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## Timeline of Nazi Abuses

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The Nazi reign of terror lasted from 1933 to 1945, a time when mounting affronts to Europe's Jews, Gypsies, and others gave way to the most unspeakable atrocities. Using well-documented facts and contemporary photographs, this timeline chronicles that tragic period in world history. Click on any year below to get a detailed history. *Caution: Many photographs in this feature are disturbing and may not be suitable for all ages.*



A German police officer examines the identification papers of Jews in the Krakow ghetto, circa 1941.

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## 1933

### January 30

President Paul von Hindenburg appoints Adolf Hitler Reichs Chancellor (Prime Minister).

### February

Published since 1923 by Julius Streicher in Nuremberg as a local organ of the Nazi party, the weekly publication *Der Stürmer*, devoted primarily to anti-Semitic propaganda and promoting hatred against the Jews, becomes one of the official organs of the party in power. The motto of the paper is "The Jews are our misfortune."



Adolf Hitler, seated center right, celebrates with members of his cabinet on January 30, 1933, the day he was appointed Prime Minister of Germany.

### February 27

Nazis burn Reichstag (Parliament) building to create crisis atmosphere. President Hindenburg grants Hitler emergency powers that limit civil rights.

### March 5

During the last free election in pre-war Germany, the Nazi party wins nearly 44 percent of the popular vote, more than twice as many votes as the next closest political party, the Social Democrats, with 18 percent. In a coalition with another right-wing party, Hitler takes full control of Germany.

### March 9

Members of the SA (*Sturmabteilung*, or "Stormtroops," originally established in 1921 by Hitler to defend Nazi meetings) and *Stahlhelm* (nationalist ex-servicemen's organization) instigate rioting against German Jews.

### March 20

First concentration camp, Dachau, established north of Munich.

### March 23

German government passes the Enabling Act, granting Hitler dictatorial powers.



During the April 1933 boycott, two SA members guard the entrance to a Jewish-owned leather-goods shop. The sign reads "No respectable German shops here!"

### April 1

SA instigates boycott of all Jewish shops in Germany. Action also directed against Jewish physicians and lawyers. Jewish students forbidden to attend schools and universities.

### April 7

Law for "the re-creation of civil-service professionalism" passed. Removal of many Jewish civil-service employees, including teachers and judges. Exception made for front-line veterans of World War I.

### April 11

Decree issued defining a non-Aryan as "anyone descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish, parents or grandparents. One parent or grandparent classifies the

descendant as non-Aryan ... especially if one parent or grandparent was of the Jewish faith."

### April 26

Formation of the Gestapo (*Geheime Staatspolizei*, or "Secret State Police"), transforming Prussian political police into an organ of the Nazi state.

### May 10

Books written by Jews and opponents of Nazism burned.

### July 14

Nazi party declared only party in Germany. Also, law pertaining to the

revocation of naturalization and cancellation of German citizenship passed. Primarily aimed at Jews naturalized since 1918 from the formerly Eastern German territories.

### September 22

Nazis establish Reich Chamber of Culture and exclude Jews from participating in the arts.

### October 4

Editor Law passed: Jews prohibited from serving as newspaper editors.

### October 14

Germany quits League of Nations.

### October 24

Nazis pass a law against "Habitual and Dangerous Criminals" that justifies placing the homeless, beggars, unemployed, and alcoholics in concentration camps.

## 1934

### January 24

Jews banned from the German Labor Front, a labor organization affiliated with the Nazi Party.

### May 17

Jews no longer entitled to health insurance.

### June 30

The "Night of the Long Knives" occurs as Hitler, Hermann Göring, and Heinrich Himmler conduct a purge of the SA leadership, murdering about 700 people, including opposition figures still in Germany.

### August 2

President Hindenburg dies. Offices of President and Chancellor combined. Hitler becomes sole leader (Führer) and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces.



Front page of *Der Stürmer*, a Nazi publication, showing a cartoon depicting Jews as instigators of rebellion, June 1934.

