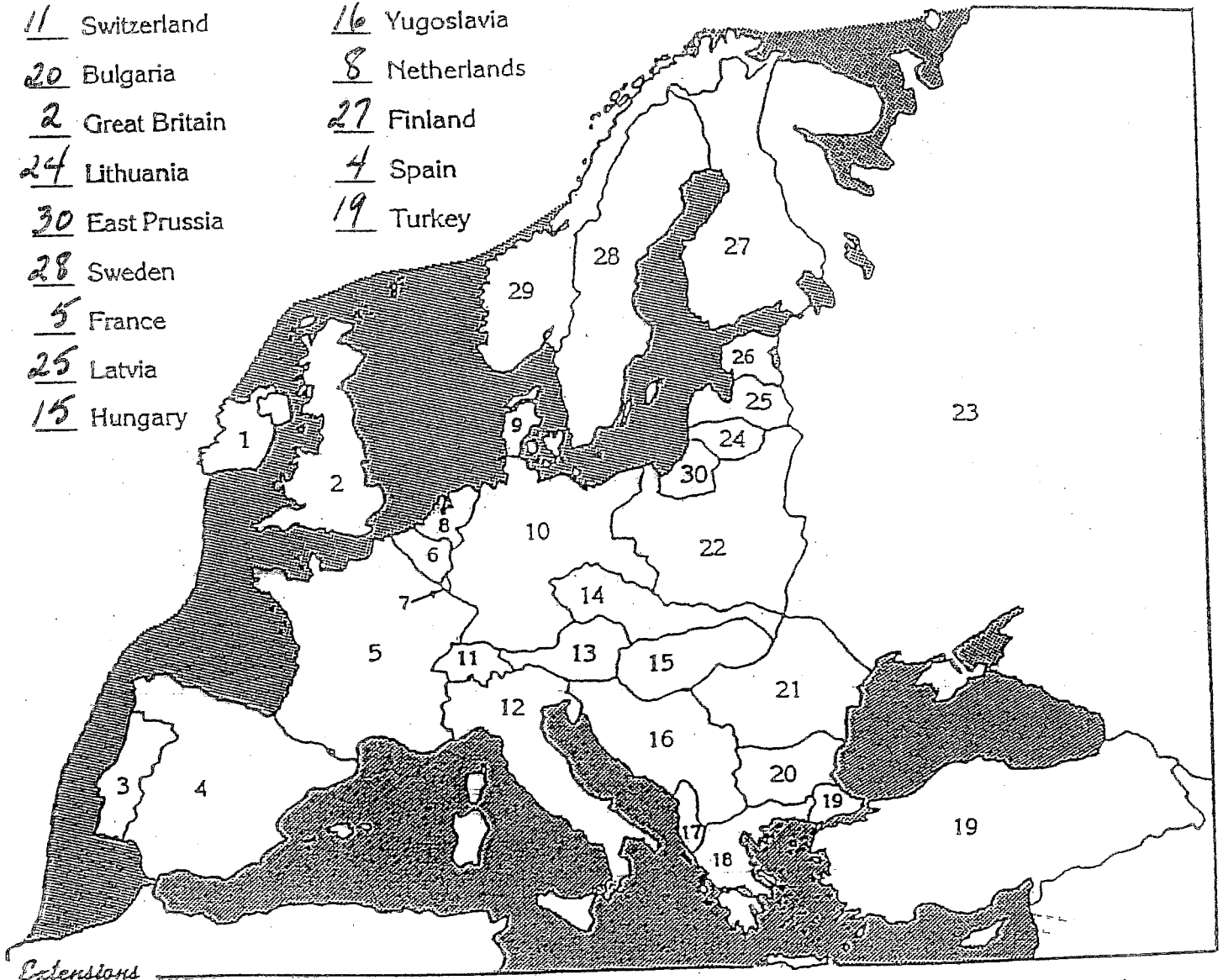
- Compare this map to a map of Europe after World War II. Which nations lost territory? Which nations gained territory? How did this lead to the Cold War?
- Use the map to trace the expansion and collapse of the Axis powers.
- Identify where major battles took place during the war.

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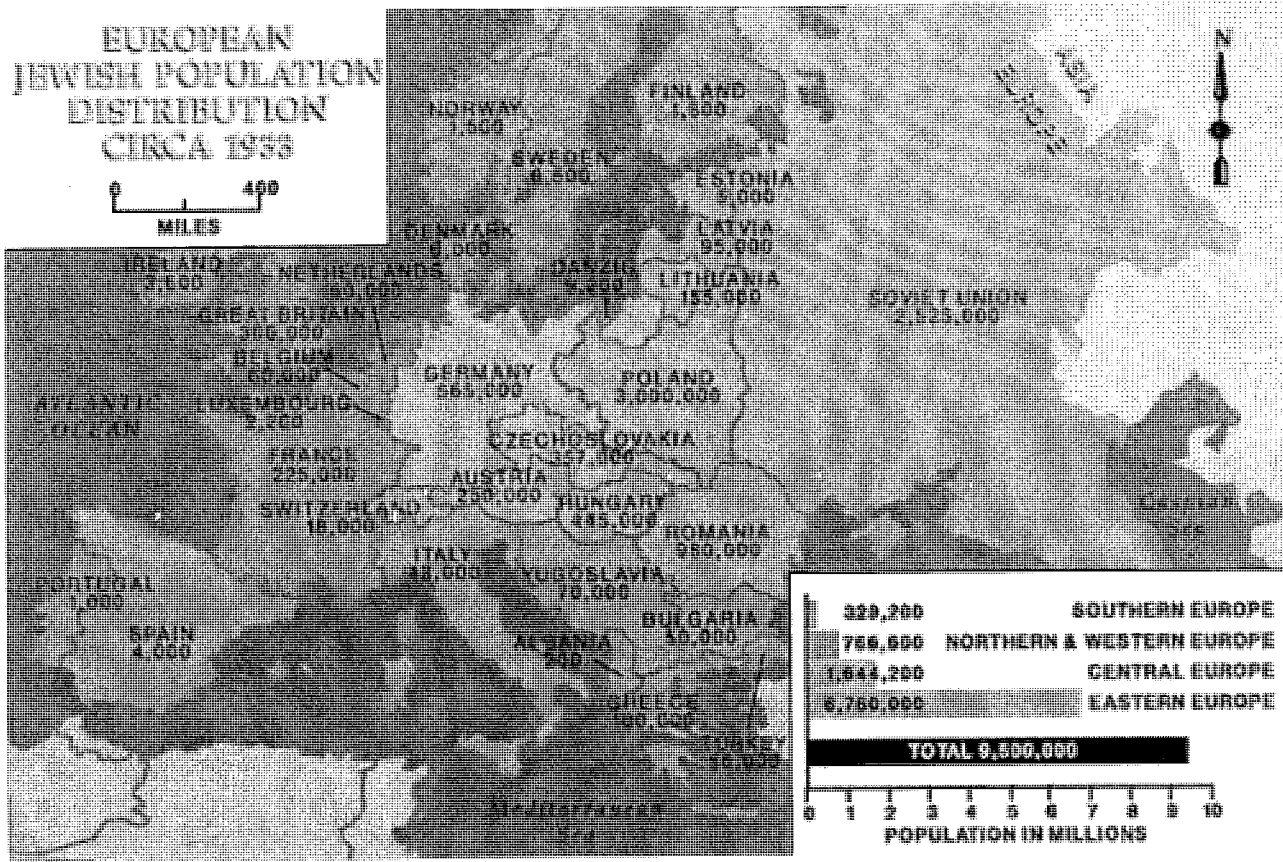
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|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| <u>18</u> Greece | <u>22</u> Poland | <u>12</u> Italy | <u>6</u> Belgium |
| <u>1</u> Ireland | <u>7</u> Luxembourg | <u>3</u> Portugal | <u>23</u> Soviet Union |
| <u>21</u> Romania | <u>17</u> Albania | <u>29</u> Norway | <u>9</u> Denmark |
| <u>14</u> Czechoslovakia | <u>10</u> Germany | <u>13</u> Austria | <u>26</u> Estonia |
| <u>11</u> Switzerland | <u>16</u> Yugoslavia | | |
| <u>20</u> Bulgaria | <u>8</u> Netherlands | | |
| <u>2</u> Great Britain | <u>27</u> Finland | | |
| <u>24</u> Lithuania | <u>4</u> Spain | | |
| <u>30</u> East Prussia | <u>19</u> Turkey | | |
| <u>28</u> Sweden | | | |
| <u>5</u> France | | | |
| <u>25</u> Latvia | | | |
| <u>15</u> Hungary | | | |



Extensions

- Compare this map to a map of Europe after World War II. Which nations lost territory? Which nations gained territory? How did this lead to the Cold War?
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◀|UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM||



European Jewish population distribution, ca. 1933

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum - Learning Center

Referenced in the following article(s):
The Holocaust
Jewish Population of Europe in 1933

KRISTALLNACHT: A NATIONWIDE POGROM, NOVEMBER 9-10, 1938



Courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Kristallnacht -- literally, "Night of Crystal" -- is usually referred to as the "Night of Broken Glass." It is the name given to the violent anti-Jewish pogrom of November 9 and 10, 1938. Instigated primarily by Nazi party officials and the SA (Nazi Storm Troopers), the pogrom occurred throughout Germany (including annexed Austria and the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia). The name *Kristallnacht* has its origin in the untold numbers of broken windows of synagogues, Jewish-owned stores, community centers, and homes plundered and destroyed during the pogrom. The term became a euphemism for this brutal pogrom and does not adequately convey the suffering it caused.

The Germans officially explained *Kristallnacht* as a spontaneous outburst of public rage in response to the assassination of Ernst vom Rath, a low-ranking official at the German embassy in Paris. Herschel Grynszpan, a 17-year old Polish Jew, had shot vom Rath on November 7, 1938. A few days earlier, Grynszpan had received a postcard from his sister; she wrote that she and his parents, together with tens of thousands of Jews of Polish citizenship living in Germany (Grynszpan's parents had lived in Germany since 1911), had been expelled from Germany without notice. Initially denied entry into their native Poland but then physically driven across the border, Grynszpan's parents and the other expelled Polish Jews were stranded in a refugee camp near the town of Zbaszyn in the border region between Poland and Germany.

Vom Rath died on November 9, 1938, two days after the shooting. The Nazis blamed "World Jewry" for the assassination and, ostensibly as reprisal, unleashed a massive pogrom against Jews within the Third Reich.

Hundreds of synagogues all over Germany, including Austria, were vandalized, looted, and destroyed. Many were set ablaze and firemen were instructed to let the synagogues burn but to prevent flames from spreading to nearby structures. The shop windows of an estimated 7,500 Jewish-owned commercial establishments were smashed and the wares within looted. Jewish cemeteries were desecrated. Mobs of SA men roamed the streets, attacking Jews and killing about 100 persons. In despair at the destruction of their homes, many Jews, including entire families, were driven to suicide.

The pogrom was especially destructive in Berlin and Vienna, home to the two largest Jewish communities in the German Reich. Most of Berlin's synagogues were burned

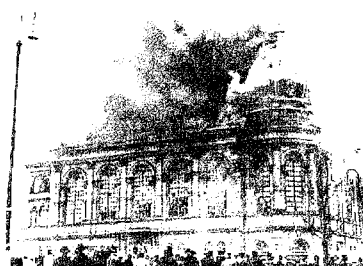
down and Jewish-owned stores and homes were looted and vandalized. Dozens of Jews were killed. In Vienna, most of the city's synagogues and small prayer houses were destroyed, burned in full view of the fire departments and the public.

While for the most part not directly involved in the pogrom, the SS and the Gestapo (secret state police) used it as a pretext for the arrest of about 30,000 Jewish males. Most were sent to the Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen concentration camps. Subjected to brutal treatment, most were released over the next three months, on the condition that they begin the process of emigration from Germany. In all, it is estimated that 2,000 – 2,500 deaths, including those in concentration camps, were directly or indirectly attributable to the Kristallnacht pogrom.

The Nazis immediately claimed that the Jews themselves were to blame for the pogrom and imposed a fine of one billion reichsmarks (some 400 million U.S. dollars at 1938 rates) on the German Jewish community. The Reich confiscated all insurance payments that were to have been paid to Jews whose businesses and homes were looted or destroyed and the Jewish owners were made personally responsible for the cost of all repairs.

The November pogrom heralded a new wave of anti-Jewish legislation. In the weeks that followed, the German government promulgated dozens of laws and decrees, designed to deprive Jews of their property and of the means to earn a livelihood. In addition, these regulations served to exclude Jews from any sort of public social life. Laws were enacted to force the "Aryanization" (transfer to non-Jewish ownership) of Jewish-owned enterprises and property, usually for a fraction of their true value. Jewish schools were closed and those children still attending German schools were expelled. Jews were forbidden to practice most professions, required to sell their valuables to state purchasing offices, and subject to special taxation. Jewish ownership of automobiles was prohibited, drivers' licenses were withdrawn, and access to public transportation was greatly limited. Jews could no longer visit places of public entertainment to attend theater performances, concerts, and movies.

The Nazis appropriated the single act of a Jewish youth as an excuse to acquire the assets of the Jewish population for upcoming war efforts, exclude Jews from all aspects of public life, and further force Jewish emigration from Germany.



Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

S.S.ST. LOUIS

**The S. S. St. Louis was the infamous ship,
which came to our Miami Shores, but was turned away.**

The German liner, the S.S. St. Louis, left Hamburg, Germany on May 13, 1939 bound for Havana, Cuba. On board were 937 Jewish passengers, all of whom had special permits to stay temporarily in Cuba until American visas were processed. On May 30, a few people were allowed to disembark at Havana. The rest were refused based on a new immigration restriction decreed by the Cuban president, Frederico Laredo Bru. On June 2, the St. Louis was ordered to leave Havana. Several passengers attempted to commit suicide, but the Cuban president still refused to honor the passengers' landing permits which had been declared worthless. With families already in Cuba screaming from the docks and passengers pleading from the ship's deck, the St. Louis was escorted out of the harbor by Cuban police boats. The St. Louis moved up and down the Florida coast for three days as rumors spread that the United States would surely admit the refugees rather than allow them to return to an uncertain fate. Appeals were made by telegram to President Roosevelt. Even Mrs. Roosevelt was asked to persuade her husband to admit, at the very least, the children who were on board the ship. All these appeals went unanswered. On June 5, Cuban president Frederico Bru then began a cat and mouse game offering to provide temporary refuge if relief organizations would give \$500 for each passenger. One American Jewish organization immediately began to try to bargain with the Cuban president, but he did not agree and told the ship to move out.

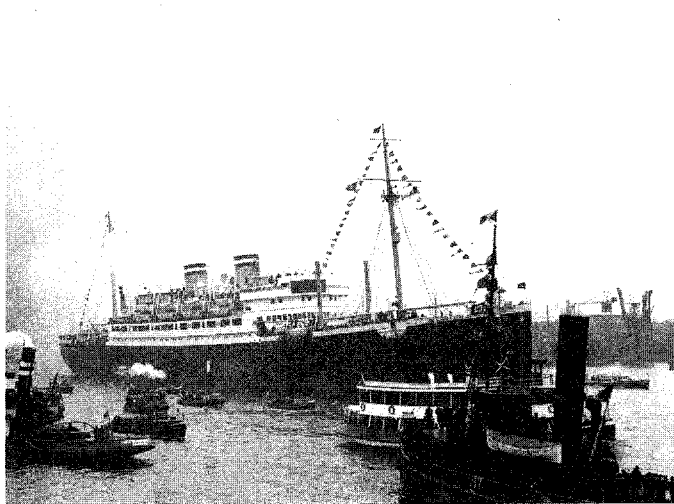
After 35 days of aimless wandering, England, France, Holland, and Belgium finally agreed to take an equal share of the human cargo. (Sadly, most went to countries that would soon be overrun by Germany.) When this plan was announced, a spokesman for the League of Nations issued a statement to the world 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 other 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.

By 1939, the bulk of German Jews found themselves trapped in their inhospitable homeland. Several thousand Jewish children were safe in Britain, more Jews had found safety in British-controlled Shanghai, and others had been able to get to Palestine before the British closed it down. But in spite of the increasing publicity about the situation facing the Jews in the Greater *Reich*, none of the major countries which could provide refuge, offered to change their immigration policy.⁴ In fact, in some areas, the annual quotas for Germans and Austrians, which could have been supplied by Jews from those countries attempting to escape, remained unfilled. No attempt was made to rectify the situation even though it was, by now, quite clear that the Jews of the Nazi *Reich* were in extreme peril. What little concern there was for the Jews was rapidly shifting toward new concerns as the world braced itself for war. For the Jews, the situation was about to get unbearably worse. There were even fewer possibilities of emigration or refuge for Gypsies and the institutionalized handicapped, who were seldom able to meet the financial requirements for escape and entry into a new homeland.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France finally realized that Hitler could not be appeased and, honoring their pact with Poland, declared war. Within weeks, a million German soldiers covered the Polish landscape from below and planes from the German Air Force, the *Luftwaffe*, dotted the skies above. The movement of German troops was so fast that it was referred to as a "*Blitzkrieg*," lightning warfare.

As the Nazis came to power, those Jews of Germany and Austria who could afford to, had not gotten out when they could because they had believed themselves fully accepted by their countrymen. In addition, each wave of persecution was thought to be the last. This belief had further hindered opportunities to escape. By the time of the "*Blitzkrieg*" in Poland, no further opportunities existed. The world had turned deaf ears to the pleas from those seeking asylum. Through several years, the Jews of Germany and Austria had clung to their hopes for change. The Jews of Poland had no such illusions. Their only escape, which was available for a short time during the initial upheaval, was to cross over to Russia or to Eastern Poland which was occupied by the Soviet Union. Once the occupation lines were drawn, however, even this option was closed. Here, as Poland braced to face the German assault, three million Polish Jews, the largest single mass of Jewry in Europe, were trapped.



Herb Karliner aboard the SS St. Louis

Source: *The State of Florida Resource Manual on Holocaust Education, Grades 9 – 12*
Photo Source: Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Donated by Herb Karliner

WANNSEE CONFERENCE

While shooting by the *Einsatzgruppen* and carbon monoxide poisoning were the general modes of execution during the early years of the war, it soon became apparent that these methods were an inefficient and ineffective long-term “solution.” Other complications included the need for slave labor to help the German war effort and massive facilities to hold prisoners.

