

**UNITED STATES  
HOLOCAUST  
MEMORIAL  
MUSEUM**

# **National Days of Remembrance**

**Between 1933 and 1945, the German government led by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party carried out the systematic persecution and murder of Europe's Jews.**

**This genocide is now known as the Holocaust.**

**The Nazi regime also persecuted and killed millions of other people it considered politically, racially, or socially unfit.**

**The Allies' victory ended World War II, but Nazi Germany and its collaborators had left millions dead and countless lives shattered.**

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### TAKEOVER OF POWER, 1933

In March 1933, Adolf Hitler addressed the first session of the German Parliament (Reichstag) following his appointment as chancellor.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### TAKEOVER OF POWER, 1933

After this photograph was taken, all political parties in the Reichstag—with the exception of the Socialists and Communists—passed the “Enabling Act” giving Hitler the power to rule by emergency decree.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### THE TERROR BEGINS

A storm trooper (SA) guards newly arrested members of the German Communist Party in a basement jail of the SA barracks in Berlin.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### THE TERROR BEGINS

Communists, Socialists, and other political opponents of the Nazis were among the first to be rounded up and imprisoned by the regime.

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## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### FROM CITIZENS TO OUTCASTS

A woman reads a boycott sign posted on the window of a Jewish-owned department store. The Nazis initiated a boycott of Jewish shops and businesses on April 1, 1933, across Germany.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### FROM CITIZENS TO OUTCASTS

Many Germans continued to enter the Jewish stores despite the boycott, and it was called off after 24 hours. In the subsequent weeks and months more discriminatory measures against Jews followed and remained in effect.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



## NAZI RACE LAWS

An instructional chart distinguishes individuals with pure “German blood” (left column), “Mixed blood” (second and third columns), and Jews (right two columns), as defined in the Nuremberg Laws.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



## NAZI RACE LAWS

Among other things, the laws issued in September 1935 restricted future German citizenship to those of “German or kindred blood,” and excluded those deemed to be “racially” Jewish or Roma (Gypsy).

[illegible]

The laws prohibited marriage and sexual relationships between Jews and non-Jews.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### THE “SCIENCE” OF RACE

Members of the Hitler Youth receive instruction in racial hygiene at a Hitler Youth training facility. The Nazis divided the world’s population into superior and inferior “races.”

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### THE “SCIENCE” OF RACE

According to their ideology, the “Aryan race,” to which the German people allegedly belonged, stood at the top of this racial hierarchy.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### THE “SCIENCE” OF RACE

The Nazi ideal was the Nordic type, displaying blond hair, blue eyes, and tall stature.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### “NIGHT OF BROKEN GLASS”

Residents of Rostock, Germany, view a burning synagogue the morning after *Kristallnacht* (“Night of Broken Glass”). On the night of November 9–10, 1938, the Nazi regime unleashed orchestrated anti-Jewish violence across greater Germany.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### **“NIGHT OF BROKEN GLASS”**

Within 48 hours, synagogues were vandalized and burned, 7,500 Jewish businesses were damaged or destroyed, 96 Jews were killed, and nearly 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### **“ENEMIES OF THE STATE”**

Within the concentration camp system, colored, tri-angular badges identified various prisoner categories, as seen in this image of a roll call at the Buchenwald concentration camp.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### **“ENEMIES OF THE STATE”**

Although Jews were their primary targets, the Nazis also persecuted Roma (Gypsies), persons with mental and physical disabilities, and Poles for racial, ethnic, or national reasons.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### **“ENEMIES OF THE STATE”**

Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah’s Wit-nesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered oppression and death.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### SEARCH FOR REFUGE

Jews in Vienna wait in line at a police station to obtain exit visas. Following the incorporation of Austria by Nazi Germany in March 1938, and the unleashing of a wave of humiliation, terror, and confiscation, many Austrian Jews attempted to leave the country.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### SEARCH FOR REFUGE

Before being allowed to leave, however, Jews were required to get an exit visa, plus pay large sums of money in taxes and additional fees.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### AMERICAN RESPONSES

Government policies in the 1930s made it difficult for Jews seeking refuge to settle in the United States.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### AMERICAN RESPONSES

In May 1939 the passenger ship *St. Louis*—seen here before departing Hamburg—sailed from Germany to Cuba carrying 937 passengers, most of them Jews.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### AMERICAN RESPONSES

Unknown to the passengers, the Cuban government had revoked their landing certificates.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## NAZI ASSAULT 1933–1939



### AMERICAN RESPONSES

After the U.S. government denied permission for the passengers to enter the United States, the *St. Louis* returned to Europe. Some 250 of the refugees would later be killed in the Holocaust.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### THE WAR BEGINS

Sections of Warsaw lay in ruins following the invasion and conquest of Poland by the German military begun in September 1939 that propelled Europe into World War II.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### THE WAR BEGINS

For most of the next two years German forces occupied or controlled much of continental Europe.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### THE WAR BEGINS

By the end of 1942, however, the Allies were on the offensive and ultimately drove back the German forces.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### THE WAR BEGINS

The war in Europe ended with the unconditional surrender of Germany in May 1945.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### LIFE IN THE GHETTO

Jews in the Warsaw ghetto wait in line for food at a soup kitchen.

