

HITLER'S FINAL SOLUTION

The Holocaust



Holocaust Memorial In Miami Beach, Florida

Power point created by Robert Martinez
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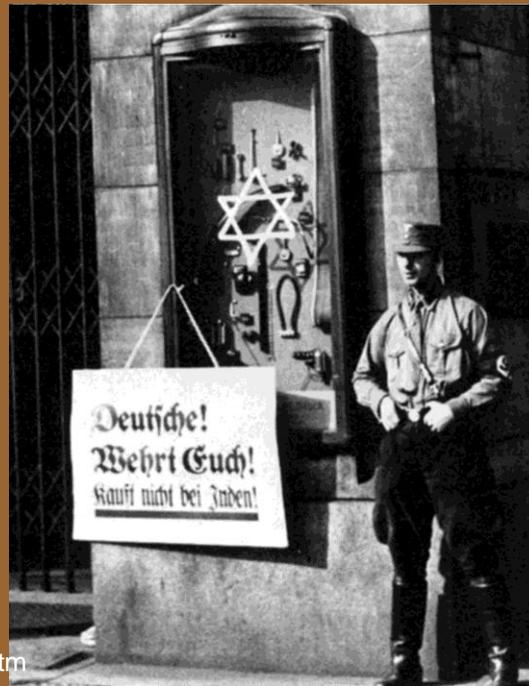
On April 7, 1933, shortly after Hitler took power in Germany, he ordered all “non-Aryans” to be removed from government jobs. This order was one of the first moves in a campaign for **racial purity** that eventually led to the Holocaust.



The Holocaust was the systematic murder of 11 million people across Europe, more than half of whom were Jews.



Although Jews were not the only victims of the Holocaust, they were the center of the Nazi's targets. **Anti-Semitism**, or hatred of the Jews, had a long history in many European countries. For decades many Germans looking for a scapegoat had blamed Jews as the cause of their failures.



Closing a Jewish synagogue.

As the Nazis tightened their hold on Germany, their persecution of the Jews increased. In 1935, the **Nuremberg Laws** stripped Jews of their German citizenship, jobs, and property. To make it easier for the Nazis to identify them, Jews had to wear a bright yellow **Star of David** attached to their clothing.



**November 9-10, 1938, became known as
Kristallnacht or “Night of Broken Glass.”
Nazi storm troopers attacked Jewish homes,
businesses, and synagogues across
Germany.**



KRISTALLNACHT

Around 100 Jews were killed, and hundreds more were injured. Some 30,000 Jews were arrested and hundreds of synagogues were burned. Afterward, the Nazis blamed the Jews for the destruction.



Nazis tried to speed Jewish emigration but encountered difficulty. Jews fleeing Germany had trouble finding nations that would accept them. France already had 40,000 Jewish refugees and did not want more. The British worried about fueling anti-Semitism and refused to admit more than 80,000 Jewish refugees. For the most part, many German Jews had no where to go.