## 1935

**May 21**

Defense Law passed: "Aryan heritage" becomes a prerequisite for military duty. During the summer, "Jews Not Wanted" posters start to appear on restaurants, shops, and on village entrance signs.

**September 15**

National Day of the NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers Party). Parliament passes, during a special session, the anti-Semitic "Nuremberg Laws," the "National Citizens Law," and the "Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor." These laws are the basis for the exclusion of Jews from all public business life and for the reclassification of the political rights of Jewish citizens.

**November 14**

First decree pertaining to the "National Citizens Law" issued: Jews denied voting rights and forbidden to hold public office. Discharge of all Jewish civil-service employees, including World War I front-line veterans. Definition of "Jew" written. First decree pertaining to the "Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor" issued: Prohibition against the marriage of Jews to non-Jews. Sexual relations between Jews and Aryans becomes a crime. Work possibilities for Jews narrowed to just a few professions. Jewish children prohibited from using the same playgrounds and locker rooms as other children.



A motorcyclist on a village outskirts takes in a sign proclaiming "Jews are not welcomed here," circa 1935.

**1936****February 10**

The Gestapo placed above the law.

**March**

The SS (*Shutzstaffeln*, or "Protection Squad," originally set up in 1925 to provide personal protection to Nazi leadership) creates the Deaths Head division to guard concentration camps.

**March 7**

German troops occupy the Rhineland in western Germany.



German citizens give the Nazi salute to Hitler during opening-day ceremonies at the 11<sup>th</sup> Olympiad in Berlin, August 1936.

**June 17**

Himmler appointed chief of German Police, with Reinhard Heydrich as his second in command.

### August 1

Opening of the Olympic Games in Berlin. Anti-Semitic posters temporarily removed.

## 1937

### June 12

SS *Obergruppenführer* (Lt. General) Reinhard Heydrich issues secret order pertaining to protective custody for Race Violators following the conclusion of the normal legal process.



Newly arrived prisoners gather for registration at the Buchenwald concentration camp, 1937.

### July 16

Buchenwald concentration camp opens in central Germany.

### Autumn

Systematic takeover of Jewish property begins.

### November

Munich exhibition of "The Wandering Jew" depicting the Jew as financial exploiter.

## 1938

### March 13

"Annexation" (*Anschluss*) of Austria and start of persecution of Austrian Jews.

### March 28

Law pertaining to the legal rights of Jewish cultural (ethnic) organizations passed. Jewish communities are no longer legal entities enjoying civil rights; instead, they can only be legally created associations.



Reichstag members applaud Hitler following his annexation of Austria, March 13, 1938.

### April 22

Decree issued against the "camouflage of Jewish industrial enterprises." Decree announced requiring the declaration of all Jewish property greater than 5,000 Reichsmarks (approx. \$1,190).

### June 9

Destruction of the Munich Synagogue.

### June 14

Decree issued requiring the registration and identification of Jewish industrial enterprises. Creation of lists of wealthy Jews at treasury offices and police districts.

### June 15

"Asocial-Action": Arrest of all "previously convicted" Jews, including those prosecuted for traffic violations, and commitment to concentration camps (approx. 1,500 persons).

### July 15

International conference held in Evian, France, and attended by delegates from 32 countries, including the United States, Great Britain, and France, to discuss the problem of Jewish refugees from Germany. Results in no effective help for Jewish refugees.



More than a million children died in the Holocaust, including three of the Margules family children shown here, whom the Nazis deported from Paris and killed in 1942. Only the girl in the lower right survived the war.

### July 21

Introduction of identity cards for Jews, to become effective January 1, 1939.

### July 28

Decree announced for the cancellation of the medical certification of all Jewish physicians, effective September 30. Thereafter, Jewish physicians only allowed to function as nurses for Jewish patients.

### August 10

Destruction of the synagogue in Nuremberg, south-central Germany.

### August 17

Decree issued to carry out the law pertaining to the change of first and last names. Effective January 1, 1939, all Jews must add to their name either "Israel" or "Sara."

### September 12

Jews forbidden to attend public cultural events.