In spite of the fact that there had been few protests against the massacres of the Jews conducted by the *Einsatzgruppen*, there was considerable dissension among the Nazi party ministers as to how best affect the “Final Solution.” Some of the ministers were concerned that in the quest to kill all Jews, military needs were being given second priority; others had requested that those Jews who could work should be saved and employed as slave laborers. With these conflicts in mind, Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Central Office of *Reich* Security (RSHA), was asked to call a meeting to discuss and coordinate the implementation of the “Final Solution.”

On January 20, 1942, at a villa in the Wannsee suburb of Berlin, the state secretaries of the most important German government ministries met with Heydrich and his expert on Jewish affairs, Adolf Eichmann. While the mass murders were, by now, well known to the conference participants, open references had usually been cloaked in modest sounding terms. For the first time, these euphemisms were pushed aside and discussion was direct and unequivocal. As Adolf Eichmann was to testify years later at his trial, “They spoke about methods of killing, about liquidation, about extermination.”

At this time, the actual method for the program of annihilation was still questionable. Clearly, the *Einsatzgruppen* could not shoot every Jew or even gas them all in trucks. However, Heydrich was more worried about gaining a consensus of approval for an annihilation program rather than determining exactly how it was to be accomplished. Surprisingly, except for prolonged discussions about the fate of Jews in mixed marriages and their part-Jewish offspring, not a single minister voiced any objection to the overall plan. In fact, it was accepted enthusiastically.

The actual methods to be used to kill the Jews had not been the prime target of discussion at the Wannsee Conference, in part because these methods were becoming quickly available. By this time, a vast network of prison camps had been established and more were being built. They were based on every conceivable rationale for a prison and ranged from killing centers to resettlement complexes, from penal colonies to POW prisons, from forced labor camps to transit camps and holding centers. Regardless of designation, all of them were prisons where people could be concentrated. For those who had not already been killed, the Nazi concentration camp was to be the “Final Solution.”

Concentration camps and the killing centers to receive the deportees were readied for full operation. Adolf Eichmann, a petty bureaucrat who had risen in the ranks due to his considerable experience in “Jewish Affairs,” became the architect of the evacuations department called “Section IV B 4” in the RSHA.

As the world was to learn, the deportations to murder were extremely well-coordinated by thousands of individuals. Eichmann’s department was small. His work was facilitated by the vital support of thousands. His network of assistants ranged from those who helped to ease bureaucratic barriers to those who rounded up the victims. Chief among his agency supporters was the transport industry which provided the essential link in the deportation plans.

CHILDREN AND THE HOLOCAUST

Up to one-and-a-half million children were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators between 1933 and 1945. The overwhelming majority of them were Jewish. Thousands of Roma (Gypsy) children, disabled children, and Polish children were also among the victims.

The deaths of these children were not accidental: they were the deliberate result of actions taken by the German government under the leadership of Chancellor Adolf Hitler. The children were killed in various ways. Many were shot; many more were asphyxiated with poisonous gas in concentration camps or subjected to lethal injections. Others perished from disease, starvation, exposure, torture, and/or severe physical exhaustion from slave labor. Still others died as a result of medical experiments conducted on them by German doctors in the camps.

During the Holocaust, children – ranging in age from infants to older teens – were, like their parents, persecuted and killed not for anything they had done. Rather, Hitler and the Nazi government believed that so-called “Aryan” Germans were a superior race. The Nazis labeled other people they considered inferior as “non-Aryans.” People belonging to non-Aryan groups, including children, were targeted by the Nazis for elimination from German society. The Nazis killed children to create a biologically pure society.



Even children who fit the Aryan stereotype suffered at the hands of the Nazis during World War II. Non-Jewish children in occupied countries whose physical appearance fit the Nazi notion of a “master race” (fair skin, blond-haired, blue-eyed) were at times kidnapped from their homes and taken to Germany to be adopted by German families. As many as 50,000 Polish children alone may have been separated from their families in this manner. Some of these children were later

rejected and sent to special children’s camps where they died of starvation or as a result of the terrible living conditions within the camps. Others were killed by lethal injections at the concentration camps of Majdanek and Auschwitz.

The experiences of children who were victims of Nazi hatred varied widely. Factors such as age, gender, family wealth, and where a child lived affected their experiences under German domination. Generally, babies and younger children deported to ghettos and camps had almost no chance of surviving. Children in their teens, or younger children who looked more mature than their years, had a better chance of survival since they might be selected for slave labor rather than for death. Some teens participated in resistance activities as well.

Children who were victims of the Holocaust came from all over Europe. They had different languages, customs and religious beliefs. Some came from wealthy families;

others from poor homes. Many ended their schooling early to work in a craft or trade; others looked forward to continuing their education at the university level. Still, whatever their differences, they shared one commonality: by the 1930s with the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany, they all became potential victims and their lives were forever changed.

Nazi Germany, 1933-39

Soon after the Nazis gained power in Germany, Jewish children found life increasingly difficult. Due to legislation prohibiting Jews from engaging in various professions, their parents lost jobs and businesses. As a result, many families were left with little money. Jewish children were not allowed to participate in sports and social activities with their “Aryan” classmates and neighbors. They



could not go to museums, movies, public playgrounds, or even swimming pools. Even when they were permitted to go to school, teachers often treated them with scorn and encouraged their humiliation by other students. Frequently, Jewish students were subject to being taunted and teased, picked upon and beaten up. Eventually Jewish and Gypsy children were expelled from German schools.

Gypsy children, like Jewish children, faced many hardships in Nazi Germany. Along with their parents, they were rounded up and forced to live behind barbed wire in special municipal internment camps under police guard. Beginning in 1938, Gypsy teenagers were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

Murder Under Cover of War

With the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, life became much harder for children all over Europe. European children of all backgrounds suffered because of the war, experiencing displacement, inadequate diets, the absence of fathers and brothers, loss of family members, trauma, and confusion. However, only certain groups of children were singled out for “extinction.”

Wartime, Hitler suggested, “was the best time for the elimination of the incurably ill.” Among the first victims of the Nazis were disabled persons, and children were not exempt. Many Germans, influenced by Nazi ideas, did not want to be reminded of individuals who did not measure up to their idealized concept of a “master race.” The physically and mentally handicapped were viewed by the Nazis as unproductive to society, a threat to Aryan genetic purity, and ultimately unworthy of life. Beginning almost simultaneously with the start of World War II, a “euthanasia” program was authorized personally by Adolf Hitler to systematically murder disabled Germans. Like

disabled adults, children with disabilities were either injected with lethal drugs or asphyxiated by inhaling carbon monoxide fumes pumped into sealed mobile vans and gas chambers. Medical doctors cooperated in these so-called “mercy killings” in six institutions, and secretly at other centers, in Germany. Though some were Jewish, most of the children murdered in this fashion were non-Jewish Germans.

With the onset of war, Jewish children in Germany suffered increasing deprivations. Nazi government officials confiscated many items of value from Jewish homes, including radios, telephones, cameras, and cars. Even more importantly, food rations were curtailed for Jews as were clothing ration cards. Jewish children felt more and more isolated. Similarly, as Germany conquered various European countries in their war effort – from Poland and parts of the Soviet Union in the east, to Denmark, Norway, Belgium, France, and the Netherlands in the west – more and more Jewish children came under German control and, with their parents, experienced persecution, forced separations, and very often, murder.

Throughout Eastern Europe, Jewish families were forced to give up their homes and relocate in ghettos – restricted areas set up by the Nazis as “Jewish residential districts.” Most of the ghettos were located in German-occupied Poland; most were established in the poorer, more dilapidated sections of towns and cities. Ghettos were fenced in, typically with barbed wire or brick walls. Entry and exit were by permit or pass only; like a prison, armed guards stood at gates. Families inside the ghettos lived under horrid conditions. Typically, many families would be crowded into a few rooms where there was little if any heat, food, or privacy. It was difficult to keep clean. Many people in the ghettos perished from malnutrition, starvation, exposure, and epidemics. Typhus, a contagious disease spread by body lice, was common, as was typhoid, spread through contaminated drinking water.



Some children managed to escape deportation to ghettos by going into hiding with their families or hiding alone, aided by non-Jewish friends and neighbors. Children in hiding often took on a secret life, sometimes remaining in one room for months or even years. Some hid in woodpiles, attics, or barns; others were locked in cupboards or concealed closets, coming out infrequently and only at night. Boys had it more difficult, because they

were circumcised and could therefore be identified.

Children were often forced to live lives independent of their families. Many children who found refuge with others outside the ghettos had to assume new identities and conform to local religious customs that were different from their own in order to survive. Some Jewish children managed to pass as Catholics and were hidden in Catholic schools, orphanages, and convents in countries across Europe.

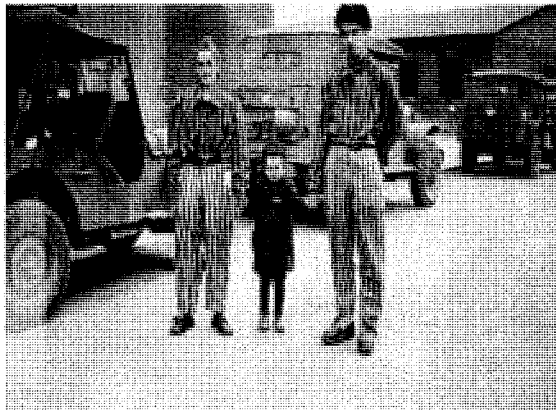
Everyday, children became orphaned and many had to take care of even younger children. In the ghettos of Warsaw and other cities, many orphans lived on the streets, begging for bread and food from others in the ghetto that likewise had little or none to spare. Exposed to severe weather, frostbite, disease, and starvation, these children did not survive for long. Many froze to death.

In order to survive, children had to be resourceful and make themselves useful. In Lodz, healthy children could survive by working. Small children in the largest ghetto in occupied Poland, Warsaw, sometimes helped smuggle food to their families and friends by crawling through narrow openings in the ghetto wall. They did so at considerable risk, as smugglers who were caught were severely punished.

Deportation To Concentration Camps

The Nazis started emptying the ghettos in 1942 and deporting the victims to concentration camps. Children were often the target of special round-ups for deportation to the camps. The victims were told they were being resettled in the “East.” The journey to the camps was difficult for everyone. Jammed into rail cars until there was no room for anyone to move, young children were often thrown on top of other people. Suffocating heat in the summer and freezing cold in the winter made the deportation journey even more brutal. During the trip, which often lasted several days, there was no food except for what people managed to bring along. There were also no water or bathroom facilities and parents were powerless to defend their children.

Two concentration camps (Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek) and four other camps (Chelmno, Sobibor, Belzec, and Treblinka) functioned as “killing centers.” All were located near railroad lines in occupied Poland, and poison gas – either carbon monoxide or Zyklon B – was the primary weapon of murder. At Chelmno, Sobibor, Belzec, and Treblinka, nearly



everyone was killed soon after arrival. At Auschwitz and Majdanek, individuals were “selected” to live or to die. Stronger, healthier people – including many teenagers – were often selected for slave labor, forced to work eleven-hour shifts with minimum provisions for clothing, food and shelter. Some who survived the camp “selection” process were used for medical experiments by German physicians.

The great majority of people deported to killing centers did not survive. For those who did survive the selection process, children and adults alike, life in the camps presented new challenges, humiliations, and deprivations. One became a prisoner: clothing and all possessions were removed. Hair was shaved off. Ill-fitting prison uniforms were distributed. One’s name was replaced with a number often tattooed on the arm. Many people scarcely recognized their own family members after they had been processed in the camps.

Camp “inmates” were crowded into barracks fitted with wooden bunk beds stacked three or four on top of each other, and several people had to fit per level on the plank beds that had neither mattresses nor blankets. Lice were everywhere and contributed to the spread of disease, which was an ever-present enemy. Standing in roll calls for extended periods in all kinds of weather and working long hours took its toll on everyone. Daily rations of food consisted of a small piece of bread and coffee or soup. As a result of these brutal living conditions, many people died. Few lasted more than a month or two. Even among those that survived, one’s vulnerability to “selection” had not ended at the point of arrival. The sick, the feeble, and those too exhausted to work were periodically identified and selected for gassing.

Liberation

Near the end of the war in 1945, the German concentration camps were liberated by Allied soldiers. By this time, many of the children who had entered camps as teenagers were now young adults. For most, the food and gestures of kindness offered by liberating soldiers were the links to life itself. Children who had survived in hiding now searched the camps trying to locate family members who might also have survived. Returning to hometowns, they had hopes that a former neighbor might know of other survivors.

It was rare for an entire family to survive the Holocaust. One or both parents were likely to have been killed; brothers and sisters had been lost; grandparents were dead. Anticipated reunions with family members gave surviving children some hope, but for many, the terrible reality was that they were now alone. Many found themselves sole survivors of once large extended families. A few were eventually able to locate missing family members.

Life as it had been before the Holocaust was forever altered. Though some individual survivors attempted to return to their former places of residence, Jewish and Gypsy communities no longer existed in most of Europe. Family homes had, in many instances, been taken over by others; personal possessions had been plundered. Because returning to one’s home in hopes of reclaiming what had been lost was fraught with extreme danger, many young survivors eventually ended up instead in children’s centers or displaced person camps.

The future was as uncertain as the present was unstable. Many young people had had their schooling interrupted and could not easily resume their studies. Merely surviving took precedence over other concerns. Owning nothing and belonging nowhere, many children left Europe and, with assistance provided by immigrant aid societies or sponsorship from relatives abroad, they emigrated, usually to the United States, South Africa, and/or Palestine which, after 1948 became the State of Israel. There, in these newly adopted countries, they slowly developed new lives.

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.

The Butterfly

**The last, very last,
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing
Against a white stone...**

**Such, such a yellow
Is carried lightly way up high.
It went away I'm sure because it wished to
Kiss the world goodbye.**

**For seven weeks I've lived in here,
Pinned up inside this ghetto
But I have found my people here.
The dandelions call to me
And the white chestnut candles in the court.
Only I never saw another butterfly.**

**That butterfly was the last one.
Butterflies don't live here,
In the ghetto.**



Pavel Friedman
Born January 7, 1921
Deported to Terezin (Theresienstadt) April 26, 1942
Wrote poem on June 6, 1943
Died in Osweicim (Auschwitz) September 29, 1944

"The Butterfly" by Pavel Friedmann, inv. No 325 c The Jewish Museum in Prague

DEPORTATIONS

Railroads were the essential link to the killing process. Between 1942 and 1945, trains carrying human cargo from every corner of Nazi-occupied Europe rolled into death camps carefully situated along major Polish rail lines. The Reichsbahn, the German railroad, was one of the largest organizations in the Third Reich. It had 1.4 million workers, of whom 500,000 were civil servants, who kept the system in operation. During the Holocaust their job was to allocate personnel, obtain freight cars, coordinate train schedules, keep the tracks open, drive locomotives, and clean cars.

As the supply lines needed for a two-front war lengthened, there was a chronic shortage of trains. The railroad system was stretched thin even in its efforts to provision the army. Allied bombing raids on the major European rail lines disrupted traffic, but the trains carrying Jews continued to roll. Transports were given additional cars, more Jews were crammed into fewer trains, indirect routes were taken so the human traffic could keep moving.

The transport of Jews, and their destination, was no secret to the Reichsbahn workers. At Auschwitz alone there were 44 parallel tracks at the train station, more than twice the number at New York's Pennsylvania Station. A special railroad spur was built to run directly to the exit ramp at Birkenau, whose chimneys were clearly visible from the trains. No railway man resigned and none protested. They did their work well: no Jew was left alive for lack of transport.

Jews were ticketed as people, although they were transported to the death camps as cattle, mainly in freight cars. Travel agents booked one-way passage to the camp at a rate of 4 Pfennig (pennies) per kilometer of track they would travel. Children under ten rode for half fare, those under four rode free. A group rate of half the usual third-class charge was introduced for deportations of more than 400 people. The Reichsbahn did not charge for the trains that returned empty. Indeed, the SS was offered a credit for one-way passenger transport. Tickets for the guards had to be paid in advance. Reichsbahn employees used the same forms and procedures to book tourists going on vacation as they did to send Jews to Auschwitz.

There were, in general, three forms of deportation. First, Jews were deported from towns and cities to transit camps or ghettos. Then they were deported from smaller ghettos to larger ones. From 1942 on, they were deported to one of the six major killing centers: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Majdanek, Chelmno, Treblinka, Belzec, and Sobibor.

Deportations were sometimes complex mass operations involving elaborate logistics. During the summer of 1942, 300,000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto were transported to Treblinka in a six-week period. Between May 15 and July 9, 1944, 434,351 Jews from 55 Hungarian localities were deported to Auschwitz in 147 trains. Most were gassed at Birkenau soon after they arrived. The railway system was stretched to its limits to keep up with the demand of the camp, where 12,000 people a day were being gassed.

In some areas, deportations were gradual. First the elderly were taken from the ghetto, then those who could not work or had no working permits. Later, children and those without influence or family connections were removed. Selections were made in the ghetto by the German-controlled Jewish Councils. In the end, however, all Jews were deported from the ghettos.

The Nazis made a disciplined effort to disguise their intentions. Deportation was called "resettlement in the East." Anxious victims were told that they were being sent to labor camps. They were encouraged to pack their belongings and take them along. The ruse often worked. Even as late as the spring of 1944, many Hungarian Jews had not heard of Auschwitz.

The train trip was often long. From Hungary the trip took days, from Greece, more than a week. In the summer, the sealed cattle cars were suffocatingly hot; unheated, they were freezing cold in winter. The SS made few provisions for food or water; the most they provided was a bucket for bodily needs. Crowded passengers were often forced to sit in feces and urine. The stench was overwhelming. When the doors were open upon arrival, grateful passengers thought that the worst of the ordeal was behind them. They were disoriented and exhausted.