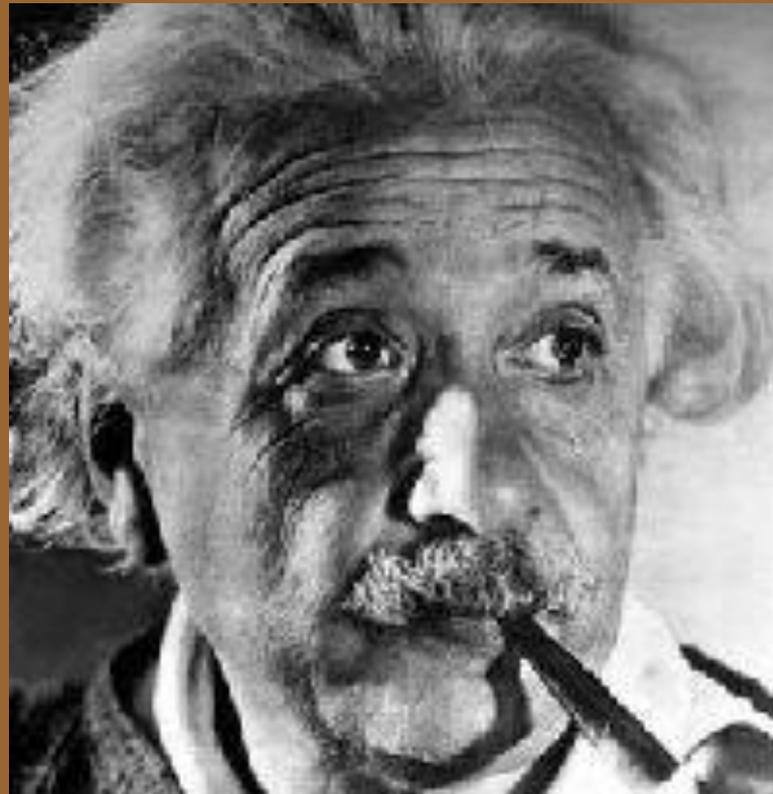


“We all want to get rid of our Jews. The difficulty is that no country wishes to receive them.”