**September 27**

Decree issued for the cancellation of licenses to practice for all Jewish lawyers, effective November 30. Thereafter, Jewish lawyers can only practice in special instances as "Jewish Consultants for Jews."

**September 29**

Munich Agreement: Britain and France accept German annexation of Sudetenland, a part of Czechoslovakia.

**October 5**

Passport decree issued, resulting in the confiscation of passports held by Jews. Procedure for reissuance of passports made more complicated. Newly issued passports stamped "J," designating Jewish ownership.

**October 15**

German troops occupy the Sudetenland.

**October 28**

Expulsion from Germany of 15,000 to 17,000 Jews of Polish origin to Zbaszyn on Polish border.

**November 7**

Hershel Grynszpan, whose parents suffered in the aforementioned expulsion, assassinates German consular aide Ernst Vom Rath in Paris.

**November 9-10**

Kristallnacht ("Night of Broken Glass"): Government-organized pogrom against Jews in Germany. Destruction of synagogues, businesses, and homes. More than 26,000 Jewish men arrested and committed to Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen concentration camps. At least 91 Jews killed, 191 synagogues destroyed, and 7,500 shops looted.



The burned-out synagogue of Aachen, Germany, one of nearly 200 synagogues destroyed during Kristallnacht.

**November 12**

Decrees issued for the "atonement payments" by German Jews in the amount of one billion marks; the elimination of German Jews from involvement in the economy; and the reconstruction of the facades of all Jewish shops. Jews have to pay for all damage caused during Kristallnacht. Jews prohibited from attending movies, concerts, and other cultural performances.

**November 15**

Jewish children expelled from German schools.

### November 28

Police decree pertaining to the appearance of Jews in public issued: Restrictions in the freedom of movement and travel, etc.

### December 3

Confiscation of Jews' drivers licenses. Creation of a "Ban Against Jews" in Berlin. Decree announced pertaining to the forced disposal (Aryanization) of Jewish industrial enterprises and businesses.

### December 14

Göring takes charge of resolving the "Jewish question."

## 1939

### January 17

Decree issued pertaining to the expiration of permits for Jewish dentists, veterinarians, and pharmacists.

### January 24

Establishment of a National Central Office for Jewish emigration, with central offices in Vienna and Prague. These offices lie under the SS's Intelligence Service, the *Sicherheitsdienst*, or SD, headed by Reinhard Heydrich. Göring orders SS leader Heydrich to speed up emigration of Jews.

### January 30

Hitler predicts in the parliament the "extermination of the Jewish race in Europe" in the event of war.

### February 21

Nazis require Jews to relinquish all their gold and silver.

### March 15

Occupation of Czechoslovakia, "Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia" created. Introduction of the anti-Semitic decrees that are already in force in Germany.

### April 18

Anti-Jewish laws passed in Slovakia. Cancellation of eviction protection.



Hermann Göring set up the first concentration camps. He also ordered Reinhard Heydrich to come up with a "General Solution" to the Jewish problem.



**April 30**

Law pertaining to rent agreements with Jews: Legal preparations for the combining of Jewish families into "Jewish Houses." Cancellation of eviction protection.



The *St. Louis* in Havana harbor, Cuba.

**May 13**

In Hamburg, 1,000 Jewish refugees board the SS *St. Louis*, a German ocean liner, for trip to Cuba, where they hope to find temporary refuge. Cuba and Miami turn them away.

**May 15**

Ravensbrück concentration camp for women established north of Berlin.

**May 22**

Nazis sign "Pact of Steel" with Italy.

**June 16-20**

SS *St. Louis* returns to Europe, where the passengers disembark.

**July 26**

Adolf Eichmann (deputy to Heydrich) placed in charge of the Prague branch of the emigration office. He becomes head of Section IVB4 of the S.D. under Reinhard Heydrich. Section IVB4 known first as the Jewish Bureau (later the Eichmann Bureau).

**September 1**

Germany attacks Poland. World War II begins. Numerous pogroms in Poland. Curfews for Jews in Germany (9 p.m. in the summer, 8 p.m. in the winter).