Primo Levi recalls that train trip to hell:

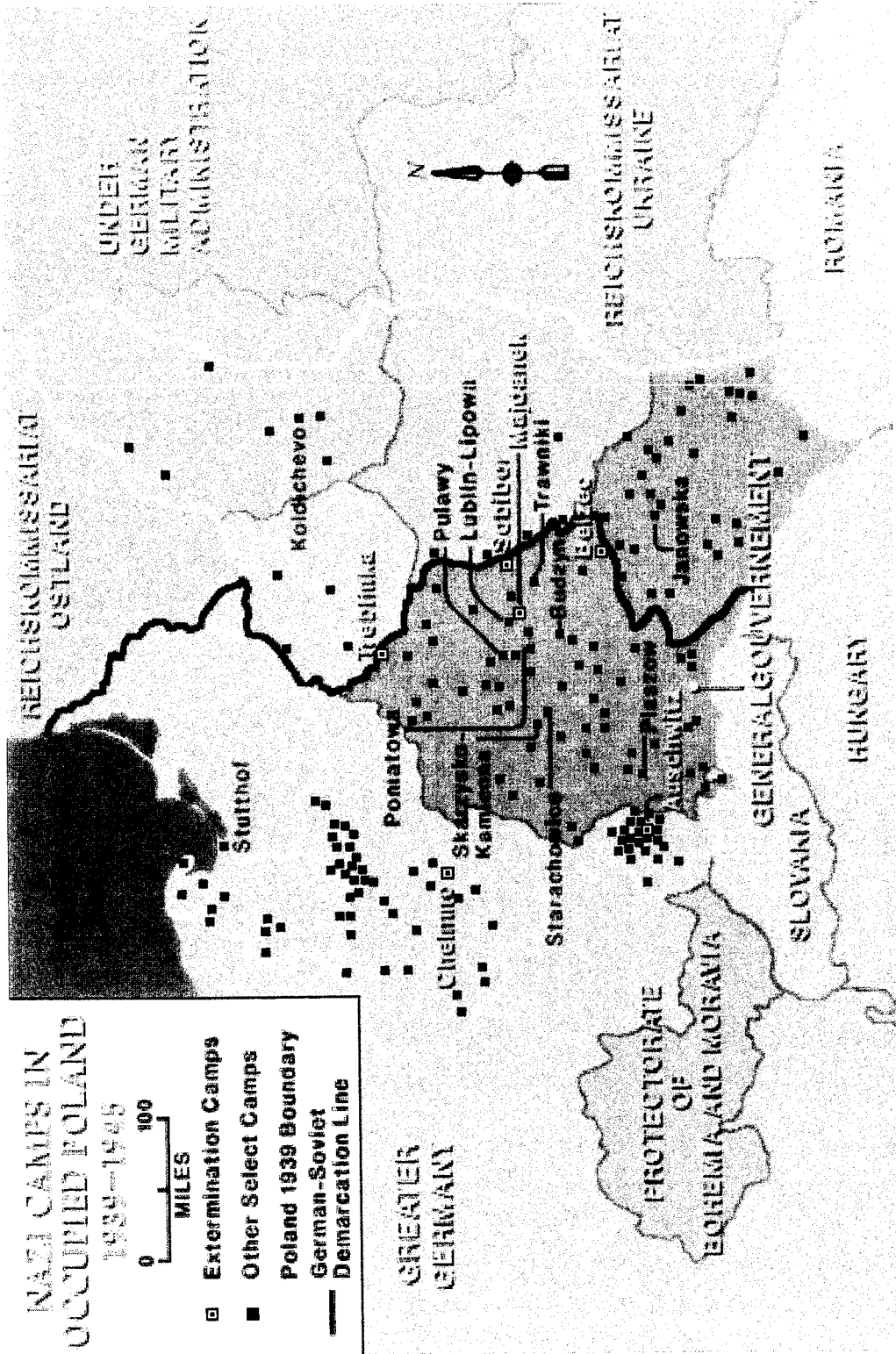
We suffered from thirst and cold. At every step we clamored for water or even a handful of snow, but we were rarely heard. The soldiers of the escort drove off anybody who tried to approach the convoy. Two young mothers nursing their children groaned night and day begging for water. The hours of darkness were nightmares without end.

Next to me, crushed against me for the whole journey, had been a woman. We had known each other for many years, and misfortune had struck us together. But we had known little of each other. Now in this hour of decision we said to each other things that are never said among the living. Everybody said farewell to life through his neighbor.

The climax came suddenly. The door opened with a crash and the dark echoed with outlandish orders in curt barbaric barking of Germans in command.

A vast platform appeared before us, lit by reflectors. A little beyond it a row of lorries. A dozen SS men began to interrogate us. How old? Healthy or ill? And on the basis of the reply they pointed in two different directions.

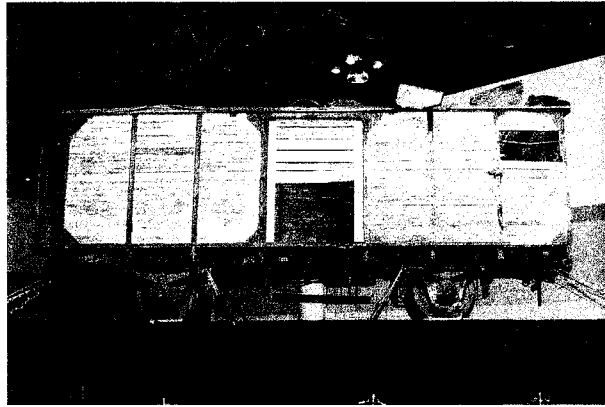
Excerpted from: *The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust* (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1993). By: Michael Berenbaum, Ph.D.



Nazi camps in occupied Poland, 1939-1945

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

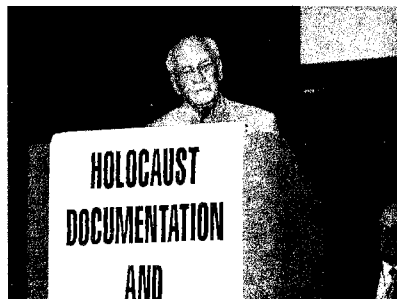
RAIL CAR OF THE HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND EDUCATION CENTER, INC.



BEFORE RESTORATION

On Tuesday, February 13, 2007, the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center unveiled its anchor artifact, a 20th Century rail car which was in use during World War II transporting men, women, and children to the Nazi concentration and death camps. This Holocaust rail car, one of only nine worldwide, will eventually be displayed in the City of Hollywood, one half block from the first South Florida Holocaust Museum. The rail car will remain in its wartime transportation state and will undergo all the necessary and major rehabilitation processes needed for preservation and visitor safety. This rail car will be a powerful tool to demonstrate to thousands of students, teachers, and visitors what hatred, evil, and prejudice can lead to if people remain silent and indifferent.

The following is a speech given by Leo Shniderman, a Survivor of the Holocaust, who shared his experiences on a rail car similar to the one unveiled that day, at the public unveiling.



Leo Shniderman, Survivor

“If those walls could talk. They would tell the story of the darkest chapter in all history. My story of that August day in 1944. It was more than one hundred of us – men, women, and children of all ages packed in that cattle car. The only facilities we had were two buckets – one on each side. After standing in that heat, the train started to move.

People began to fall on each other screaming, vomiting. Everybody was soaking wet from perspiration – the body odor so thick to the point of causing people to pass out.

I can still see that man against the wall begging us to move back a little, to give some room for his pregnant wife. And this young girl that became hysterical. She had to use those buckets. Her mother and another woman were holding up a coat in front of her to give her some privacy.

I was among the youngsters. People asked me to climb up on those packages to that little window because maybe I could see where we are going. I started to read the signs on the road. Immediately, it became known to us -- the big lie. We are not going to Germany to be resettled. We are not going East to the front. We are traveling South toward the mountains. I also saw something that still hurts me inside. Peasants were pointing to the sky. Some even more graphic were going with their finger across the throat calling out, “Moshe, Sara, throw out the money, the jewelry. You won’t need them anymore. Suddenly, somebody screamed. An elderly man collapsed. His daughter screamed “Help! People, help me.” Nobody was able to render any help.

The second day went from bad to worse. One infant died – the mother wailed uncontrollably. The buckets were overflowing. The stench, the heat, people pushing because everyone wanted to be next to the gate.

In the middle of the night on the second day, we arrived in Auschwitz. The minute the doors opened, those camp servants, the kapos, with clubs in their hands, came in and started to beat everybody over their heads, in their face, on their backs – their way of saying, “Get out of the train.” What they said was even more painful than their blows. They told the young mother to throw away the baby. “Give the baby to that old woman if you want to live.”

We walked down the ramp. What we saw, I hope no human eyes should ever see. Families were being torn apart. Men were separated from women, parents separated from the children. The sick and the half dead were thrown aside with the broken suitcases and the torn rags. I saw in everybody’s eyes the same question. “Will anybody ever believe that? Will anybody ever understand what is going on here tonight? I don’t know how.

My mother managed to break through the line. She ran over to me, grabbed me by the shoulders and said, “My child. I know I won’t see you anymore. Take care of your little brother.” Yes, she was right. I never saw her or my little brother again.

I just want to add on behalf of all Holocaust Survivors a word of thanks to all involved in bringing this authentic anchor artifact – the rail car – for future generations to see and remember how hatred and bigotry can drive a cultured people to sink so deep into bestiality. There is an old saying among Jewish people – For a Jew to be a realist is to believe it was a miracle to come out alive from this Hell. Today, I believe it was a miracle. The same world that let death happen gives us now the opportunity to tell build monuments, museums, to publish books and make films. All this gives us hope that we might live to see another miracle – a world without hate- without bigotry. No more anti-Semitism, no more wars, no more bloodshed.”

DIRECTORY OF MAJOR CAMPS

CAMP	LOCATION	TYPE OF CAMP	IN OPERATION	CLOSURE	PRESENT STATUS
Auschwitz-Birkenau	Poland	Concentration/Extermination	April 1940 - January 1945	Liberated by USSR	Camp preserved
Belzec	Poland	Extermination	March 1942 - June 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
Bergen-Belsen	Germany	Concentration/Holding Ctr	April 1943 - April 1945	Liberated by UK	Graveyard
Buchenwald	Germany	Concentration	July 1937 - April 1945	Liberated by UK	Camp preserved; Museum
Chelmno	Poland	Extermination	December 1944 - April 1943; April 1944 - January 1945	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
Dachau	Germany	Concentration	March 1933 - April 1945	Liberated by USA	Camp preserved; Museum
Dora/Mittelbau	Germany	Forced Labor	Sept 1943 - April 1945	Liberated by USA	Memorial Sculpture Plaza
Ebensee	Austria	Labor			
Flossenbürg	Germany	Forced Labor	May 1938 - April 1945	Liberated by USA	Buildings; Monument
Gross-Rosen	Germany	Concentration	August 1940 - February 1945	Liberated by USSR	Camp preserved; Museum
Gunskirchen	Austria	Labor	March 1945 - May 1945	Liberated by USA	
Gurs	France	Holding Center	April 1939 - Summer 1944	Liberated by USA	

Hasag Czystochowa	Poland	Forced Labor			Liberated by USSR	
Janinagrube	Poland	Labor				
Janowska	Ukraine	Forced Labor; Extermination		September 1941 – November 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Not maintained
Kaiserwald	Latvia	Forced Labor		March 1943 – September 1944	Liquidated by Germany	Not maintained
Majdanek	Poland	Concentration; Extermination		July 1941 – July 1944	Liberated by USSR	Camp preserved; Monument
Malines	Belgium	Holding Center				
Mauthausen	Austria	Concentration		August 1938 – May 1945	Liberated by USA	Buildings; Monument
Natzweiler/Struthof	France	Forced Labor; Concentration		May 1941 – September 1944	Liquidated by Germany	Camp preserved
Neuengamme	Germany	Forced Labor		June 1940 – May 1945	Liberated by UK	Used as prison; Monument
Nordhausen	Germany	Labor				
Ohrdruf	Germany	Concentration			Liberated by USA	
Oranienburg	Germany	Holding Center		March 1933 – March 1935	Liquidated by Germany	Not maintained
Plaszow	Poland	Forced Labor		December 1942 – January 1945	Liquidated by Germany	Not maintained
Ravensbrück	Germany	Concentration		May 1939 – April 1945	Liberated by USSR	Buildings; Monument
Sachsenhausen	Germany	Forced Labor		July 1936 – April 1945	Liberated by USSR	Museum; Buildings
Skarzysko Kamienna	Poland	Forced Labor		August 1942 – August 1944	Liberated by USSR	

Sobibor	Poland	Extermination	May 1942 – October 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
Stutthof	Poland	Concentration	September 1939 – May 1945	Liberated by USSR	Buildings; Museum
Terezin (Theresienstadt)	Czech Republic	Holding Center/Transit Ghetto	November 1941 – May 1945	Liberated by USSR	Buildings; Monument
Trawniki	Poland	Labor	Fall 1941 – Spring 1944	Liquidated by Germany	
Treblinka	Poland	Extermination	July 1942 – November 1943	Liquidated by Germany	Monument
Vaivara	Estonia	Concentration/Transit	August 1943 – February 1944		
Westerbork	Netherlands	Transit Camp	October 1939 – April 1945	Liberated by Canada	Monument
Wöbbelin	Germany	Labor			

Courtesy of the Simon Wiesenthal Center

RESISTANCE

JEWISH RESISTANCE – AN EMOTIONAL ISSUE

Jewish resistance during the Holocaust has been a particularly emotional and controversial issue for Holocaust survivors and for scholars. The myth that most Jews were not courageous in the face of death has compelled some writers to seek an explanation in a pattern of behavior they believe Jews learned over the course of centuries: that historically, in order to survive as a minority group in a Christian-dominated Europe, Jews had to refrain from resistance. The same myth of Jewish compliance leads other writers to document the many instances in which Jews did resist, including the compelling stories of the young men and women in the ghettos who chose to die fighting.

Why didn't they resist? This is one of the most frequently asked questions about the Holocaust.

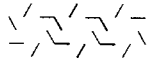
The large number of people killed by the Nazis and their supporters leads many to conclude erroneously that the victims did not resist. Historical evidence tells a different story. From the Nazis' rise to power to the end of the Third Reich, Jews and other victims of Nazism participated in many acts of resistance. They often did so in the face of great danger, not only to themselves but to their families.

Used in the context of the Holocaust, "resistance" may be defined as any action contrary to the established ideology, policies, laws, or actions of National Socialism taken by individuals or groups who were considered "enemies of the state" and whose lives were in jeopardy.

Resistance took many forms ranging from the spontaneous acts of defiant individuals to the planned actions of groups. Armed rebellions by Jews imprisoned in the closed ghettos and death camps remain among the most dramatic and well-documented forms of Jewish resistance. The famous Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in the spring of 1943 drew the attention of the world. During the Holocaust, non-violent acts like smuggling food, medicine, and messages also comprised forms of resistance as did quiet actions of willful disobedience such as continuing to practice religious and cultural traditions in defiance of the rules and creating fine art, music and poetry inside ghettos and concentration camps. For many, simply maintaining the will to remain alive in the face of abject brutality was the surest act of spiritual resistance.

To ask why people did not resist, in some ways blames the victim for faults of the transgressor. Given the enormous odds against resistance during the Holocaust, it is more pertinent to consider any act of resistance as truly remarkable. The more appropriate question to ask is: How did people facing such hopeless circumstances manage to resist at all?

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum



Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation Study Guide

The Jewish Partisans

Between 20,000 and 30,000¹ Jews escaped the ghettos and work camps of Nazi-occupied Europe, fleeing to the forests for shelter where they formed groups and fought back against the Nazis and their collaborators. These brave Jews are known as the Jewish Partisans.

It is important to note that for most victims of the Holocaust, the chance to escape and join the partisans never came. Only very few Jews had the means and the opportunity to escape, and even then, the choice was difficult. Most of these young people were their families' lifelines for



survival in the ghettos and camps, smuggling in available food and information whenever possible. The Nazis and their collaborators also used a method called Collective Responsibility to deter Jews from escaping the ghettos and camps. Collective Responsibility meant that for each person who escaped, 10 to 25 remaining people would be killed or executed, beginning with the escapee's family.

Daily survival in the forests was very difficult. Exposure and starvation posed as great a threat to the average partisan as did discovery by a Nazi patrol. Shelter was a small dugout in the ground.

Adequate clothing and food were scarce. The winter months meant enduring freezing temperatures, but welcoming snow, as it masked the smoke from a campfire.

In the face of these challenges to survival, which often meant risking death to seek or steal food from local villages, the Jewish Partisans organized to sabotage and resist the Nazis. Their missions, carried out in military-style units, were very successful in destroying thousands of trains. Apart from mining train tracks, partisans sabotaged

communications lines, exploded Nazi-controlled farms and power plants, and successfully rescued scores of other Jews still imprisoned in ghettos and camps.

Many Jewish Partisans fought alongside local groups also resisting the Nazi occupation. Making themselves known to other groups held many risks, however, as anti-Semitism was widespread in the rural areas where Jewish Partisans hid and carried out their missions. Many thousands of Russian soldiers, trapped in Eastern Europe after Hitler invaded Poland, escaped and formed partisan groups. These Russian partisan groups greatly aided many Jewish Partisans in their struggle to fight and survive in the forests. Among the Russians, however, there was also anti-Semitism.

Though people of all ages became Jewish Partisans, many were very young. Children as young as nine years old fought, and many Jewish Partisans were between the ages of 17 and 25. Most commonly, men and boys carried out all partisan missions, although in some camps, girls and women worked and fought alongside them.