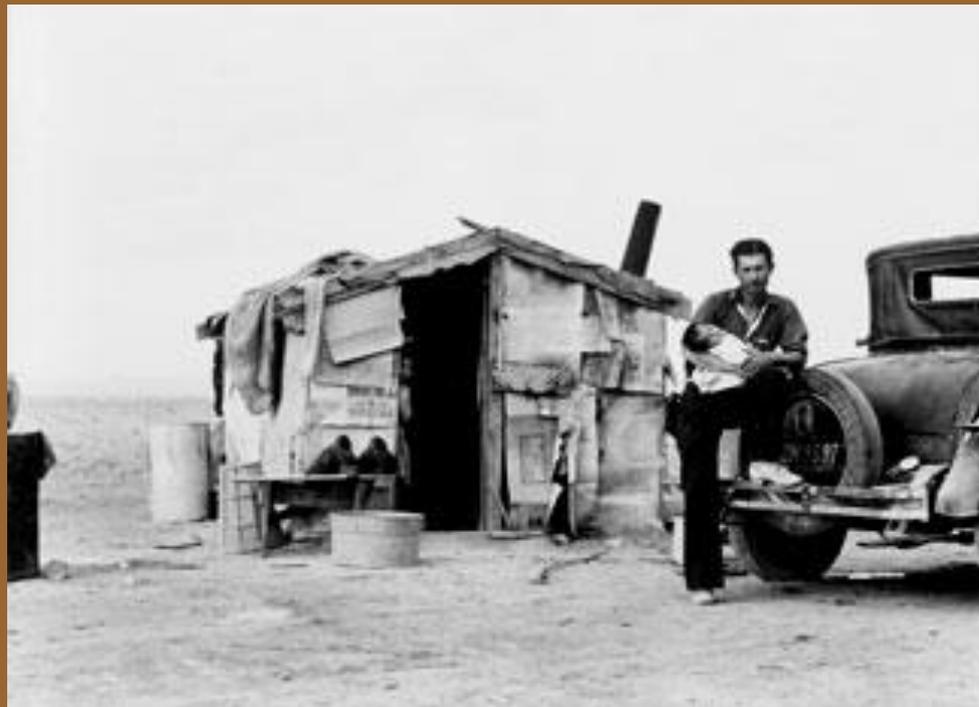
- Joachim von Ribbentrop

German Foreign Minister

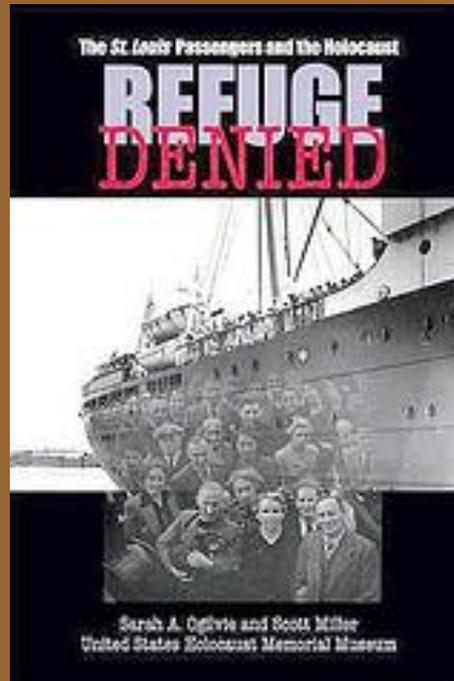
Although the average Jew had little chance of reaching the United States, “persons of exceptional merit,” including physicist **Albert Einstein** and 100,000 other refugees were accepted into the U.S.



Americans were concerned that letting in more refugees during the **Great Depression** would deny U.S. citizens jobs and threaten economic recovery. There was widespread anti-Semitism and fear of “enemy agents” among many Americans.



The German ocean liner, *St. Louis* passed Miami in 1939. Although 740 of the liner's 943 passengers had U.S. immigration papers, the Coast Guard followed the ship to prevent anyone from disembarking in America. The ship was forced to return to Europe. More than half of the passengers were later killed in the Holocaust.





“The cruise of the *St. Louis* cries to high heaven of man’s inhumanity to man.”

- *New York Times*

By 1939 only about a quarter million Jews remained in Germany. But other nations that Hitler occupied had millions more. Obsessed with a desire to rid Europe of its Jews, Hitler imposed what he called the “**Final Solution.**”



The “Final Solution” was a policy of **genocide**, the deliberate and systematic killing of an entire population.



Hitler's Final Solution rested on the belief that Aryans were a superior people and that the strength and purity of this **“master race”** must be preserved. To accomplish this, the Nazis condemned to slavery and death not only the Jews but other groups that they viewed as inferior or unworthy or as **“enemies of the state.”**



The Nazis targeted other Germans whom they found unfit to be part of the “master race.” Such victims included homosexuals, the mentally deficient, the mentally ill, the physically disabled, and the incurably ill.



Hitler began implementing his Final Solution in Poland with special Nazi death squads. Hitler's elite Nazi "security squadrons" (the SS), rounded up Jews – men, women, children, and babies – and shot them on the spot.



CATTLE BRANDS

Jews were tattooed with numbers for tracking.



Tattooed arm of young Jewish child.

Jews were ordered into dismal, overcrowded ghettos, segregated Jewish areas in certain Polish cities. The Nazis sealed off the ghettos with barbed wire and stone walls. Life inside the ghetto was miserable. While some Jews formed resistance movements, others resisted by other means (underground newspapers).



FORCED LABOR

Factories were built alongside ghettos where people were forced to work for German industry.



Finally, Jews in communities not reached by the killing squads were dragged from their homes and herded onto trains or trucks for shipment to **concentration camps**, or labor camps.