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## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### LIFE IN THE GHETTO

Ghettos were city districts, often enclosed, in which the Germans concentrated the municipal and some-times regional Jewish population to control and segregate it from the non-Jewish population.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### LIFE IN THE GHETTO

In November 1940, German authorities sealed the Warsaw ghetto, severely restricting supplies for the more than 300,000 Jews living there.

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## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### LIFE IN THE GHETTO

Survival was a daily challenge as inhabitants struggled for the bare necessities of food, sanitation, shelter, and clothing.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### MOBILE KILLING SQUADS

About a quarter of all Jews who perished in the Holocaust were shot by SS mobile killing squads and police battalions following the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### MOBILE KILLING SQUADS

These units carried out the mass murder of Jews, Roma, and Communist government officials. This man was murdered in the presence of members of the German Army, the German Labor Service, and the Hitler Youth.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### DEPORTATIONS

Between 1942 and 1944, trains carrying Jews from German-controlled Europe rolled into one of the six killing centers located along rail lines in occupied Poland.

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## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### DEPORTATIONS

Commonly between 80 and 100 people were crammed into railcars of this type. Deportation trains usually carried 1,000 to 2,000 people.

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## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### DEPORTATIONS

Many died during the extreme conditions of the journey, and most survivors were murdered upon arrival at the killing centers.

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## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### DEPORTATIONS

This railcar is on display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### CONCENTRATION CAMP UNIVERSE

Jews from Hungarian-occupied Czechoslovakia (present-day Ukraine) are taken off the trains and assembled at the largest of the killing centers, Auschwitz-Birkenau.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### CONCENTRATION CAMP UNIVERSE

The overwhelming majority of Jews who entered the Nazi killing centers were murdered in gas chambers—usually within hours of arrival—and their bodies cremated.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### CONCENTRATION CAMP UNIVERSE

The German authorities confiscated all the personal belongings of the Jews, including their clothing, and collected them for use or sale. Soviet troops discovered tens of thousands of shoes when they liberated the Majdanek concentration camp in Poland in July 1944.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## “FINAL SOLUTION” 1939–1945



### CONCENTRATION CAMP UNIVERSE

These confiscated shoes from Majdanek and Auschwitz are on display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## THE COURAGE TO RESCUE

For several weeks in October 1943, Danish rescuers ferried 7,220 Jews to safety across the narrow strait to neutral Sweden.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## THE COURAGE TO RESCUE

As a result of this national effort, more than 90 per-cent of the Jews in Denmark escaped deportation to Nazi concentration camps.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## THE COURAGE TO RESCUE

This boat, now on display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., was used by a group of rescuers code-named the “Helsingør Sewing Club.”

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## RESISTANCE

In fall 1939, Jewish activists in Warsaw, around the historian Emanuel Ringelblum, established a secret archive to document Jewish life and death in the ghetto and the extreme conditions of German occupation.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## RESISTANCE

In 1942–1943, they buried these documents in metal containers, such as this milk can, to preserve a record of Nazi crimes for future generations. This milk can is on display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

# THE HOLOCAUST

## LAST CHAPTER



### DEATH MARCHES

This photo taken from the window of a private home shows prisoners being marched from one concentration camp to another. In response to the deteriorating military situation in late 1944, German authorities ordered the evacuation of concentration camp prisoners away from advancing Allied troops to the interior of Germany.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## DEATH MARCHES

Evacuated by train, ship, or on foot, prisoners suffered from malnutrition, exhaustion, harsh weather, and mistreatment. SS guards followed strict orders to shoot prisoners who could no longer walk or travel.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## LIBERATION

General Dwight D. Eisenhower and other high-ranking U.S. Army officers view the bodies of prisoners killed by German camp authorities during the evacuation of the Ohrdruf concentration camp.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## LIBERATION

Eisenhower visited the camp to witness personally the evidence of atrocities.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## LIBERATION

He publicly expressed his shock and revulsion, and he urged others to see the camps firsthand lest “the stories of Nazi brutality” be forgotten or dismissed as merely “propaganda.”

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## POSTWAR TRIALS

Leading Nazi officials listen to proceedings at the International Military Tribunal, the best known of the postwar trials, in Nuremberg, Germany, before judges representing the Allied powers.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## POSTWAR TRIALS

Beginning in October 1945, 22 major war criminals were tried on charges of crimes against peace, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and conspiracy to commit such crimes.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## GENOCIDE DID NOT END WITH THE HOLOCAUST

In response to the Holocaust, the international community worked to create safeguards to prevent future genocides.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## GENOCIDE DID NOT END WITH THE HOLOCAUST

The United Nations in 1948 voted to establish genocide as an international crime, calling it an “odious scourge” to be condemned by the civilized world.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## GENOCIDE DID NOT END WITH THE HOLOCAUST

Despite this effort, genocide has continued, and it continues to threaten parts of the world even today.

# THE HOLOCAUST LAST CHAPTER



## GENOCIDE DID NOT END WITH THE HOLOCAUST

Refugees from the 2003–2005 genocide in Darfur, Sudan, above, struggle to survive after being displaced from their villages.