⁽¹⁾ Ruben, Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Europe*, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1974)

Map

◀| UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM ||



Jewish armed resistance in ghettos and camps, 1941-1944

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

◀ | UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM | ▶



Jewish partisan activity in western Europe, 1942-1944

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum - Learning Center

Referenced in the following article(s):

Jewish Resistance

France

Armed Jewish Resistance: Partisans

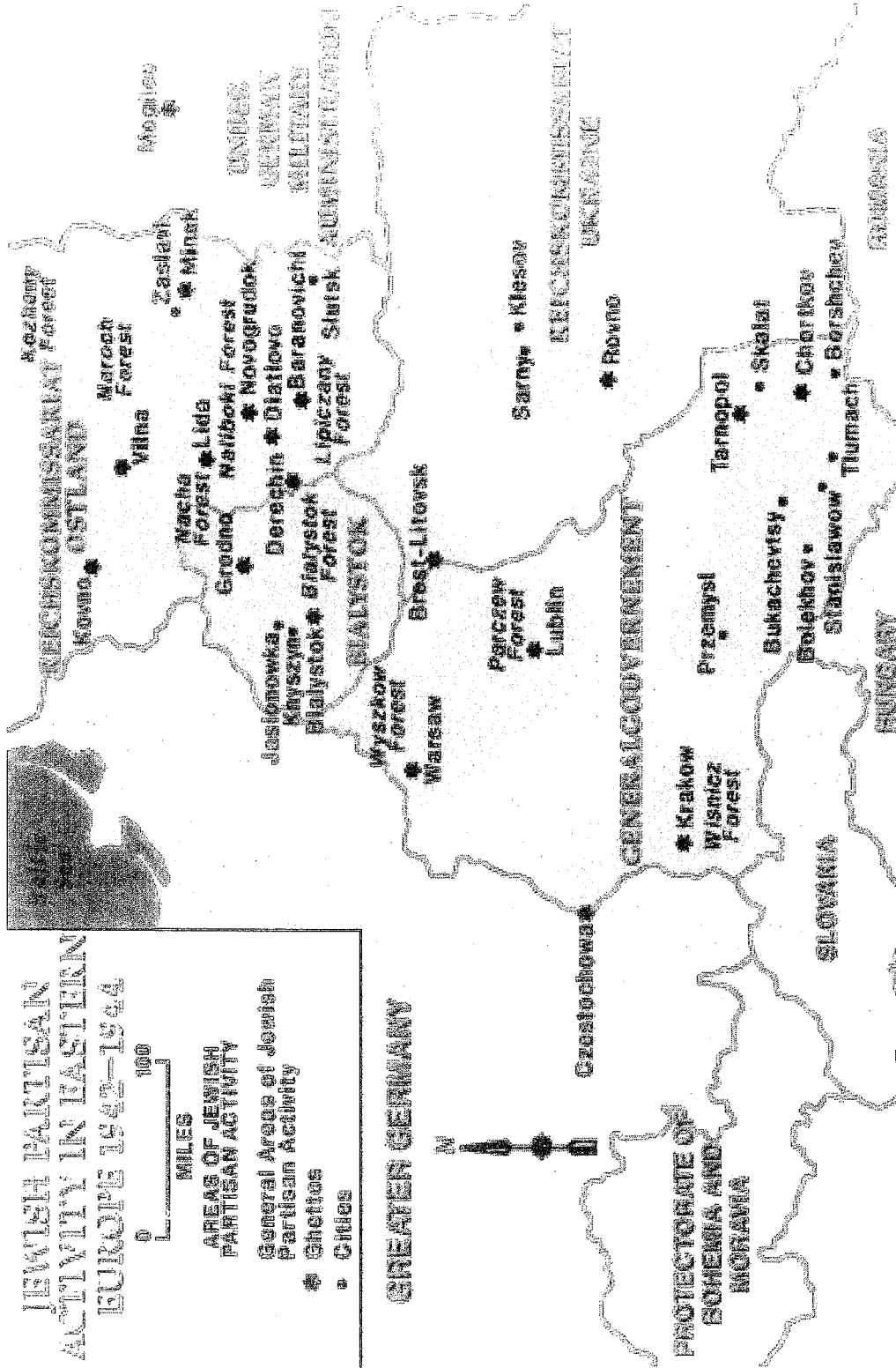
**JEWISH PARTISAN
ACTIVITY IN EASTERN
EUROPE 1942-1944**

0 100
MILES

**AREAS OF JEWISH
PARTISAN ACTIVITY**

General Areas of Jewish
Partisan Activity

- Ghettos
- Cities



Jewish partisan activity in eastern Europe, 1942-1944

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

CHRONOLOGY OF RESISTANCE

1938

November 7

Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jew living in France, assassinates Ernst von Rath, a minor German embassy official in Paris, France, to protest the deportation of his parents to Poland. This act was used as a pretext for "*Kristallnacht*," the state-organized attacks against Jews and Jewish property carried out throughout the *Reich* on November 9-10.

1939

November 8

An attempt on Hitler's life in Munich fails as a bomb explodes but leaves him uninjured.

1940

May

Dr. Emmanuel Ringelblum founds the *Oneg Shabbat* ("Joy of the Sabbath") secret archives in the Warsaw ghetto to document the plight of Polish Jews.

1941

February 25

A strike protesting the deportation of Jews from the Netherlands begins in the Amsterdam shipyards and soon spreads throughout the city.

August 21

The first German soldier is killed in Paris, France, by a member of the French resistance.

December 31

Abba Kovner calls for armed resistance of Jewish youth groups in the Vilna ghetto.

1942

May 1

A successful one-day general strike of ghetto workers in the Bialystok ghetto in eastern Poland is organized by the ghetto resistance.

May 18

Members of the Herbert Baum resistance group set fire to an anti-Soviet propaganda exhibition in Berlin.

July

Members of the "White Rose" movement begin to distribute anti-Nazi leaflets in Munich.

July 22

Residents of the Nieświec ghetto in eastern Poland resist a German deportation with knives, axes, clubs, and a handful of firearms. A few Jews manage to escape to join the partisans.

August 30

Leaders of the *Rote Kapelle* (Red Orchestra), a German Communist resistance group working with Soviet intelligence from 1939, are arrested. They are executed in December.

September 2-3

The residents of Lachva, Byelorussia, stubbornly resist German attempts to massacre them. Up to 700 Jews are killed in the struggle, enabling some to flee into the forests to join partisan groups.

September 10-11

Meir Berliner, a Jewish prisoner at Treblinka, kills SS officer Max Bialis. In retaliation, Ukrainian guards massacre many Jews awaiting death in the camp's gas chambers.

September 23

Following a German order to assemble for deportation, Jews in the Tuczyń ghetto in western Ukraine set fire to the ghetto's houses, offering strong resistance. Up to 2,000 people escape into the forests.

1943**January 18**

Several combat groups of the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB) fight German units attempting to deport Jews from the Warsaw ghetto.

February

Some 200 to 300 Christian women in mixed marriages protest for nearly one week outside several Berlin assembly centers after their Jewish husbands are arrested.

February 18

Hans and Sophie Scholl and other leaders of the "White Rose" are arrested for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets in Munich. On February 22, they are executed.

April 19

Members of the Committee for the Defense of Jews in Belgium cooperate with the Belgian resistance to attack a deportation train leaving the transit camp of Malines headed for Auschwitz.

Warsaw ghetto revolt begins. Fighting continues for nearly one month.

May 16

Warsaw ghetto uprising ends.

August 2

Armed revolt begins in the Treblinka killing center.

August 16

Fighting begins in the Bialystok ghetto as the Germans prepare to deport the residents to death camps. Resistance fighters hold out against German tanks and artillery until August 26. Several groups manage to escape into the surrounding forests. Some 40,000 Jews left in the ghetto are deported in the coming weeks.

September 1

Armed resistance is ordered by Vilna ghetto resistance leaders as the liquidation of the ghetto begins. Lacking arms, only a few fighters manage to fight to the death over the next few days. Others escape to join partisan bands outside the city.

October 14

Armed revolt begins at the Sobibor killing center.

December 22

Kraków's underground Jewish Fighting Organization carries out a daring attack on German officers sitting in the city's Cyganeria cafe. Eleven Germans are killed and thirteen wounded.

1944**March 7**

Emmanuel Ringelblum and his family are executed by the Germans. After the war, his *Oneg Shabbat* histories are discovered and published.

May 16

Gypsies at Auschwitz resist the destruction of the Gypsy family camp.

July 20

A group of dissident German officers and politicians attempt to assassinate Hitler. The attempt fails, and a number of those implicated are either summarily shot or executed after sentencing by a "Peoples Court" within a few days.

August 1

The Warsaw uprising begins as Polish resistance forces (AK) occupy important parts of the city. The fighting continues until October 2, when remnants of the Polish forces surrender. Tens of thousands of Polish citizens and fighters are killed and the rest are evacuated.

August 19

An insurrection begins in Paris, France, to prevent the Germans from destroying the city as the western allies approach. The city is liberated on August 25.

September 1

The Slovakian uprising begins. Partisan units battle the Germans until October 27, when surviving partisans flee into the mountains.

September 8

Italian partisans seize the Val d'Ossola near the Swiss border. They proclaim a republic, which lasts for five weeks, until the Germans recapture the area.

October 6-7

Prisoners blow up Crematorium IV at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

October 20

Belgrade is liberated by Yugoslav partisan units and Soviet troops.

1945

January 6

Four women prisoners -- Róża Robota, Ella Gaertner, Esther Wajcblum, and Regina Safirsztain -- are hanged in the women's camp at Auschwitz. They had smuggled the explosives that were used during the *Sonderkommando* revolt of October 7, 1944.

February 2

During the night, more than 570 prisoners, many of them Soviet prisoners of war under death sentences, revolt and escape from a barrack in the Mauthausen concentration camp. All but seventeen are later caught and killed.

April 9

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is hanged at Flossenbürg concentration camp.

April 11

Prisoners at Buchenwald revolt to forestall the planned evacuation of the camp as the Allies draw near. Some 150 Germans are taken prisoner a few hours before units of the American forces enter and liberate the camp.

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Derived from *Resistance During the Holocaust*. Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Used by permission of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

David Goldberg was born in 1907 in Dubno, Ukraine. He survived the Holocaust because he was rescued by Janina Bradel and her family. They hid Jewish people, including David, in their apartment, saving their lives.

Q=Interviewer, D=David, J=Janina

Q. Let's talk a little bit about the actual arrangements in the attic. What were the physical arrangements?

D. The big room was twice the size of an elevator. It was approximately six feet wide and fifteen feet long. We couldn't stand up for eighteen months, because the highest point of the compartment was only five feet tall. There was no heat, no daylight, nothing at all. It was a tin roof. In the wintertime, the temperature reached 20 or 30 degrees below zero, and the summertime was impossibly hot. We were filthy, dirty. We didn't take a bath for eighteen months. We never shaved the whole time.

Q. What about food?

D. Janina delivered to us whatever they had in their home. But the worst of all that she did for us was that we had a little bucket in that house which we used for a toilet. Every one of us used it. She was the one who took it away every day, washed it, and brought it back up. If we would have been discovered, not only would we have been killed, but everyone in her family would have been killed, and the house would even have been burned. This was the penalty for keeping and hiding Jews. They weren't even supposed to give Jewish people a little water. It was certainly forbidden to help them to survive.

Q. Did you know what would have happened to you and your parents if the Jews you were hiding had been discovered?

J. I saw with my own eyes soldiers with rifles, leading a family at whose home they had discovered Jews, to be shot somewhere. This was near our apartment, right in front of the house where they were discovered. They were hidden by somebody where the ghetto used to be, and they were led right past us. I was coming from town, and this woman looked at me so pitifully, to help her or something. I saw this group, how they were led away. My mother, when she saw, ran away, because she was in shock. This meant that we would be in the same situation if we were caught.

My father said, "There's one thing. They will not take us out alive from here. Either we'll survive, or in case they find you, I'll run up with my swords to the attic, and we'll continue to use our weapons until they kill every one of us. They will not take us as they did all those people."

D. She saw with her own eyes what would happen to her if they had discovered us in her attic. Another time, a Polish family did the same thing that they did, and the Jewish people were discovered with them. They took both families, the Jewish family and the Polish family, and she saw with her own eyes as they shot them to death.

- J. There was no time to be in fear. Of course, it was dangerous, but to meet all their own daily needs and ours, we had to invest all our energy to supply the house with the minimal necessities. For instance, there was no electricity, there was no soap available, there was no firewood to cook. Our daily life was preoccupied mostly with getting those things to fill out all of our daily needs. So, there was no time to be scared.
- D. Her father brought up to us two big bags of garlic and onions. He said, "If you eat this, you'll survive. If not, everyone of you will get sick and die." We ate part of it every day. And no one ever got sick. We couldn't even talk to each other. If we had to say something, we had to say it quietly, because somebody lived right next door to this attic. So, we had to be careful.
- Q. Did you have any reading materials?
- D. Yes, we did. Her father brought us two daily newspapers, one German and one Ukrainian. I was the reader.
- Q. That's how you followed the news?
- D. Yes, that's right.
- Q. And you read by candlelight?
- D. No. In the attic, there was a small opening, less than a foot in diameter, with a piece of glass in the wall. It was built into the brick. That allowed enough light in to read.

THE DIPLOMATS AND THEIR ROLE DURING THE HOLOCAUST

Most people are unaware of the dramatic story of diplomats from diverse countries, cultures, and backgrounds who, by the end of the war, had saved tens of thousands of Jewish lives. These stories collectively may constitute the largest rescue of Jews and other refugees during the Nazi Holocaust.

Diplomatic rescue took place between 1938 and 1945 by more than 100 diplomats representing 25 countries, who were actively involved in saving refugees.

Many people have heard the story of Raoul Wallenberg of Sweden and, more recently, Chiune Sugihara of Japan, who rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Yet, few people are aware that there were this many diplomats willing to risk their careers and even their lives. Many are unaware that diplomatic rescue was even possible. Ultimately, thousands of Jews were rescued by men and women whose heroic deeds have remained largely unrecognized.

Rescue by diplomats took many forms. Diplomats issued visas, including exit visas and transit visas, citizenship papers, protective papers and other forms of documentation that allowed Jews to escape the Nazis. Some diplomats personally smuggled refugees across international borders and frontiers. To save Jews, many diplomats established safe houses and some even hid Jews in their embassies and in their personal residences. Some brave diplomats were able to personally halt Nazi deportations to the death camps. Some diplomats warned the Jewish community of impending actions and deportations.

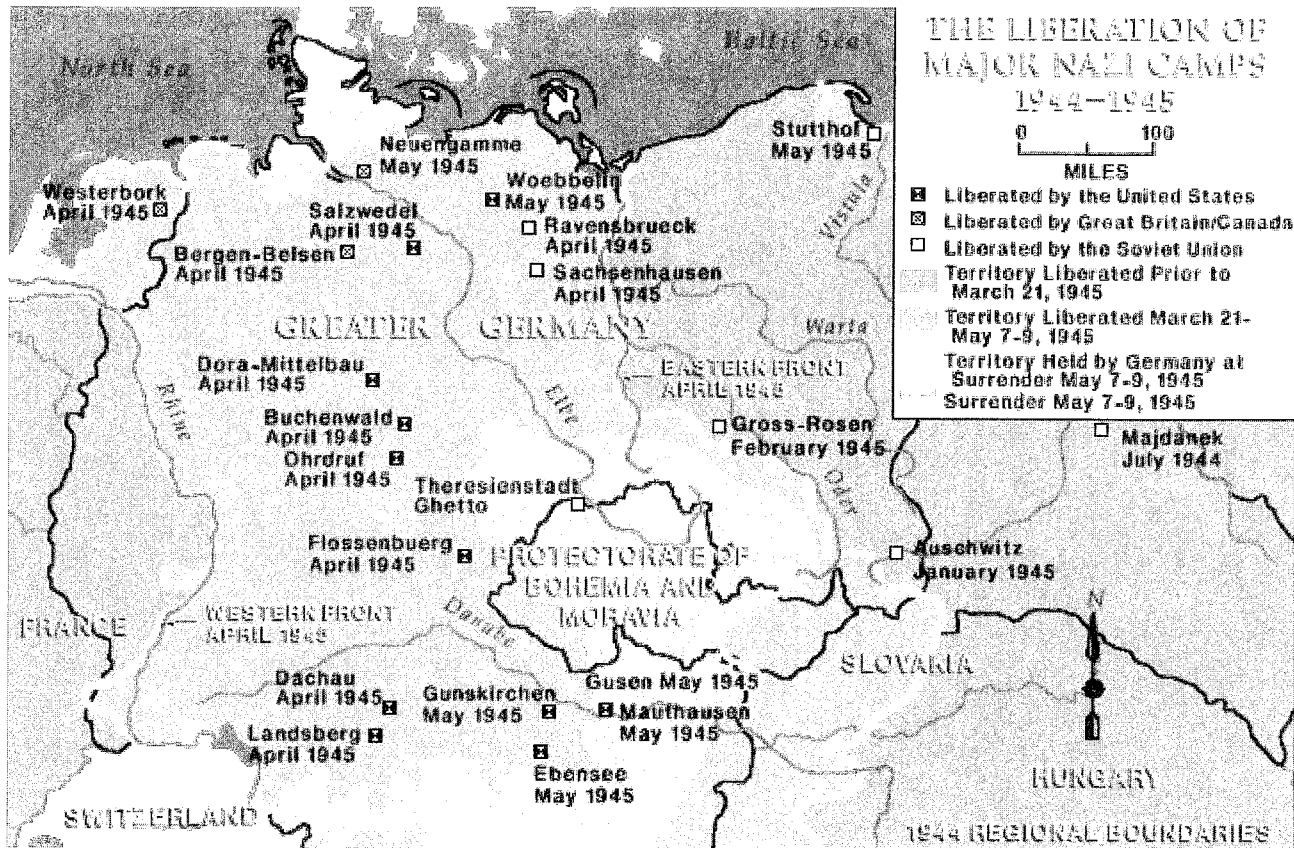
These diplomats rescued Jews at the peril of their careers, and oftentimes, their lives. Most of the diplomats who aided Jews did so illegally, and in direct violation of the regulations and immigration policies of their countries. Some diplomats were fired or were stripped of their ranks and pensions. Others were ostracized in their home countries. Two diplomats lost their lives.

Recognizing and honoring these diplomats causes us to think about the plight of refugees in our own times. It is our hope that this exhibit will inspire a new generation to remember the Holocaust and its courageous heroes. It is a story of unbelievable moral courage and transcendent heroism by a few individuals who made an enormous difference in the lives of thousands and thousands of people.

Taken from Visas for Life: the Righteous and Honorable Diplomats material

Map

◀|UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM||



Liberation of major Nazi camps, 1944-1945

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

TESTIMONY FROM A LIBERATOR

Warren Melgaard is a liberator who was with the 11th Armored Division during World War II. He liberated Mauthausen on May 5, 1945. He wanted to ensure the world would never forget and therefore gave his testimony. . He recently passed away.

A. We didn't know this was a Holocaust. We had no idea. We had this bad smell. And then the gates opened all the way. And here were inmates, walking skeletons. Just with sticks maybe to help them walk, just to come up and touch your hand or rub the side of your vehicle and thank you, thank you, thank you.

Oh, you could see in their eyes – if they could cry, they were crying. They certainly had tears in my eyes. I had sore eyes for a week. I couldn't believe. And then I looked to the right and here were bodies, stacked ten feet high, maybe one hundred feet long, rows of them. They didn't have time to incinerate...

...They left everything in disarray, completely...All these bones and people laying dead all over the place. Didn't even clean up the cremators...

...We had to radio back and say we need help, a lot of help. We need help. Bring trucks, bring shovels, bring a blade for our tank to dig a grave. We got all done that afternoon. We got the grave dug. It was ten feet wide, seven feet deep – right in front of the main, what I think was the main entrance to Mauthausen. On the left-hand side as you look in through the gate is a massive grave that probably is still there. We had thousands of bodies to bury. We had to start somewhere. And it was Bill put in charge, Joachim was put in charge of the burial. He ordered two truckloads of prisoners to be brought over to lay the bodies in the grave. My job was to relay information they could get off the bodies or numbers, whatever. Bill would tell them where he wanted the bodies and how he wanted them placed.