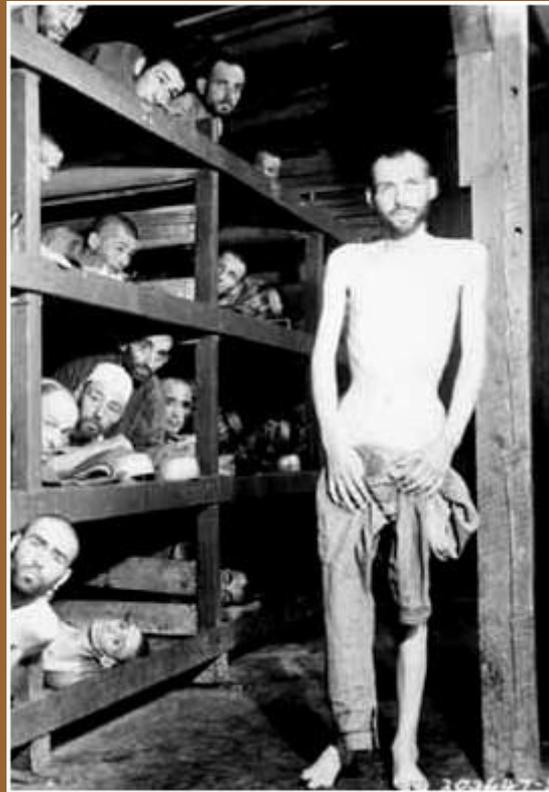
JEWISH CHILDREN MARKED FOR DEATH



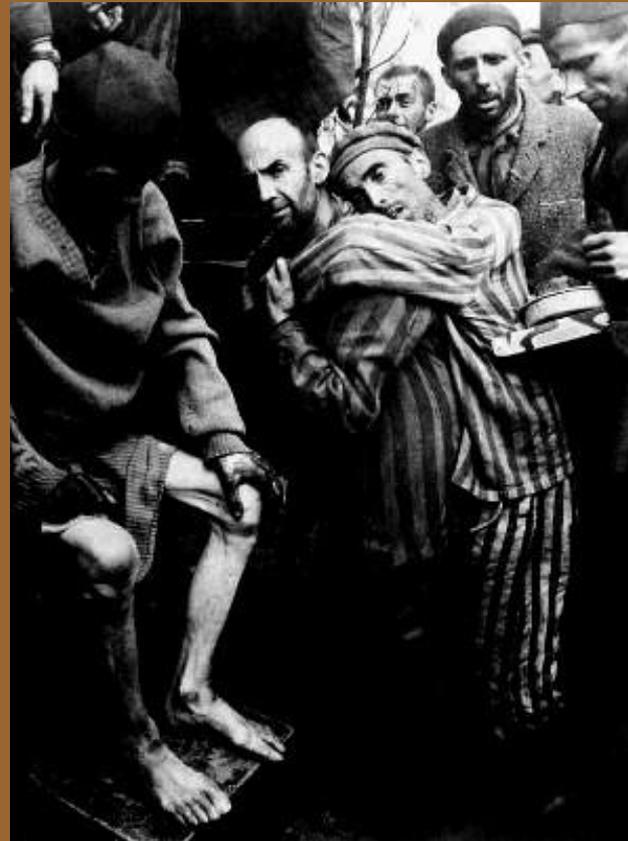
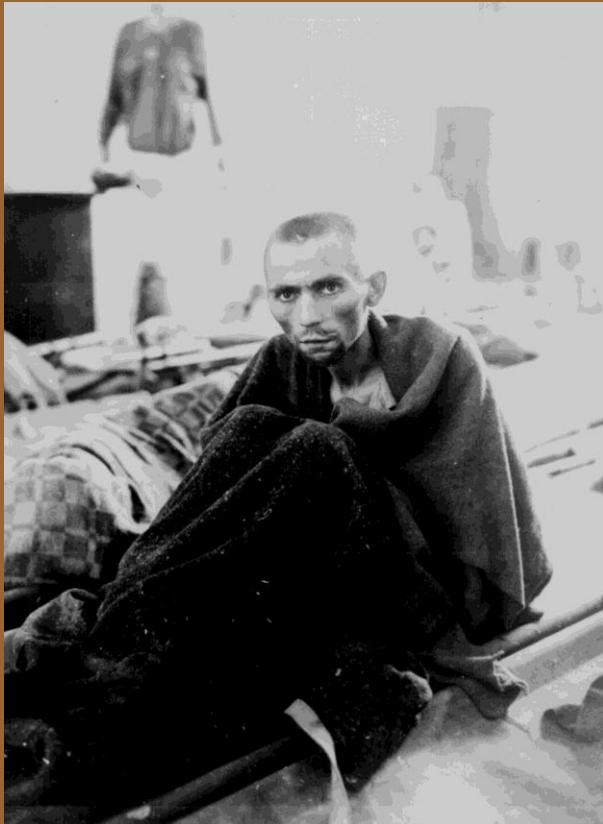
Nazi concentration camps were originally set up to imprison political opponents and protesters. The camps were later turned over to the SS, who expanded the concentration camp and used it to warehouse other “undesirables.”