**September 3**

Britain and France declare war on Germany.

**September 21**

In occupied Poland, Heydrich authorizes the mobilization of *Einsatzgruppen* (killing squads), which see action beginning in the spring of 1941 after the invasion of Russia. Heydrich also authorizes the establishment of ghettos, each under a *Judenrat* (Jewish Council).

**September 23**

Confiscation of radios from Jews.

**September 27**

Establishment of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (National Central Security

Department), which coordinates all political and criminal police in Germany under Heydrich. Warsaw surrenders.

### September 29

Germans and Soviets divide Poland. More than two million Jews live in the German area and 1.3 million in the Soviet-controlled territory.

### October

Nazis begin euthanasia, including murder by starvation, lethal injection, and carbon-monoxide poisoning, on sick and disabled in Germany.

### October 8

First ghetto (unguarded and unfenced) established in Piotrkow, Poland.

### October 12

First deportations from Austria and the "Protectorates" to Poland.

Establishment of the *Generalgouvernement* (Government General) in the German-occupied territories of Poland.

### October 18

Introduction of wearing of the Star of David in Wloclawek, Poland.

### October 26

Forced labor for Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*.

### November 8

Hans Frank appointed Governor of the *Generalgouvernement* (headquartered in Krakow). Assassination attempt on Hitler fails.

### November 23

Introduction of the wearing of the Star of David in the entire *Generalgouvernement* (occupied Poland).

### November 28

Frank issues directive to establish *Judenrats* in *Generalgouvernement*.



Hartheim Institute, one of six hospitals and nursing facilities where the Nazis carried out their euthanasia program, killing children and adults by gassing, shooting, and lethal injection.

## 1940

### January 25

The Polish town of Oswiecim



(Auschwitz) chosen as the site of a new Nazi concentration camp.

### February 10-13

First deportations from Pomerania (Stettin, Stralsund, Schneidemuehl) to Lublin, Poland.

### April 9

Germany invades Denmark and Norway.



The main entrance to Auschwitz I, with its electrified fence and sign declaring *Arbeit Macht Frei* ("Work Makes One Free").

### April 20

High Command of the Armed Forces issues secret order: Discharge persons of mixed blood and husbands of Jewish women.



Children in the Lodz ghetto dig for fuel in an empty lot.

### April 30

First guarded ghetto established in Lodz, Poland.

### May 1

Rudolf Höss chosen as kommandant of Auschwitz.

### May 10

Germany invades Holland, Belgium, and France.

### June 14

The Nazis occupy Paris.

### June 22

French army surrenders. Marshall Philippe Petain signs an armistice with Germany.

### In July

Eichmann presents his Madagascar Plan, proposing to deport all European Jews to the island of Madagascar off Africa.

### August 8

Anti-Jewish laws passed in Romania.

### October 3

Vichy government in France passes anti-Jewish laws (*Statut des Juifs*) that go beyond German legislation at that time.

### October 7

German troops enter Romania.

### October 16

Nazis issue order for the establishment of the Warsaw Ghetto.

### October 22

"Aktion Burckel": Deportation of Jews from Alsace-Lorraine, Saarland, and Baden to southern France, then, in 1942, to Auschwitz.



A street scene in the Warsaw ghetto, early 1940s.

### November 15

Nazis seal off the Warsaw Ghetto.

### November 20-24

Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia join the Axis powers.

## 1941

### January 22-23

First massacre of Jews in Romania.

### February-April

Deportation of 72,000 Jews into the Warsaw Ghetto.

### February 22-23

Deportation of 400 Jewish hostages from Amsterdam to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria.



Six thousand inmates await disinfection in a Mauthausen courtyard, July 1941. After 24 hours of waiting, nearly 140 had died.

### March 2

German troops occupy Bulgaria.

### March 7

Induction of German Jews into forced labor.

### April 6

Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.

### May 14

Arrest of 3,600 Parisian Jews. Romania passes law condemning adult Jews to forced labor.