Q. Let me ask you, where were the prisoners, the camp inmates, when you entered the camp?

A. They were all in this area that was by the gate which be the length of probably one thousand feet – by the length which might have been a half a mile...

Q. How many incinerators were there?

A. I think in that one building I was in there were four or six incinerators. And they had many different type carts, all steel, that they used to put bodies in. And these cremators seemed exceptionally long, many five times in length to width, something like that. I saw no real toilet facilities. I could just imagine those poor people in there what they had to go through.

Q. Do you remember how you felt when you first walked in there?

A. I thought, here I came from the United States. I felt as a very patriotic young man that believed in his country – the greatest country you could live in – and that the price some people will pay for freedom. That's what I thought about – freedom.

This excerpt is adapted from the original testimony of Warren Melgaard which is part of the Oral History Collection of the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc.

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY (VICTORY IN EUROPE)
HADASSAH ROSENSAFT
UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON, D.C., MAY 8, 1995**

For most of the world, May 8, 1945 marked the end of World War II in Europe, but for the survivors of the concentration camps, the war ended on the day of our liberation.

I am a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust. I was born and raised in Poland. In early August 1943, together with thousands of Jews from my hometown of Sosnowiec, I was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. There I lost my entire family: my parents, my first husband and our 5 year old son, and my younger sister. They were all killed in the gas chambers of Birkenau. I remained alone.

After 15 months at Auschwitz, I was sent with eight other women as a medical team to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany. We arrived there on November 23, 1944, and I was assigned as the supervisor of the so-called "hospital."

Conditions in Belsen were horrible. The camp was filthy and overcrowded. Ironically speaking, whatever was bad in Auschwitz was worse in Belsen, except that there were no gas chambers. Hundreds of inmates—thousands toward the end – were dying daily from starvation, torture and all kinds of epidemic diseases. We lived in despair, without any ray of hope that we would ever be free again.

But the miracle happened. The day was Sunday, April 15, 1945. I was sitting with a group of Jewish orphans who had been placed in my charge, telling them stories, trying to comfort them. Suddenly, a few minutes after 3 p.m., we heard a voice repeating the same words in English and German over and over: "Hello, hello, you are free, we are British soldiers and we came to liberate you!" These words still resound in my ears.

It is hard to imagine how we felt. The British found 58,000 inmates in Belsen: men, women and children – over 90% of them were Jews. The vast majority were living skeletons. What the British saw was a sea of crying bones.

Although the war was still going on, one of our liberators, Brigadier General H. L. Glyn-Hughes, the Chief Medical Officer of the Second British Army, decided to remain in Belsen with a medical unit headed by Colonel James Johnston, and to try to save as many of the survivors as possible. I was asked to organize and head a medical team to help them, and I was honored and privileged to do so.

A new hospital for 17,000 patients was established in the nearby former German military barracks. The patients were transferred there and we started to work. Our group included eight doctors from among the survivors and 620 other men and women who, although still convalescents themselves, came forward to help. We worked hard around the clock. Thousands were saved thanks to the performance of superhuman work, but

13,944 still died during the two months following the liberation. They are buried in the mass-graves of Belsen.

I don't remember the 8th of May in 1945. We were too busy with the sick and the dying. Of course, we were told by our British friends that the war in Europe was over, but we did not celebrate.

I am not a masochist, but for years, I have been watching a film on television recording reactions in different countries to the end of the Second World War. I see people in New York, London and Paris, dancing in the streets, laughing, singing, filled with joy that their dear ones will soon be coming home. These scenes fill me with terrible pain.

We in Belsen did not dance on that day. We in Belsen had nothing to be hopeful for. Nobody was waiting for us anywhere. We were alone! The liberation came too late – not only for the dead but also for the survivors. While we were liberated from death and the fear of death, we were not free from the fear of life.

We also know that the liberation of Belsen and the other camps was not a priority on the agenda of the war strategy. We were discovered accidentally.

This does not in any way lessen our deep, everlasting gratitude to every soldier of the Allied armies who took part in freeing us from the Germans. But every year on May 8th, when the world celebrates, my thoughts are with the dead, and I remember the anguish with which we, the survivors, returned to life.

Hadassah Bimko Rosensaft studied medicine at the University of Nancy in France, received her doctorate as a dental surgeon in 1935 and practiced dentistry in her native city of Sosnowiec, Poland until August 1943 when she was sent to Auschwitz concentration camp. She helped rescue hundreds of inmates in Auschwitz and saved 149 orphans in Bergen-Belsen.

In 1958, Dr. Rosensaft moved to the United States. She served on the President's Commission on the Holocaust and later on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. She was the chairwoman of the archives and library committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, a member of the Museum's executive committee and the honorary president of the World Federation of Bergen-Belsen survivors.

Permission granted by son Menachem Rosensaft.

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER WRITES HOME

Paris, France
May 19, 1945

Dear Mother:

In just a few days I will be in an airplane on my way back to the APO to which you write me. Before I leave Europe, I must write this letter and attempt to convey to you that which I saw, felt and gasped at as I saw a war and a frightened peace stagger into a perilous existence. I have seen a dead Germany....If it is not dead, it is certainly ruptured beyond repair. I have seen the beer hall where the era of the inferno and hate began, and as I stood there in the damp moist hall where Nazism was spawned, I heard only the dripping of a bullet pierced beer barrel and the ticking of a clock which had already run out the time of the bastard who made the Munich beer hall a landmark. I saw the retching vomiting of the stone and mortar which had once been listed on maps as Burnheim, Begensberg, Munich, Frankfurt, Augsburg, Linz and wondered how a civilization could ever again spring from cities so utterly removed from the face of the earth by weapons the enemy taught us to use at Coventry and Canterbury. I have met the Germans, have examined the Storm trooper, his wife and his heritage of hate, and I have learned to hate almost with as much fury as the G.I. who saw his buddy killed at the Bulge, almost as much as the Pole from Bridgeport who lost 100 pounds at Mauthausen, Austria. I have learned now and only now that this war had to be fought. I wish I might have done more. I envy with a bottomless and endless spirit, the American soldier who may tell his grandchildren that with his hands he killed Germans.

That which is in my heart now I want you and those dear to us to know and yet I find myself completely incapable of putting it into letter form.... I think if I could sit down in our living room or the den at 11 President, I might be able to convey a portion of the dismal, horrible and yet titanic mural which is Europe today. Unfortunately, I want to be able to do that for months or maybe a year, and by then the passing of time may dim the memory. Some of the scenes will live just so long as I do – some of the sounds, like the dripping beer, like the firing of a Russian tommy gun, will always bring back the thought of something I may try to forget, but never will be able to do.

For example, when I go to the Boston Symphony, when I hear waves of applause, no matter what the music is, I shall be traveling back to a town near Linz where I heard applause unequalled in history, and where I was allowed to see the ordeal which our fellow brothers and sisters of the human race have endured. To me Poland is no longer the place where Chopin composed, or where a radio station held out for three weeks – to me Poland is the place from which the prisoners of Mauthausen came, when I think of the Czechs, I will think of those who were butchered here, and that goes for the Jews, the Russians, the Austrians, the people of the 25 different lands – yes, even the Germans who passed through this Willow Run of death. This was Mauthausen. I want you to remember the word....I want you to know, I want you to never forget or let our disbelieving friends forget that your flesh and blood saw this. This was no movie, no printed page. Your son saw this with his own eyes and in doing this aged 10 years.

Mauthausen was built with a half-million rocks which 150,000 prisoners – 18,000 was the capacity – carried up on their backs from a quarry 800 feet below. They carried it up steps so steep that a captain and I walked it once and were winded, without a load. They carried granite and made 8 trips a day ... and if they stumbled, the S.S. men pushed them into the quarry. There are 235 steps, covered with blood. They called it the steps of death. I saw the shower room (twice or three times the size of our bathroom) a chamber lined with tile and topped with sprinklers where 150 prisoners at a time were disrobed and ordered in for a shower which never gushed forth from the sprinklers because the chemical was gas.

When they ran out of gas, they merely sucked all the air out of the room. I talked to the Jews who worked in the crematory, one room adjacent, where six and seven bodies at a time were burned. They gave these jobs to the Jews because they all died anyhow, and they didn't want the rest of the prisoners to know their own fate. The Jews knew theirs, you see. I saw their emaciated bodies in piles like cords of wood...the stench of death, the decomposition of human flesh, of the uncontrolled body fluids, of burned, charred bones. I saw the living skeletons, some of whom regardless of our medical corps work, will die and be in piles like that in the next few days. Malnutrition doesn't stop the day that food is administered. Don't get the idea that these people were all derelicts, all just masses of people....some of them doctors, authors, some of them American citizens, a scattered few were G.I.'s. A Navy Lt. still lives to tell the story. I saw where they lived, I saw where the sick died, three and four in a bed, no toilets, no nothing. I saw the look in their eyes. I shall never stop seeing the expression in the eyes of the anti-Franco former prisoners who have been given the job of guarding the S.S. men who were captured.

And how does the applause fit in. Mother, I walked through countless cell blocks filled with sick dying people – 300 in a room twice the size of our living room and as we walked in – there was a ripple of applause and then an inspiring burst of applause and cheers, and men who could not stand up sat up and whispered though they tried to shout it – vive L'Americansky...Vive L'Americansky...the applause, the cheers, those faces of men with legs the size and shape of rope, with ulcerated bodies, weeping with a kind of joy you and I will never, I hope, know. Vive L'Americansky... I got a cousin in Milwaukee... We thought you guys would come.. Vive L'Americansky.... Applause—gaunt, hopeless faces at last filled with hope. One younger man asked me something in Polish which I could not understand but I did detect the word “Yid”... I asked an interpreter what he said – the interpreter blushed and finally said....”He wants to know if you are a Jew.” When I smiled and stuck out my mitt and said “yes”... he was unable to speak or show the feeling that was in his heart. As I walked away, I suddenly realized that this had been the first time I had shaken hands with my right hand. That, my dear, was Mauthausen. There but for the Grace of God.....

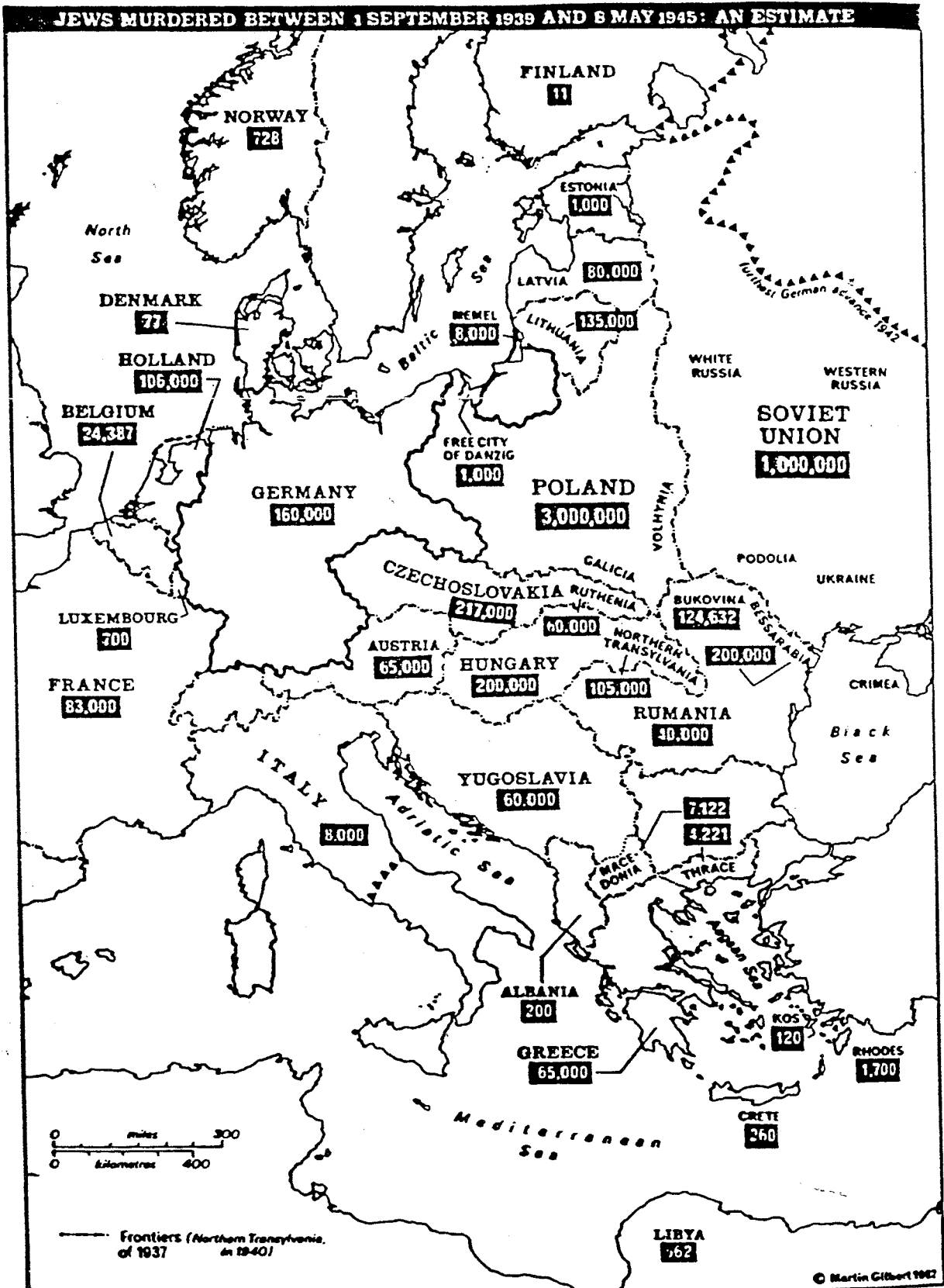
I will write more letters in days to come. I want to write one on the Russians.... I want to write and tell you how I sat next to Patton and Tulbukhin at a banquet at the Castle of Franz Joseph. I want to write and tell you how the Germans look in defeat, how Munich looked in death, but those things sparkle with excitement and make good reading. This is my Mauthausen letter. I hope you will see fit to let Bill Braude and the folks read it. I would like to think that all the Kacheheimers and all the Friendlys and all our good Providence friends would read it. Then I want you to put it away and every Yom Kippur I want you to take it out and make your grandchildren read it.

For, if there had been no America we, all of us, might well have carried granite at Mauthausen.

All my love,
F.F.*

***Fred Friendly was a towering figure in the history of broadcast news. He was named president of CBS News and later taught in the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and inspired a new generation of journalists.**

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Council, Washington, D.C.



Gilbert, M. *Atlas of the Holocaust*. Jerusalem: Steimatsky's, 1982 Reprinted with permission.



United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

A girl in the Kloster Indersdorf children's center who was photographed in an attempt to help locate surviving relatives. Such photographs of both Jewish and non-Jewish children were published in newspapers to facilitate the reunification of ...
See more photographs

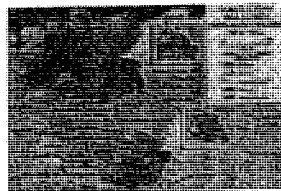
DISPLACED PERSONS

From 1945 to 1952, more than 250,000 Jewish displaced persons (DPs) lived in camps and urban centers in Germany, Austria, and Italy. These facilities were administered by Allied authorities and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (**UNRRA**). Among the concerns facing these Jewish DPs in the years following the Holocaust were the problems of daily life in the displaced persons camps, Zionism, and emigration.

DAILY LIFE

Soon after **liberation**, survivors began searching for their families. UNRRA established the Central Tracing Bureau to help survivors locate relatives who had survived the concentration camps. Public radio broadcasts and newspapers contained lists of survivors and their whereabouts. The attempt to reunite families went hand-in-hand with the creation of new ones; there were many weddings and many births in the DP camps.

Schools were soon established and teachers came from Israel and the United States to teach the children in the DP camps. Orthodox Judaism also began its rebirth as yeshivot (religious schools) were founded in several camps, including Bergen-Belsen, Foehrenwald, and **Feldafing**. Religious holidays became major occasions for gatherings and celebrations. Jewish volunteer agencies supplied religious articles for everyday and holiday use.



Major camps for Jewish displaced persons, 1945-1946
See maps

Displaced Persons

The DPs also transformed the camps into active cultural and social centers. Despite the often bleak conditions--many of the camps were former concentration camps and German army camps--social and occupational organizations soon abounded. Journalism sprang to life with more than 170 publications. Numerous theater and musical troupes toured the camps. Athletic clubs from various DP centers challenged each other.

EMIGRATION

After liberation, the Allies were prepared to repatriate Jewish displaced persons to their homes, but many DPs refused or felt unable to return. The Allies deliberated and procrastinated for years before resolving the emigration crisis, although some Allied officials had proposed solutions just months after liberation. Earl Harrison, in his August 1945 report to President Truman, recommended mass population transfer from Europe and resettlement in British-controlled Palestine or the United States. The report influenced President Truman to order that preference be given to DPs, especially widows and orphans, in U.S. immigration quotas. Great Britain, however, claimed that the United States had no right to dictate British policy insofar as the admission of Jews to Palestine was concerned.

Truman alone could not raise restrictive U.S. and British immigration quotas, but he did succeed in pressuring Great Britain into sponsoring the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. This bi-national delegation's suggestions included the admission of 100,000 Jewish DPs to Palestine. Britain's rejection of the report strengthened the resolve of many Jews to reach Palestine and, from 1945-1948, the **Brihah** ("escape") organization moved more than 100,000 Jews past British patrols and illegally into Palestine.

British seamen captured many of the ships used in the operations and interned the passengers in camps on the island of Cyprus. The British attack on one such ship, the "Exodus 1947," attracted worldwide publicity and strengthened support for the DPs' struggle to emigrate.

On May 14, 1948, the United States and the Soviet Union recognized the state of Israel. Congress also passed the Displaced Persons Act in 1948, authorizing 200,000 DPs to enter the United States. The law's stipulations made it unfavorable at first to the Jewish DPs, but Congress amended the bill with the DP Act of 1950. By 1952, over 80,000 Jewish DPs had immigrated to the United States under the terms of the DP Act and with the aid of Jewish agencies.

With over 80,000 Jewish DPs in the United States, about 136,000 in Israel, and another 20,000 in other nations, including Canada and South Africa, the DP emigration crisis came to an end. Almost all of the DP camps were closed by 1952. The Jewish displaced persons began new lives in their new homelands around the world.