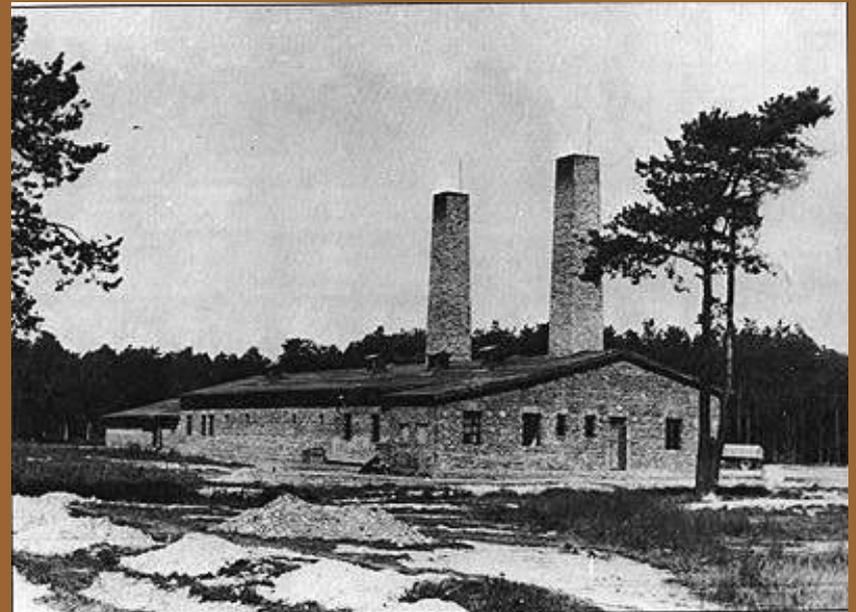
Life in the camps was a cycle of hunger, humiliation, and work that almost always ended in death. The prisoners were crammed into crude wooden barracks that held up to a thousand people each. They shared their crowded quarters, as well as their meager meals, with hordes of rats and fleas.



Inmates in the camps worked from dawn to dusk, seven days a week, until they collapsed. Those too weak to work were killed.



As deadly as overwork, starvation, beatings, and bullets were, they did not kill fast enough to satisfy the Nazis. To mass slaughter and starvation they would add a third method of killing – murder by **poison gas.**



Gas Chamber at Auschwitz

The Germans built six **death camps** in Poland. Each camp had several huge gas chambers in which as many as 12,000 people could be killed a day.



Auschwitz



When prisoners arrived at **Auschwitz**, the largest of the death camps, they had to parade by several SS doctors. With a wave of the hand, the doctors separated those strong enough to work from those who would die that day. Both groups were told to leave all their belongings behind, with a promise that they would be returned later.



Those destined to die were then led into a room outside the **gas chamber** and were told to undress for a shower. To complete the deception, the prisoners were even given pieces of soap. Finally, they were led into the chamber and poisoned with cyanide gas that spewed form vents in the walls.



Zykon-B Gas Canisters



“Showers” Gas Chamber

This orderly mass extermination was sometimes carried out to the accompaniment of cheerful music played by an orchestra of camp inmates who had temporarily been spared execution.



Buchenwald Concentration Camp

At first the bodies were buried in huge pits. But the decaying corpses gave off a stench that could be smelled for miles around. Worse yet, mass graves left evidence of the mass murder.