**May 16**

French Marshall Petain approves collaboration with Hitler in radio broadcast.



A member of *Einsatzgruppe D* prepares to shoot a Ukrainian Jew, who is forced to kneel before a mass grave full of other victims.

**June**

Vichy government revokes civil rights of French Jews in North Africa and decrees many restrictions against them. Nazi SS *Einsatzgruppen* begin mass murder.

**June 22**

Germany attacks the Soviet Union.

**June-July**

Mass shootings of Jews begin in Ponary Forest, the killing grounds near Vilna, Poland. By 1944, 70,000 to 100,000 perish there.

**June-August**

Numerous pogroms occur in occupied Russian territories.

**July 2**

Anti-racist riots in Lvov, Poland in which Ukrainian

nationalists take part.

**July 8**

Introduction of the wearing of the Star of David in Baltic countries.

**July 17**

Alfred Rosenberg appointed Reich Minister for the Eastern Occupied Territories to administer territories seized from the Soviet Union.

**July 31**

Göring assigns Heydrich the task for "a complete solution of the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe." Beginning of the "Final Solution."

**August**

Ghettos established in Bialystok and Lvov, Poland.

**September**

Janowska labor and extermination camp opens near Lvov in Ukraine.



Reinhard Heydrich oversaw the *Einsatzgruppen* (killing squads). He also convened the Wannsee conference in January 1942 to discuss implementation of the Final Solution.

**September 1**

Police order pertaining to the introduction of the Star of David in Germany, effective September 19 for all Jews age six and older.

**September 3**

First gassing tests in Auschwitz using Zyklon-B, a poisonous gas.

**September 6**

Vilna Ghetto created with population of 40,000 Jews.

**September 19**

German troops capture Kiev, Ukraine.

**September 27**

Heydrich declared "Protector of Bohemia and Moravia."



A 1936 portrait of two-year-old Mania Halef, a Jewish child who was later killed in the mass execution at Babi Yar.

**September 28-29**

Mass murder of Jews at Babi Yar near Kiev (34,000 victims).

**October 3**

Forced labor for the Jews in the Reich.

**October 10**

Ghetto in Theresienstadt, Czechoslovakia, established.

**October 12-13**

Massacre of Jews at Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine (11,000 victims).

**October 14**

Orders issued for deportation of German Jews from Germany as defined by its 1933 borders.

**October 16**

Deportation of the Jews from the Reich begins.

**October 23**

Massacre of Jews in Odessa (34,000 victims). Prohibition against the emigration of Jews.

**October-November**

*Einsatzgruppen* mass killings of Jews all over southern Russia.

**October 28**

Massacre of Jews in Kiev (34,000 victims).

### November 6

Massacre of Jews in Kovno (Kaunas), Lithuania (15,000 victims).

### November 25

Declaration made pertaining to the collection of Jewish assets through deportations.

### December

Massacre of Jews in Riga, Latvia; victims include the first transport of Jews from Germany (27,000 victims).



A mother and her two children wait with a large group of Jews from Lubny, Ukraine, whom the Nazis have assembled for mass execution, October 16, 1941.

### December 7

Japanese attack Pearl Harbor. Hitler issues "Night and Fog" decree, policy under which underground agents and other opponents are made to vanish into the "night and fog."

### December 8

The United States and Britain declare war on Japan. Chelmno extermination camp opens near Lodz, Poland. By April 1943, 360,000 Jews will have been murdered at Chelmno.

### December 11

Germany declares war on the United States, which, in turn, declares war on Germany.

### December 30

Massacre of Jews in Simferopol in the Crimea (10,000 victims).

## 1942

### January 1

Allied nations sign declaration of the United Nations.

### January 15

"Resettlements" from Lodz to the extermination camp Chelmno begin.

### January 20

Wannsee Conference held to solidify plans for the deportation and



Jews from the Lodz ghetto board trains for the death camp at Chelmno.

extermination of European Jewry (Final Solution). Heydrich convened the meeting to transfer mass murders to the fixed death camps, with Eichmann in charge of transportation.