**LETTER FROM PRESIDENT TRUMAN TO GENERAL EISENHOWER
CONCERNING THE HARRISON REPORT ON DISPLACED JEWS
IN TH U. S. OCCUPATION ZONE, 1945**

September 29, 1945.

White House News Release

August 31, 1945

MY DEAR GENERAL EISENHOWER:

I have received and considered the report of Mr. Earl G. Harrison, our representative on the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, upon his mission to inquire into the condition and needs of displaced persons in Germany who may be stateless or non-repatriable, particularly Jews. I am sending you a copy of that report. I have also had a long conference with him on the same subject matter.

While Mr. Harrison makes due allowance for the fact that during the early days of liberation the huge task of mass repatriation required main attention he reports conditions which now exist and which require prompt remedy. The conditions, I know, are not in conformity with policies promulgated by SHAEF, now Combined Displaced Persons Executive. But they are what actually exists in the field. In other words, the policies are not being carried out by some of you subordinate officers.

For example, military government officers have been authorized and even directed to requisition billeting facilities from the German population for the benefit of displaced persons. Yet, from this report, this has not been done on any wide scale. Apparently it is being taken for granted that all displaced persons, irrespective of their former persecution or the likelihood that their repatriation or resettlement will be delayed, must remain in camps – many of which are overcrowded and heavily guarded. Some of these camps are the very ones where these people were herded together, starved, tortured, and made to witness the death of their fellow inmates and friends and relatives. The announced policy has been to give such persons preference over the German civilian population in housing. But the practice seems to be quite another thing.

We must intensify our efforts to get these people out of camps and into decent houses until they can be repatriated or evacuated. These houses should be requisitioned from the German civilian population. That is one way to implement the Potsdam policy that the German people “cannot escape responsibility for what they have brought upon themselves.”

I quote this paragraph with particular reference to the Jews among the displaced persons: "As matters now stand, we appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them except that we do not exterminate them. They are in concentration camps in large numbers under our military guard, instead of SS troops. One is led to wonder whether the German people, seeing this, are not supposing that we are following or at least condoning Nazi policy."

You will find in the report other illustrations of what I mean.

I hope you will adopt the suggestion that a more extensive plan of field visitation by appropriate Army Group Headquarters be instituted, so that the humane policies which have been enunciated are not permitted to be ignored in the field. Most of the conditions now existing in displaced persons camps would quickly be remedied if through inspection tours they came to your attention or to the attention of your supervisory officers.

I know you will agree with me that we have a particular responsibility toward these victims of persecution and tyranny who are in our zone. We must make clear to the German people that we thoroughly abhor the Nazi policies of hatred and persecution. We have no better opportunity to demonstrate this than by the manner in which we ourselves actually treat the survivors remaining in Germany.

I hope you will report to me as soon as possible the steps you have been able to take to clean up the conditions mentioned in this report.

I am communicating directly with the British Government in an effort to have the doors of Palestine opened to such of these displaced persons as wish to go there.

Very sincerely yours,
HARRY S. TRUMAN

General of the Army D. D. Eisenhower

HOW WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

United Nations

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore, The General Assembly proclaims

This Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

1. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.
2. No one shall be guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.
2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purpose and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
2. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free full consent of the intending spouses.
3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.
3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

1. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
2. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

A Partial Listing of Acts of Genocide During the Twentieth Century*

*** 1904—Botswana** The German government massacred 65,000 (out of a population of 80,000) people known as the Hereros in southern Africa.

*** 1915–1922—Turkey** The Ottoman Empire killed at least 1,500,000 Armenians in an attempt to “destroy all of the Armenians living in Turkey.”

*** 1918–1921—Ukraine** The Ukrainians slaughtered between 100,000 and 250,000 Jews in 2,000 different pogroms.

1932–1933—Soviet Union The Soviet Union purposely induced a famine in the Ukraine which resulted in 3 million to 8 million deaths.

1936–1939—Soviet Union At least 400,000–500,000 people were shot and killed in the Soviet Union for political reasons. In 1937–1938 there were days when up to 1,000 people were shot in Moscow alone.

*** 1939–1945—Europe** 6,000,000 Jews in Europe were killed by the German Nazi government. This accounted for between 75 to 85 percent of all European Jews. The Nazis also murdered up to 6,000,000 other people which included Gypsies, handicapped individuals, homosexuals, political opponents, and huge numbers of Slavic peoples.

1940–1951—Soviet Union During this time Russia, under the dictatorship of Stalin, deported whole nations of people from their native lands which resulted in massive numbers of deaths. These included Germans, Crimean Tatars, Kalmuyks, Chechens, Ingushes, Meskhetians, Karachai, Balkarians, and Greeks.

1965—Indonesia The government of Indonesia slaughtered up to 600,000 people it accused of being “Communists.” Many of these people were simply opponents of the government.

*** 1965–1972—Burundi** The Tutsi killed between 100,000 and 300,000 Hutus in the African nation of Burundi.

1965–1990s—Guatemala More than 100,000 Indians in Guatemala have been killed by the military.

1966—Nigeria Genocidal massacre of Ibo people in northern Nigeria by government troops.

1971—Bangladesh The Pakistani government killed between 1,000,000 and 3,000,000 Bengalis in East Pakistan (now called Bangladesh).

*** 1972–1990s—Paraguay** The Paraguayan government has enslaved, tortured, and killed thousands of Ache Indians in Paraguay.

*** 1975–1979—Cambodia** Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians were killed in a series of purges by Pol Pot’s Khmer Rouge government. Even more people died on forced marches from the cities to the countryside, during forced labor, and from starvation. Altogether, between 1,000,000 and 3,000,000 people were killed.

1975–1990s—East Timor An estimated 100,000 citizens (out of a population of 600,000) of East Timor have been slain by Indonesian troops.

1991–1995—Bosnia “Ethnic cleansing” practiced in Bosnia and other newly formed republics of former Yugoslavia.

1994—Rwanda Between 100,000 and 500,000, primarily Tutsi, were massacred in a civil war between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes.

* From the National Council for the Social Studies. Used by permission. An asterisk appears by those dates and incidents that the United Nations Report on Genocide (2 July 1985) notes as examples of genocide in the twentieth century. The other mass killings were not identified as genocide in the UN Report either because they had not yet occurred or because the UN Genocide Convention and Treaty does not include mass killings of political, class, or gender groups within its definition. Nevertheless, many scholars have argued that the exclusion of political, class, and gender groups is arbitrary at best and unconscionable at worst.

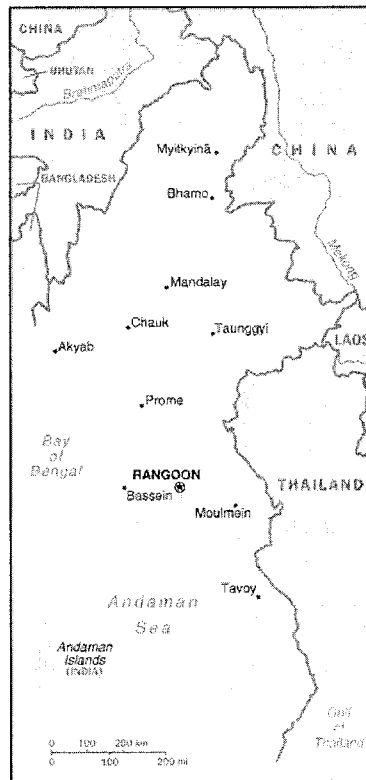
GENOCIDE IN BURMA (MYANMAR)

When the Holocaust ended, peoples of the world vowed that never again would they stand by and let it happen again. Yet, again and again it goes on. It happened in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Guatemala, just to name a few. Now it is happening in Darfur and in Burma.

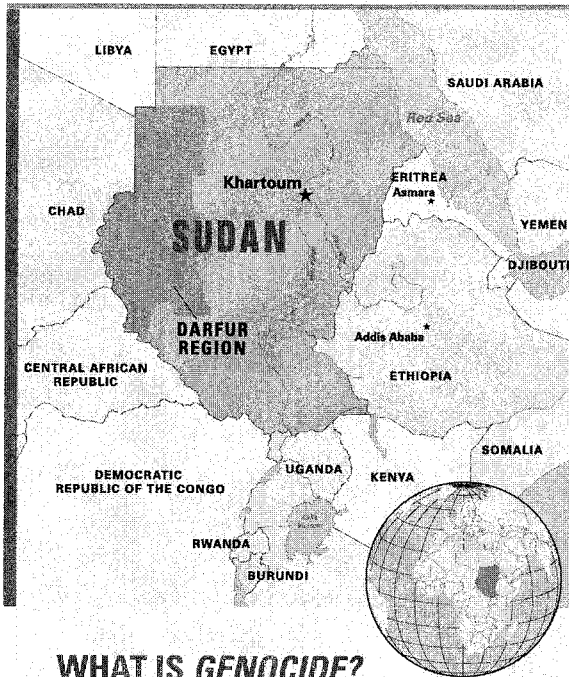
The government that seized power in Burma in 1962 continues to perpetrate violence and genocide against rebel ethnic groups and citizens. It has been reported that soldiers have burnt thousands of houses to the ground and raped and killed many inhabitants, often in a systematic way.

Leaflets were found that stated "The minority Shan people are the enemy and have to be destroyed." Beheadings, beatings, and the use of forced labor and rape are common. People who have spoken out against the government often become political prisoners. One has stated, "The atrocities will go on because these people are not for democracy." Two students spoke of spending 15 years in jail for speaking out in favor of democracy. One of them said he was forced to act like a dog, being on all fours and barking.

It has also been reported that thousands of monks who protested against the government for raising prices were loaded into army trucks and shipped to army camps in remote areas of Burma. As of October 2007, Burma has been closed to foreign reporters.



GENOCIDE EMERGENCY: DARFUR, SUDAN



WHAT IS GENOCIDE?

Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish refugee who fled Poland to the United States, introduced the term genocide in 1944 to describe what was happening in Nazi-occupied Europe. In 1948, the United Nations adopted the UN Genocide Convention, which defined *genocide* as certain acts undertaken with the intent to destroy, in whole or in substantial part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, as such. In agreeing to the Genocide Convention, nations promised to “undertake to prevent” genocide.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum honors the memory of those who suffered in the Holocaust by confronting genocide and threats of genocide today through the work of its Committee on Conscience. Join our efforts at www.ushmm.org/conscience.

Since early 2003, Sudanese government soldiers and their proxy militia, known as the Janjaweed, have fought rebel groups in the western region of Darfur. Initially, the government strategy largely involved systematic assaults against civilians from the same ethnic groups as the rebel forces. The targeted victims have been mostly from the Fur, Zaghawa, and Masaalit ethnic groups.

Hundreds of thousands of civilians have died from violence, disease, and starvation, and thousands of women have been raped. More than 2.5 million civilians have been driven from their homes, their villages torched and property stolen. Thousands of villages have been systematically destroyed and more than 230,000 people have fled to neighboring Chad. But most of those displaced are trapped inside Darfur. Although large-scale government attacks against civilians have declined since 2005, millions remain at risk. Most of the displaced are not returning home for fear that their villages will be attacked again. The Sudanese government still bears primary responsibility for the danger to civilians, but the increasing fragmentation of the rebel groups and their use of violence have contributed to the high level of insecurity.

Darfur is home to more than 30 ethnic groups, all of which are Muslim. The Janjaweed militias—recruited, armed, trained, and supported by the Sudanese government—are drawn from several of the groups in Darfur who identify themselves as Arab. They have used racial and ethnic slurs while attacking and raping the targeted groups.

The Khartoum-based government’s use of ethnically and racially targeted violence in Darfur resembles similar actions in southern Sudan before a tenuous 2005 peace agreement ended conflict there. Government-sponsored actions in both regions have included:

- **INFLAMING** ethnic conflict
- **IMPEDING** international humanitarian access, resulting in deadly conditions of life for displaced civilians
- **BOMBING** civilians from aircraft
- **MURDERING** and **RAPING** civilians

Because of substantial evidence that “acts of genocide or related crimes against humanity were occurring or immediately threatened,” in 2004 the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum declared a Genocide Emergency for Darfur. That same year, the U.S. government determined that genocide had been committed in Darfur. In January 2005, the UN Commission of Inquiry concluded that “crimes against humanity and war crimes have been committed in Darfur and may be no less serious and heinous than genocide.” In March 2005, the UN Security Council asked the International Criminal Court to investigate the Darfur situation. The court has issued arrest warrants for a high-ranking Sudanese government official and a militia leader on charges of crimes against humanity.

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

WHAT CAN I DO?

HELP THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM CONFRONT GENOCIDE TODAY

1. JOIN OUR COMMUNITY OF CONSCIENCE

Visit our Web site, www.ushmm.org/conscience. Sign up for our Genocide Prevention e-newsletter, download our Darfur layer on Google Earth, and subscribe to the *Voices on Genocide Prevention* podcast and blog. Learn more about genocide, the current situation in Darfur, and other places at risk.

2. CONTACT THE MEDIA

Tell them you want better coverage of Darfur. Visit their Web sites, call them, and send e-mails providing feedback on their coverage of the region.

3. COMMUNICATE WITH DECISION MAKERS

Stress the need to provide humanitarian assistance, protect civilians, stop the violence, and promote a solution to end the genocide in Darfur. Contact government officials and members of the United Nations, the European Union, and the African Union.

4. GET ENGAGED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Talk about Darfur with friends, family, members of organizations you belong to, and coworkers—help spread the word. Schools, churches, synagogues, mosques, and groups across the country are making a difference.

5. SUPPORT EDUCATION AND RELIEF EFFORTS

Support the ongoing efforts of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to draw attention to what is happening in Darfur. Find out more about who is on the ground in Darfur, what they are doing, and how you can help.

YOUR VOICE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

DO NOT BE SILENT.

Learn how at www.ushmm.org/conscience.

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

100 Reed Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2125 | ushmm.org

**THE UNITED NATIONS
ESTABLISHED JANUARY 27 AS THE DAY
TO REMEMBER THE HOLOCAUST**

On January 27, 2006, the United Nations Department of Public Information held its first universal observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust under the theme “Remembrance and Beyond.” The commemoration was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The date designated by the General Assembly is the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp by the Soviet Red Army on January 27, 1945.

This first observance marked a major step in a broader program of outreach on the Holocaust and the United Nations by the Department of Public Information. This declaration by the United Nations is an important statement. It rejects any denial of the Holocaust as an historical event and condemns all manifestations of religious hatred and violence. This resolution is a reminder of the universal lessons of the Holocaust – a unique evil - which cannot simply be consigned to the past and forgotten. It is designed to encourage remembrance of and education about the Holocaust, in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide.

PASTOR MARTIN NIEMOELLER'S QUOTE

Pastor Martin Niemoeller was a highly decorated commander in World War I. He later became a preacher and the most prominent leader of the anti-Nazi Confessing Church in Germany. In 1934, he formed the Pastors Emergency League. He was later arrested for attacking the state and was sent to a concentration camp. From 1937 until the end of the war, he was held in prison as well as in Sachsenhausen and Dachau.

“First they came for the Communists
And I did not speak out –
Because I was not a Communist.
Then they came for the Socialists
And I did not speak out –
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the trade unionists
And I did not speak out –
Because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out –
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me –
And there was no one left
To speak out for me.”

Have the students rewrite this poem in their own words so that the people and groups apply to today's society.

Source: *State of Florida Resource manual on Holocaust Education, Grades 9 - 12*

ONE VOTE: ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Is one vote important? Can one voice make a difference?
After reading this article, answer the above question again.

Elections are losing popularity, though they have become more important than ever. One reason people often give for not voting is that they believe one vote won't make a difference. **THEY ARE WRONG.** In England, King Charles I was beheaded in 1610, and King George I was placed in office by **ONE ELECTORAL VOTE** or by **ONE VOTE** cast in a handful of election precincts; Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, Rutherford Hayes, Woodrow Wilson, Harry Truman, and John F. Kennedy. **ONE VOTE** saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment. The U.S. Senate approved a Declaration of War **BY ONE VOTE** sending America to war against Mexico back in 1846. The Military draft was approved by Congress in 1941 **BY ONE VOTE.** In one year, 1962, Maine, Rhode Island, and North Dakota all elected governor by a margin, you guessed, **ONE VOTE** per precinct.

Adolph Hitler, a man whose evil destiny set the world on fire, was elected head of Germany's fledgling Nazi part **BY ONE SINGLE VOTE.**

It has been said that people should "act as if the whole election depended on your single vote".....History shows that occasionally it does.

Abraham Lincoln, in his Gettysburg Address, said that we have a "government of the people, by the people, for the people." But if government is truly to belong to the people – rather than the reverse – the people must take an active and educated role in shaping their government.

Questions for Discussion:

1. How does this reading relate to Holocaust studies?
2. How and where might you use this reading?

**Source: The march of the Living, Central Agency for Jewish Education, Miami, Florida.
Reprinted by permission.**

How altruistic are you?

Altruism and empathy are two of the basic building blocks of the heroic personality. Here's a quiz to help gauge your altruistic tendencies.

Never Once **More than once** Often **Very often**

1. I have given directions to a stranger.
2. I have offered directions to someone who looked lost but did not ask me for directions.
3. I have made change for a stranger.
4. I have given money to charity.
5. I have done volunteer work for a charity.
6. I have donated blood.
7. I have stopped to help someone pick up things he or she dropped.
8. I have helped carry a stranger's belongings (books, parcels, luggage, etc.).
9. I have delayed an elevator and held the door open for a stranger.
10. I have allowed someone to go ahead of me in line (at a Xerox machine, at the market).
11. I have paid for someone ahead of me in line who was short of money.
12. I have pointed out a clerk's error in undercharging me for an item.
13. I have offered to help a handicapped or elderly stranger across the street.
14. I have offered my seat on a bus or train to a stranger who was standing.
15. I have helped a friend move to a new home.
16. I have fed someone else's expired parking meter.
17. I have offered my help to someone who fell down.
18. I have picked up litter in a public place.
19. I have switched seats with someone (in a plane, a theater) who wanted to sit with friends or family.
20. I have helped a lost animal or child find an owner or parent.



Scoring: Who do you think we are, *Cosmo*? We can't pin a score on a trait as personal as altruism. You need to reflect. How often have you done these things? How often have you had a chance but failed to act? Everyone who's altruistic doesn't necessarily go on to become a hero. But we can say this: You won't be sorry if you help those poor sweaty tourists find their way to the zoo.