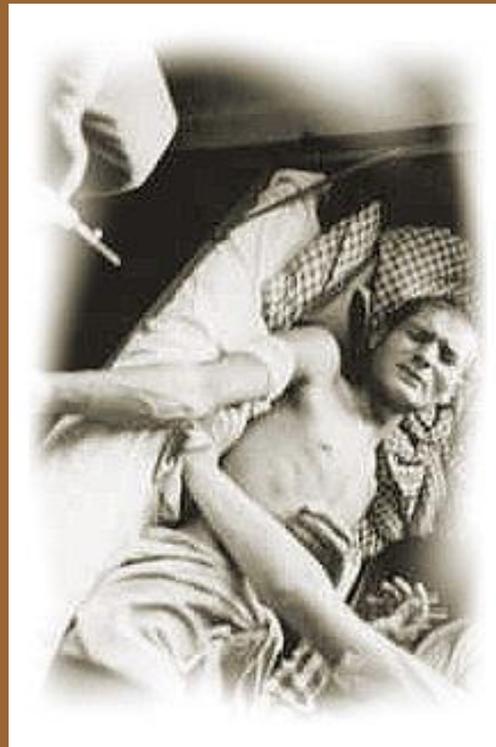
GERMAN SSTRROOPS



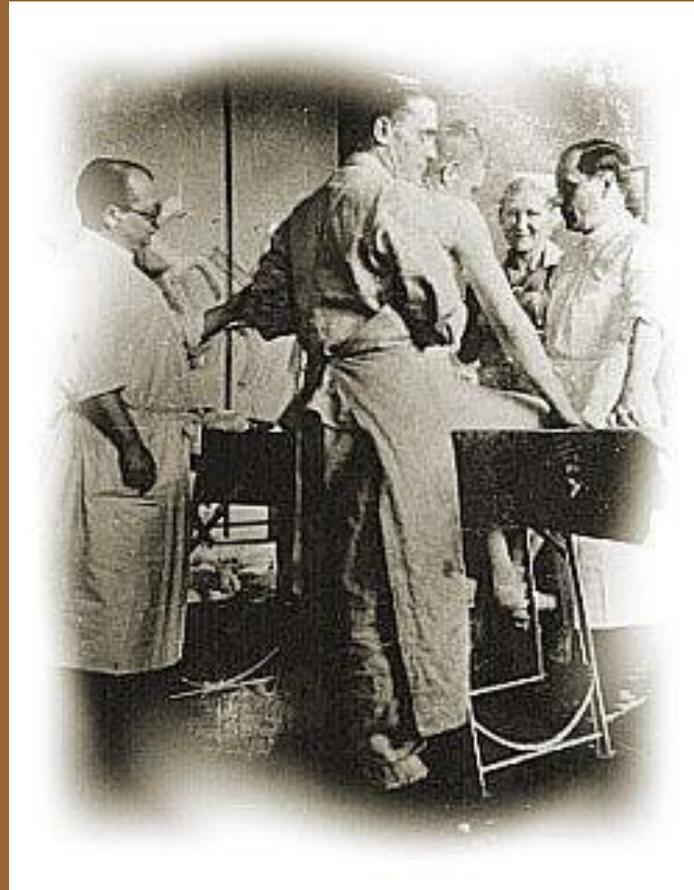
At some camps, to try to cover up the evidence of their slaughter, the Nazis installed huge **crematoriums**, or ovens, in which to burn the dead. At other camps, the bodies were simply thrown into a pit and set on fire.



Gassing was not the only method of extermination used in the camps. Prisoners were also shot, hanged, or injected with poison. Still others died as a result of horrible **medical experiments carried out by camp doctors.**



Some of these victims were injected with deadly germs in order to study the effect of disease on different groups of people. Many more were used to test methods of **sterilization**, a subject of great interest to some Nazi doctors in their search for ways to improve the “**master race.**”





Prisoners cheer the U.S. 11th Armored Division on May 6, 1945



American soldiers force Austrian/German civilians forced to bury bodies, wearing their best clothes.

An estimated **six million** Jews died in the death camps and in the Nazi massacres. But some miraculously escaped the worst of the Holocaust. Many had help from ordinary people who were appalled by the Nazi's treatment of Jews. Some Jews even survived the horrors of the concentration camps.