Healing Words for Kids & Teens

Top Ten Tips

How to Deal with Teasing, Gossip and Other Big Issues

Say nice things about the people around you and they'll do the same for you.

Avoid the gossip game; tomorrow you might be "it."

When someone confides in you, keep the secret, even from your best friend! You want the same for your secrets, right?

Respect yourself for your many talents and great features. Do the same for your siblings and classmates. Appreciate your differences and don't judge. Every person is special and this makes life interesting, rich, and beautiful.

Give yourself and others the benefit of the doubt, and reach out. Maybe the person you think is a snob is just shy, or the kid making fun of you is just jealous of your nice family or good grades.

Chat rooms and e-mail are fun, but they are not confidential. With the click of a mouse button, hundreds could be reading your real opinion of your friend's new jacket, and your friendship could be ruined, perhaps forever.

If you are being teased or ridiculed, don't let the bullies win by believing their taunts. They have a character problem, not you! Stand your ground!

Use the 3 P's if you are being teased or bullied: Prevent means learning to know when you might be in a "situation," and getting help from an adult when necessary; Prepare to make the first move by being ready to use nonviolent alternatives, like humor or trying to make friends with the bully, and; Protect means getting self-defense training, like tae kwan do. Hopefully, you'll never need to use it, but, man, you'll have confidence.*

Remember, there are at least two sides to every story. It is far better to help make peace among your family members and friends than to contribute to the quarrel.

Disagree with respect, and avoid harsh words with your parents, siblings and friends. A harsh word, said in haste, can take a long time to erase.

*From T.W. Doyle's "Why Is Everybody Picking on Me: A Guide to Handling Bullies."



TAKE THE PLEDGE!

Take the **Words Can Heal Pledge** and become a part of a new national campaign to enhance relationships and build respect, tolerance and integrity through the practice of positive speech. This compelling call to sensitize people to the power of their words will make a difference in your life and the lives of everyone you know.

An all-star team of political, corporate, entertainment and spiritual celebrities has already signed on in support of the campaign, including U.S. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, Senators Harry Reid, John McCain, Joseph Lieberman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

The Words Can Heal Campaign promises to engage Americans of all walks of life, faiths, and affiliations through dynamic advertisements, an internet site, our new book called *The Words Can Heal Handbook*, lively seminars, and television, radio, and newspaper stories.

Join us by taking the Pledge today and letting others know about your commitment through sharing the pledge, stickers, tips & tools, and articles that are in this kit.

You can order additional pledges, pins, Workplace Awareness Kits, Family Awareness Kits, or the lively *Words Can Heal Handbook: How Changing Your Words Can Transform Your Life and the Lives of Others* at www.wordscanheal.org. While you are logged on to the site, sign up for bi-weekly healing words e-mails that will help you keep your pledge alive.

The Words Can Heal Pledge

I pledge to think more about the words I use.

I will try to see how gossip hurts people, including myself,
and work to eliminate it from my life.

I will try to replace words that hurt with words that
encourage, engage and enrich.

I will not become discouraged when I am unable to choose
words perfectly, because making the world a better place is
hard work.

And I am pledging to do that, one word at a time.

ETHNIC JOKES

Please read the following statements. Circle SA if you strongly agree with the statement, A if you partially agree, U if undecided, D if you disagree, and SD if you strongly disagree.

1. It is okay to tell ethnic jokes. SA A U D SD
2. People who tell ethnic jokes are usually insensitive.
SA A U D SD
3. It is okay for people to tell ethnic jokes about their own group.
SA A U D SD
4. It is inappropriate to tell ethnic jokes in school or at work.
SA A U D SD
5. It is appropriate to tell ethnic jokes at home.
SA A U D SD
6. People who are offended by ethnic jokes have no sense of humor.
SA A U D SD
7. Ethnic jokes are not intended to hurt anyone's feelings.
SA A U D SD

Reprinted with the permission of the Anti-Defamation League.

WORLD PEACE WORLD LOVE KIDS CLUB

IDEAS FOR PEACE AT SCHOOL

Don't be a bully!

Be kind to all your classmates.

If you see someone "picking on" another student because of their looks, grades, etc., stick up for that student.

If you see someone being bullied, report it to a teacher or the school officials.

Share your lunch or snack with someone.

Make friends with someone different from you.

Invite a new classmate to your home to visit.

Invite someone to share a project or do homework with you.

If you see someone scared, sad, or depressed, try and help them out.

If you have two of something, and someone has none, give them one!

Give everyone a valentine card!

If you see classmates fighting, try and help settle the argument. (If they are fighting physically, report it. Don't get hurt!)

If you see someone being treated unfairly, report it.

Be happy for others' strengths (such as winning in a game or getting an "A" in class).

Help others with their weaknesses. (Maybe you are good at math and they are not.)

Be tolerant of someone's disabilities. Help them if they need help.

Just because someone is not in your immediate group of friends, doesn't mean you shouldn't be friends.

Share friends!

IDEAS FOR PEACE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD:

Make it a point to learn about other cultures and nationalities.

Help a neighbor in some way.

Bring an old person some flowers or a gift if they seem lonely.

Help an older person do some chores.

Offer to baby sit or play with a child in your neighborhood.

Have a neighborhood SWAP.

Give something extra to someone that doesn't have it.

Organize a neighborhood clean up. Everyone will be happy to live in a squeaky clean place.

Set up a neighborhood watch. Then you can all be responsible for helping each other keep safe.

Set up a neighborhood watch for the kids. Then everyone can worry less.

Help a neighborhood kid if they get hurt or someone tries to hurt them.

Remember the world has many kinds of families. Invite new neighbors to your house and share your family culture, holidays, or foods.

Bring a new neighbor a cake or gift and introduce yourself.

Ask a new neighbor kid to join you to play.

Try and agree what games to play and play together. Take turns choosing!

Respect peoples' homes and yards.

Don't deface property or write graffiti. It makes things messy.

AT HOME

Don't argue with your brothers and sisters, or parents if it is unnecessary.

Agree to watch the same TV shows or movies. Take turns choosing.

Do something kind for your parents...like a surprise house cleaning.

Keep your room clean.

Eat everything on your plate.

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<http://www.planetpals.com/IKC/spreadpeace.html>

COMMITMENT TO COMBAT RACISM

YES NO

- _____ _____
1. Have I aggressively sought out more information in an effort to enhance my own awareness and understanding of racism (talking with others, reading, listening)?
- _____ _____
2. Have I spent some time recently looking at my own racist attitudes and behavior as they contribute to or combat racism around and within me?
- _____ _____
3. Have I reevaluated my use of terms or phrases or behaviors that may be perceived by others as degrading or hurtful?
- _____ _____
4. Have I openly confronted a racist comment, joke, or action among those around me?
- _____ _____
5. Have I made a personal contract with myself to take a positive stand, even at some possible risk, when the chance occurs?
- _____ _____
6. Have I become increasingly aware of racist TV programs, advertising, news broadcasts, textbooks, holiday observances, slogans, etc.
- _____ _____
7. Have I complained to those in charge of promoting racist TV programs, advertising, news broadcasts, holiday observances, slogans, etc.?
- _____ _____
8. Have I suggested and taken steps to implement discussions or workshops aimed at understanding and eliminating racism, sexism, and ageism with friends, colleagues, social clubs, or church groups?
- _____ _____
9. Have I been investigating and evaluating political candidates at all levels in terms of their stance and activity against racist, sexist, and ageist government practices?
- _____ _____
10. Have I investigated curricula of local schools in terms of their treatment of the issues of racism, sexism, and ageism (also, textbooks, assemblies, faculty, staff, administration, and athletic programs and directors)?
- _____ _____
11. Have I contributed time and/or funds to an agency, fund, or program that confronts the problems of racism, sexism, and ageism?
- _____ _____
12. Have my buying habits supported nonracist, nonsexist, and nonageist shops, companies, or personnel?
- _____ _____
13. Is my school or place of employment a target for my educational efforts in responding to racism, sexism, and ageism?
- _____ _____
14. Have I become seriously dissatisfied with my own level of activity in combating racism, sexism, and ageism?
- _____ _____
15. Have I ended my affiliation with organizations which are racist, sexist, or ageist in their membership requirements?
- _____ _____
16. Have I subscribed to a publication which will educate me in the area of culture other than my own? Have I left copies of that publication in sight where my friends and associates might see it and question my interest in it?
- _____ _____
17. Have I made an effort to learn some of the language of those in my community who may speak something other than English?
- _____ _____

Adapted from White Awareness, A Handbook for Human Relations Training by Judith Katz, University of Oklahoma

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Holocaust Remembrance Day (also known as Yom Hashoah) has been set aside for remembering the victims of the Holocaust and for reminding Americans of what can happen to civilized people when bigotry, hatred, and indifference reign. The day's principal message is that another Holocaust must never be allowed to happen.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Council was created by a unanimous act of Congress in 1980 and was charged to build the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D. Co. and to encourage annual, national, civic commemorations of the Days of Remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust.

After a study of the Holocaust, you might want to plan to have a classroom Day of Remembrance. This could include a variety of activities:

- A candle lighting ceremony which the students could write
- The reading of names of victims killed in the Holocaust
- The reading of names of concentration camps
- Original poetry done by the students
- Poetry or diary excerpts written during the Holocaust
- A pledge of remembrance
- Original art work, short stories, essays, or music
- A survivor guest speaker
- A presentation of a tile or quilt project.

The following is the list of dates on which Holocaust Remembrance Day occurs:

2008 Sunday, May 2
2009 Tuesday, April 21
2010 Sunday, April 11

OUR PRESIDENTS REMEMBER...

“Although words do pale, yet we must speak. We must strive to understand. We must teach the lessons of the Holocaust. And, most of all, we ourselves must remember... The world’s failure to recognize the moral truth forty years ago permitted the Holocaust to proceed. Our generation – the generation of survivors – will never permit the lesson to be forgotten.”

Jimmy Carter

“Remembrance has a power for good that is all its own, and each of us must use that power as we contemplate the Holocaust – and its impact on the entire world We know that remembrance is possible for both those who have witnessed and those who have heard. My generation cannot forget, but neither must any generation... Let us make our remembrance, then, always in the manner and spirit of those who liberated the concentration camps and freed and cared for survivors. Those soldiers came not in conquest but in compassion, not to kill and enslave but to free and heal. Let our remembrance ever be thus and it will be a resolution true and noble – ‘Never Again.’”

Ronald Reagan

“Our challenge today is to insist that time will not become the Nazis’ friend, that time will not fade our sense of specificity, the uniqueness of the Holocaust, that time will not lead us to make the Holocaust into an abstraction. Our challenge today is to remember the Holocaust, for if we remember we will, as our soldiers did, look its evil in the face... For memory is our duty to the past, and memory is our duty to the future.”

George Herbert Walker Bush

“The Holocaust transformed the 20th century, sweeping aside the facile Enlightenment hope that evil can somehow be permanently vanquished; demonstrating there is no war to end all war, that the struggle against the basest tendencies of our nature continues forever and ever and demands eternal vigilance.”

The Holocaust began when the most civilized country of its day unleashed unprecedented acts of cruelty and hatred, abetted by perversion of science, philosophy and law. A culture, which produced Goethe, Schiller and Beethoven, brought forth Hitler and Himmler’s merciless hordes, and because the educated stood by, or worse, participated, the innocent perished...

To build bulwarks against the evil, there is but one path to take. We have our differences but we cannot separate ourselves from each other. This is the dynamic tension in the life of the contemporary world. Organizing a civil society, a civil world, requires us to honor diversity even as we reaffirm our common humanity. The framework within individuality, ethnicity, and nationality can exist without turning murderous is constitutional democracy, and the respect in international law for human rights.”

Bill Clinton

“Humanity is bound by conscience to remember what happened. The record has been kept and preserved. The record was one of the worst acts of genocide in history and came not from crude and uneducated men, but from men who regarded themselves as cultured and well schooled, modern men, forward looking. Their crime showed the world that evil can slip in and blend in amid the most civilized surroundings. In the end, only conscience can stop .”

George W. Bush

HAVE YOU LEARNED THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON OF ALL? BY ELIE WIESEL

May I share with you one of the principles that governs my life? It is the realization that what I receive I must pass on to others. The knowledge that I have acquired must not remain imprisoned in my brain. I owe it to many men and women to do something with it. I feel the need to pay back what was given to me. Call it gratitude.

Isn't this what education is all about? There is divine beauty in learning, just as there is human beauty in tolerance. To learn means to accept the postulate that life did not begin at my birth. Others have been here before me, and I walk in their footsteps. The books I have read were composed by generations of fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, teachers and disciples. I am the sum total of their experiences, their quests. And so are you.

You and I believe that knowledge belongs to everybody, irrespective of race, color or creed. Plato does not address himself to one ethnic group alone, nor does Shakespeare appeal to one religion only. The teachings of Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. do not apply just to Indians or African-Americans. Like cognitive science, theoretical physics or algebra, the creations and philosophical ideas of the ages are part of our collective heritage and human memory. We all learn from the same masters.

In other words, education must, almost by definition, bring people together, bring generations together.

Education has another consequence. My young friends, I feel it is my moral duty to warn you against an evil that could jeopardize this generation's extraordinary possibilities. That evil is fanaticism.

True education negates fanaticism. Literature and fanaticism do not go together. Culture and fanaticism are forever irreconcilable. The fanatic is always against culture, because culture means freedom of spirit and imagination, and the fanatic fears someone else's imagination. In fact, the fanatic who wishes to inspire fear is ultimately doomed to live in fear, always. Fear of the stranger, fear of each other, fear of the other inside him or her.

Fanaticism has many faces: racism, religious bigotry, ethnic hatred. What those faces have in common is an urge to replace words with violence, facts with propaganda, reason with blind impulses, hope with terror.

For a while we might have believed that fanaticism was on its decline. It is not. Quite the contrary, it is on the rise in our cities, in our country and in our world.

In Western Europe – in Germany and France, Belgium and Austria – we are seeing a resurgence of yesterday's demons of fascism and intolerance. In Eastern Europe, ethnic factions are rekindling old conflicts. In the Middle East, deeply held hatreds seem ever on the verge of sparking more raging conflagrations. "It's us against them" has been taken as an essential truth. Strangers are being greeted with animosity almost everywhere.

Let us look at our own country. As this last decade of a century, which is also the last decade of a millennium, runs to its dazzling denouement, we seem ever more divided. Can't all our citizens – white

Americans and African-Americans, Hispanics and Asians, Jews and Christians, Jews and Moslems, young and old – live together, work together and face together their common challenges? Must they – must we—constantly subject ourselves to useless social tensions and dangerous ideological conflicts that could turn joy into dust and creation into ashes?

We face many difficulties and must find answers to thorny questions if our nation is to flourish: What has happened to our economy? What went wrong with elementary and secondary education? Why are so many youngsters seduced by crime? By drugs? By hate? Why is there so much bloodshed in so many quarters?

The answers to these questions do not lie with the clichés, senseless stereotypes and absurd accusations that are being used to justify religious or ethnic hatred.....

I insist: all collective judgments are wrong. Only racists make them. And racism is stupid just as it is ugly. Its aim is to destroy, to pervert, to distort innocence in human beings and their quest for human equality.

Racism is misleading. There are good people and bad people in every community. No human race is superior; no religious faith is inferior. We all come from somewhere, and we all wonder where we are going.

I know: You have been tested during your years in school, more than once. But the real tests are still ahead of you. How will you deal with your own or other people's hunger, homelessness, sexual or gender discrimination and community antagonisms?

The world outside is not waiting to welcome you with open arms. The economic climate is bad; the psychological one is worse. You wonder, will you find jobs? Allies? Friends? I pray to our Father in heaven to answer "yes" to all these questions.

But should you encounter temporary disappointments, I also pray: Do not make someone else pay the price for your pain. Do not see in someone else a scapegoat for your difficulties? Only a fanatic does that – not you, for you have learned to reject fanaticism. You know that fanaticism leads to hatred, and hatred is both destructive and self-destructive.

I speak to you as a teacher and a student – one is both, always. I also speak to you as a witness.

I speak to you, for I do not want my past to become your future.

Source: Wiesel, Elie. "Have You Learned the Most Important Lesson of All?" Copyright © 1992 by Elirion Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Georges Borchardt, Inc. on behalf of the author.

A TEACHER SHARES

“On the first day in the new school year, all the teachers in one private school received the following note from their principal:

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 student become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns.

Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more humane.”

Haim Ginott

Source: English Journal, Volume 69, Number 7, October 1980, p.14.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE SCIENTISTS OF THE FUTURE

Today you may call it fantasy or some silly talk. But let me assure you that I am not the Don Quixote type nor a little boy daydreaming. I am a Holocaust survivor, 70 years old, and I am dead serious.

First, let me express my admiration for your numerous and most miraculous achievements. You found cures for the most dreadful diseases, you prolonged life, you succeeded in restoring sight to the blind, and you developed a device that enables the deaf to enjoy beautiful music. You harnessed the energy of the sun and you made the desert bloom. You controlled the climate and made possible for man to live and work in every season of the year. Thanks to your ingenuity, people on earth can spend time on the moon and send missions to the most distant planets. The list of your successes seems endless.

Now I am not sure how to classify this letter to you. It could be a request, a plea, or a challenge. I would like to ask you to use your talent and wisdom and all the means in your possession to extract the sound trapped in the walls of rail car 31599G, the one displayed in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

Please understand how important this is. Let the world in the 21st century hear the anguish of the people going to their death not knowing why. Let the people in the future listen to little children gasping for breath of air and to the cry of those helpless mothers who keep asking why. Why is my baby not allowed to grow up? What crime is it to be born Jewish? Let the world of the 22nd century hear the last prayers of men and women in the face of death, keep their faith in the Almighty God and also let the future listen to the anger against the world in the middle of the 20th century that let it all happen.

Please scientists of the future, don't let me down. Fulfill my wish for the sake of 6,000,000 innocent victims.

LEO SHNIDERMAN
Holocaust Survivor

April 1991

HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND EDUCATION CENTER, INC.

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JOURNAL WRITING FOR STUDENTS

by Merle R. Saferstein
Director of Educational Outreach
merle@hdec.org

"Saturday, 15 July, 1944

Dear Kitty,

... It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart.

Yours, Anne"

(Taken from Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl)

During the Holocaust, Anne Frank and many other children in hiding, in ghettos and in concentration camps kept journals which helped them document their lives, their feelings, their hopes and their dreams. After the war, some of these journals were recovered and have provided us with firsthand accounts of what actually took place throughout the years of 1933 - 1945.

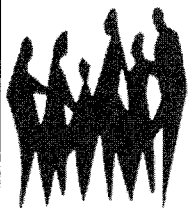
While studying the Holocaust, we suggest that you keep a journal. Your teacher will be presenting a great deal of information which you may wish to explore. Writing in a journal is an excellent starting place.

One of the most important things to keep in mind about journal writing is that there are no rules. Therefore, it is different from any other writing you have done before. What matters most is that you put down what is on your mind. You might include facts you've learned, feelings and/or questions about a particular subject and observations you've made while studying the topic.

When you write, be honest and reveal whatever comes into your mind. Hopefully, you will find it helpful in dealing with the many issues, which are brought up with the study of the Holocaust.

After the unit, you may wish to continue writing in your journal. Journal writing is a tool for expressing yourself in a safe way.

**HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND
EDUCATION CENTER'S ANNUAL
VISUAL ARTS AND WRITING CONTEST**



HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND EDUCATION CENTER, INC.

A LIVING MEMORIAL THROUGH EDUCATION

2008-2009 ANNUAL VISUAL ARTS AND WRITING CONTEST

The Holocaust: The Meaning of Never Again

Contest Dates: September 1, 2008 through March 27, 2009

Elementary School – Grades 4-5

Middle School – Grades 6-8

High School – Grades 9-12

Colleges and Universities

Writing Contest

Students can submit poetry, an essay, or a story – avoid research papers. Limit 1,000 words. Written entries must be typed and double spaced on one side of the paper.

Visual Arts Contest

Students can submit any media including sculpture, computer graphic design, collage, and painting. Musical entries will also be accepted.



Entries must have an index card indicating name, home address, home phone, grade, name of school, school address, and teacher. Please have student print clearly. Each entry must represent the original effort of the writer and/or artist.

Awards

The Overall Winner will be sent to the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** in Washington, D.C. and will attend the annual national commemoration of the **Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust**. The ceremony will be held in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol Building in **April 2009**. *Please note:* The winning student must be accompanied by a chaperon.

First Place Winner in each category will receive a **\$250 U.S. Savings Bond**.

All entries will receive a Certificate of Merit if they include their home address.

Winners will be announced April 2009.

**Deliver or mail
entries to:**

Merle R. Saferstein, Director of Educational Outreach
Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc.

2031 Harrison Street, Hollywood, FL 33020

(954) 929-5690 x206 / (954) 929-5635 Fax

Written entries can be e-mailed to merle@hdec.org.

The Center reserves the right to reproduce, publish, and exhibit all entries. The winning entries will become the exclusive property of the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center. Those entries which are not awarded prizes may be picked up by June 15, 2009 or they, too, become property of the Center.

First Place Writing Winner Elementary School Division

Natalia Haguaburo – 5th Grade
Addison Mizner Elementary School
Palm Beach County, Florida

Diary of Elisabeth Arnold

April 15, 1940

I blame mother for moving into this abandoned, ghost-like house. The man who lived here before us was a Jew and left to hide. Although I am not to tell anyone where the old man went, I will tell you. He has gone to a farm way out of the little town in Denmark. I do not understand why I mustn't tell anybody about this story. Everything is happening so quickly, but one day I am going to change the way people look at Jews. Why don't they just take all of us? We are the same, and it is time to stand up for what we believe in.

April 25, 1940

No Jewish child has shown up for school, and our friend, Annah, has been taken away by a man with enriched clothing. Now, I am not allowed to have picnics in the park for two reasons: my mother does not want me out alone, and there is no food to feast on. They only sell certain food for a certain amount. My best friend Helen came to our house today and told us that they took her mother to that terrible concentration camp, and her father and two brothers were taken to the Ghetto. Helen had nowhere to go, but my father, who liked the idea of the Jews having to leave, turned Helen in. I blame myself for this terrible incident. I think my mother agrees, because she made us leave and move in with our grandparents in a bigger town in Denmark.

May 10, 1940

Grandma is home schooling us, and I helped grandma make supper, which usually was vegetable soup. But tonight, there were a few pieces of meat, which she formed into a smiley face. I guess she is trying to make the worst of times into the best. Last night, I was milking Velma, the cow, when something caught my eye. The thing was sparkling and absolutely breathtaking. I took it out of the big stack of hay and dusted it off. It was a necklace with a big star on it. I am wearing it to the market tomorrow to see if everyone approves that it is gorgeous and magical.

July 7, 1940

I do not understand what is happening, but they are taking me away from my grandparents and taking me to a ghetto. But I am not Jewish. My grandmother explained that one of the Nazi soldiers saw me wearing the necklace with the Jewish star, and they suppose I am Jewish. I was scared to leave my grandparents, who I loved oh so very much, and do not know if I will see ever again.

August 5, 1940

This is the most horrible thing ever. Every day I see people dying and starving, but I have nothing to offer. One day, a girl, who was thinner than a twig, asked me if I would like to read some Jewish prayers. I told her that I was not Jewish and do not know why I am here, but I told her that it would not hurt. I found out that the thin girl's name is Helen and looked identical to my friend Helen from back home. Helen and I became close friends and were also sent to the same concentration camp.

September 20, 1940

Once I got to the concentration camp, two mean-looking soldiers took Helen and me to a corner and sent everyone else into a big room. Now I know why they pulled us two to the side. We have to work for the Nazis, and I dread looking at everyone so thin with just a small cloth for clothing. I quickly got used to working as hard as a dog and eating like a mouse, but Helen did not. One night, Helen froze on the floor. She told me she could not take this anymore and said that we should run away. "It is worth a shot. Why stay here and die? Why not try for what you believe in and die?"

December 4, 1940

I can't believe it. Helen died. Helen could not take it; she simply tried running away. They hung Helen in front of everyone. I felt her pain and her last word was Shalom to all my friends. You do not deserve this. Then, she was gone. I tried holding the tears, but they just shot out like cannons. Our friendship was short, but the words she told me the night before were pure and powerful. She will not live, but her words will live on in everyone's heart. I now, too, feel thinner and weaker. I can no longer write to you, but remember all the adventure that you have heard.

January 28, 2007

Wow! You survived the living nightmare just like me. This Diary is very important to me. Share it with everyone you know. My life was a challenge. Even though I was not Jewish, I felt what they felt: misery, hatred, and mistreatment. We are all created equal, whether you are a child or an adult, whether you are short or tall, whether you are Catholic or Jewish. Everyone will learn a lesson, no matter what. We all live, no matter what. We all grow, so why change things? We all deserve to be treated equally.

First Place – Writing
Middle School
Evan Gruda – 6th Grade
Highland Oaks Middle School

Remember.....the night of November 10, 1938, Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass.

Remember.....to listen to survivors' stories so we can never forget

Remember.....the Nazis that took victims from their homes in the middle of the night

Remember.....families that were separated and never saw each other again

Remember.....the horrible conditions of the concentration camps and the lack of food

Remember.....the screams of the victims as the gas chambers slowly kill them

Remember.....those who risked their lives hiding Jewish families from Nazis

Remember.....the men and women in World War II who fought to free Jews

Remember.....the 6 million Jews who died in the Holocaust

Remember.....the children for the sake of all children

First Place Writing – High School Division
Matthew Piscitelli – 10th Grade
Christopher Columbus High School
Miami-Dade County

Childhood Lost

Without a worry the children play,
Knowing adulthood is far away.
Going to school and playing right after,
Their lives were filled with joy and laughter.
Their parents riddled by rumors of pain,
The children untouched and perfectly sane,
Then came the soldiers, the guns, and the orders
And the children's boundless energy now had borders.
Dark confusion and questions congested their heads,
As nightmares caused tossing in their comfortable beds.
Tired and thirsty, the children marched afraid
Utterly baffled, they sang and they prayed.
Separated from parents, children cried.
Out of those children, more than a million died.
The surviving children worked themselves gaunt,
As the ruthless soldiers continued to taunt.
The children were rescued, but the damage was done.
These years of their childhood grossly void of fun,
Now with beards and hair of snow,
The children speak so the children know.

**HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND
EDUCATION CENTER'S ANNUAL
AN ACT OF KINDNESS
CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE CONTEST**

Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc.
2031 Harrison Street Hollywood, FL 33020
954-929-5690 www.hdec.org

AN ACT OF KINDNESS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

You may have seen the movie *Pay It Forward* or read the book with the same title written by Catherine Ryan Hyde. It is about a teacher who starts a movement with a voluntary, extra credit assignment: **Think of an idea for positive change in the world and put it into action.** A student, who is the hero of *Pay It Forward*, comes up with the idea to do something good for three people. When these people ask how they can pay back the kind deed or gesture, he tells them to Pay It Forward to three more people. This chain of passing along an act of kindness has a ripple effect and multiplies kindness quickly affecting a large number of people in a short time.

Within our communities, there are so many things that each of us could do. We could get involved in helping the homeless or underprivileged, tackling the problems of youth violence, literacy issues, pollution, and at-risk youth, speaking out against the ethnic slurs and jokes as well as the hate music, appreciating and celebrating our ethnic, religious, and cultural differences, and the list goes on.

We ask you to look beyond yourself and make a difference in someone's life. Sometimes, it is just as easy as smiling at someone who is feeling sad or including an individual who is alone. Even a simple act of kindness can make a tremendous difference and, in turn, can positively affect others.

We are asking students to share their experience with us and how it changed someone's life. We will award the top two student entries with a \$100 United States Savings Bond and each of the winners will have their names inscribed on our wall of "Students Making a Difference." The winners will also share their entries at our Annual Meeting in June.

Please submit your entry to us at:
Student Act of Kindness
C/o Holocaust Documentation and Education Center
2031 Harrison Street
Hollywood, FL 33020

Please include your name, grade, school, school address, teacher, home address, phone number and e-mail address, if you have one.

We look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for joining us in our efforts to make a difference in the lives of others.

A Simple Act of Kindness Contest

Amanda Tapanes – Grade 4
Good Shepherd Catholic School
Miami-Dade County

The Old Lady and I

My neighborhood is very quiet. There are many different people. Next to my house lives a little old lady by herself. She used to live with her husband but he died a year ago. He used to take her to the grocery store every Sunday after mass but since he died, she no longer has anyone to take her so she walks to the grocery store.

One Sunday morning, as my family and I got home from church, I saw the little old lady sitting by herself on her porch. I asked my mom if I could go and say hi. My mom told me “Don’t be long.” As I walked toward the old lady, she looked at me like I was doing something wrong. I said hi to her and we began to talk. She told me so many stories about when she was young; it felt like I was there with her. After about an hour my mom came outside and told me to go in the house. I asked the old lady if I could come after school tomorrow she said, “Of course.”

The old lady and I became very close and we laughed and played cards. I notice that she was so happy to be with me. I loved being with her, too. We became good friends. Every Sunday my family and I would take her to the grocery store and then when we came home, we sat on the porch.

A Simple Act of Kindness Contest
William Scheinman – Grade 10
Ben Lipson Hillel Community Day School
Miami-Dade County

United Jewish Generations

Three years ago, hoping to get community service hours, I volunteered to help Rabbi Menachem Smith in his work with seniors. Rabbi Smith's organization, "United Jewish Generations" is an outreach program for seniors in our community. The list of services for this organization include educational and entertainment workshops, a magazine and visiting the elderly in nursing homes.

I volunteered to accompany Rabbi Smith every Friday during these past few summers. We began early in the morning, driving to numerous Jewish nursing homes to sit and talk, do Shabbat services and bring news from the outside world. When I first began, I was 12 years old and I have to admit I was a bit scared. Many of the people had significant illnesses or were mentally confused. I noticed, however, by the end of these long days, I had a feeling of satisfaction and I was proud of what I had done. As I got a bit older, I enjoyed it more. I have a passion for World War II and history and I often spent time talking with WWII veterans, or talking about politics, in addition to doing Shabbat services with them. It was moving to see some of these people doing Shabbat prayers, as many of them had not done so for many years and on occasion were tearful. When I asked a friend to accompany me and he told me that he was just not able to do it, I realized that the average teenager might not be able to make these visits.

My act of kindness is the formal fund I created, called the "William Scheinman Fund for UJG", to raise money to support United Jewish Generations. Because of the generous donations that we have received, Rabbi Smith is able to continue his great work in our community

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SPECIALIZED HISTORY

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Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND EDUCATION CENTER, INC.

ANNOTATED WEBOGRAPHY

<http://www.hdec.org>

Holocaust Documentation and Education Center website. Includes information about the organization, the future museum, the rail car which the Center is bringing to South Florida for permanent exhibition, the Oral History Library collection, educational outreach programming, the *State of Florida Resource Manuals on Holocaust Education* for all grade levels, and volunteer opportunities.

<http://www.ushmm.org>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website

<http://www.ushmm.org/outreach/> (for the Student Outreach Site authorization required)

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.yadvashem.org>

Yad Vashem. Homepage for Israel's Museum and Memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.

<http://www.wiesenthal.com>

The *Simon Wiesenthal Center* homepage. International center for Holocaust remembrance and the defense of human rights and the Jewish people. Contains answers to 36 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.

<http://www.remember.org>

Homepage of the *Cybrary of the Holocaust*. One of the largest web sites on the Holocaust. It contains encyclopedic information, answers to frequently asked questions, curriculum outlines, 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.

<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.jewishpartisans.org>

The Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation contains information about the Jewish partisans during the Holocaust. It also contains study guides for teacher resources.

<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 the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike.

<http://www.hrusa.org>

Human Rights USA suggests ideas and tools for advocating and protecting human rights. Encourages community-based action.

<http://www.annefrank.nl>

The Anne Frank House in Amsterdam.

<http://www.historychannel.com>

History Channel

<http://www.splcenter.org>

Southern Poverty Law Center. Teaching Tolerance project started in 1991 in response to alarming increase in hate crime among youth.

<http://www.dosomething.org>

Do Something is an organization that helps students to get involved in their community. Students identify issues in the school or community that they care about and create community projects to turn ideas into action.

<http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/alert/students>

An online networking website that helps connect people working to bring peace to Darfur.

<http://www.wordscanheal.org>

National campaign to eliminate violence, curb gossip, and promote the healing power of words to enhance relationships at every level.

<http://www.raoulwallenberg.net>

Information about Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg.

CALL FOR ARTIFACTS FOR MUSEUM

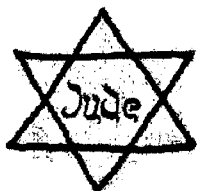
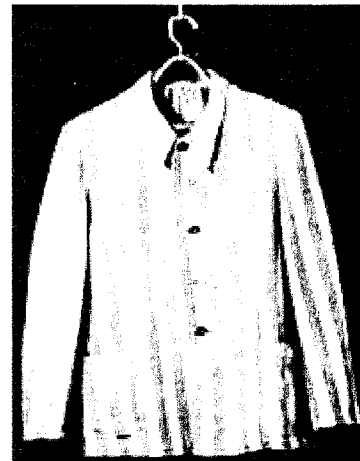
The **Holocaust Documentation and Education Center** anticipates the opening of the first **South Florida Holocaust Museum** located at 2031 Harrison Street in Hollywood, Florida within the next year.

We are turning to you, because we urgently need your help.

The task of this **Museum** is to tell the story of the Holocaust from the rise of Nazism through the assault against the Jews, from ghettoization to deportation, from mobile killing units to the death camps and the death marches, and then on to liberation, the return to life and the journey of Holocaust Survivors to their new lands and the emergence of their new lives. Included in this will be the importance of the Holocaust for our world and our time. These are the themes of the **Museum**.

For the Museum to take shape, we need you to help us find the artifacts that will enable us to build the Museum. Artifacts may be large or small.

Artifacts may be three dimensional or paper.



We need **concentration camp uniforms** and **Jewish stars**. We need artifacts from the **world before** – when Jewish life was vibrant and diverse. We need material from the Holocaust years, **liberation**, the **DP camps**, and even material on the **post- Holocaust life** of Survivors in the United States and Israel.

Each Survivor knows that these artifacts are the remnants of their life before and of their struggle during the Shoah. We would like to give these remnants a permanent home for present and future generations to see.

Children of Survivors may not know what their parents possess. However they may come across this material as they help their parents move from their homes to a warmer climate or to places of assisted living, or as they clear out their parents' homes after they are gone.

Please do not throw them out. Contact us first. Everyone can help with this effort.

Rabbis can help. Ask your congregants of their past. Ask them what material remnants they may have and tell them how they can donate them to us.

Health Care Professionals can help. You are with people in their hours of need. You often advise them as to the transitions in their life. You are with people as they are forced to confront their own mortality. Please mention the existence of the **Museum**. Tell them of our needs. It may be good for individuals facing such difficult transitions to think beyond themselves.

Lawyers, Financial Planners, and Insurance Personnel can help. You help people plan for their retirement, their illnesses, and their deaths. Please ask them about their non-monetary possessions, articles that are valuable to documenting the Holocaust. Please inform them of our mission and our needs.

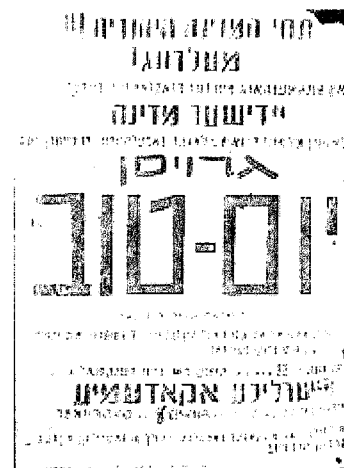
When in doubt, please call us. Please do not discard any papers, pictures, or materials that may be of historic value.

We are here to assist you. We hope that you can assist us.

Please give us the opportunity to gather the artifacts that we need to tell the story of the fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, and above all, the children. Please help us remember.

We can build the Museum together. We cannot build it alone!

Please call the Center at (954) 929-5690 or email us at info@hdec.org



DP camp notice

Holocaust Documentation & Education Center, Inc.

My Commitment to Stop Violence and End Prejudice

Each day in the news, we hear about acts of violence, which are taking place throughout the world. People suffer from crimes perpetrated against them as a result of racism and prejudice.

In the United States and in our own South Florida community, individuals are killed or tortured for no apparent reason other than the color of their skin, their race, sexual orientation, or religion. This violence must end! Please help us by acting to stop the rash of crimes committed because of hatred.

I want to stop violence, which surrounds me. I pledge to do this by resolving my own conflicts in a peaceful way. I also pledge to respect others and not judge anyone by skin color, race, sexual orientation or religion. I want to help make this a better world in which to live.

Signature _____

Date _____

To the student: Please sign this and take it home and keep it in a place where you can read it each day.