### January 31

*Einsatzgruppe A* reports the liquidation of 229,052 Jews in the Baltic states. [Liquidation in this instance means to kill, while liquidation of ghettos usually refers to outright killing and/or deportation to death camps.]

### End January

Deportation of Jews to Theresienstadt begins.

### February-March

Mass murder of Jews in Charkow (Kharkov), Ukraine (14,000 victims).

### March 1

Extermination of Jews begins at Sobibor, an extermination camp in Poland. By October 1943, 250,000 Jews will have been murdered there.

### March 6

First conference on sterilization held: Definitions pertaining to sterilization of persons of mixed blood laid down.

### March 16-17

Extermination camp Belzec established in Poland to murder Jews from Lublin, the Lublin district, and Galicia. By liberation (two survivors), 600,000 Jews had been murdered there.

### Mid-March

Start of "Aktion Reinhard," code name for the operation that had as its objective the physical destruction of Jews in the interior of occupied Poland.



Human bones lie in piles before the crematoria at Majdanek extermination camp.

### March 21

"Resettlement" of the ghetto in Lublin: 26,000 persons sent to extermination camps Belzec and Majdanek and other camps.

### March 26

Public notices pertaining to the identification of Jewish homes in Germany. Deportation of 60,000 Slovakian Jews, some to Auschwitz, others to the extermination camp Majdanek, near Lublin, Poland.

### Starting end of March



Arrival of initial transports of Jews at the concentration and extermination camps at Auschwitz (Auschwitz I & Auschwitz II).

**April 24**

Jews prohibited from using public transportation. Exception only for forced laborers, if their workplace lies farther than seven kilometers from their place of residence, though taking a seat in the conveyance not allowed.

**May 27**

Czech commandos mortally wound SS leader Heydrich.

**June 1**

Introduction of the Star of David in France and Holland. Treblinka extermination camp opened about 40 miles northeast of Warsaw.

**June 2**

Deportation of German Jews to Theresienstadt begins.

**June 4**

Heydrich dies of his wounds.

**June 10**

Germans liquidate Lidice, Czechoslovakia, in retaliation for Heydrich's death.

**June 30**

Jewish schools in Germany closed.

**July 1**

Massacres of Jews in Minsk, Lida, and Slonim, all in Belorussia.

**July 2**

Berlin Jews are sent to Theresienstadt.

**July 4**

Start of mass gassings at Auschwitz.

**July 7**

Himmler grants permission for sterilization experiments at Auschwitz.

**July 15**

First deportation from Holland to Auschwitz.



A young Dutch girl, part of a transport of Dutch Jews, arrives at Theresienstadt.

**July 19**

Himmler orders Operation Reinhard, the mass deportation of Jews in Poland to extermination camps.

"Resettlement" of the inhabitants of the Warsaw Ghetto to the extermination camps at Belzec and Treblinka begins. By September 13, Nazis will have deported 300,000 Jews to Treblinka. Armed resistance during liquidation of Nieswiez ghetto, western Belorussia.

### July 23

Mass exterminations by gassing started at Treblinka. By August 1943, Nazis will have murdered 700,000 Jews there.



Bales of hair cut from female prisoners, discovered at Auschwitz following its liberation in January 1945.

### August 4

First deportations from Belgium to Auschwitz.

### August 9

Armed resistance during the liquidation of the Mir ghetto, western Belorussia.

### August 10-22

"Resettlement" of the Lemberg (Lvov) ghetto in Ukraine. Forty thousand Jews deported to extermination camps.

### August 14

Arrest of 7,000 "stateless" Jews in unoccupied France.

### August-September

Deportations from Zagreb, Croatia, to Auschwitz. Gassings near Minsk of Jews deported from Theresienstadt.

### September 3

Armed resistance during liquidation of Lahava ghetto, western Belorussia.

### September 9

Massacre of Jews near Kislowodsk, Caucasus.

### September 16

Conclusion of "resettlement" of the Lodz ghetto (55,000 victims).

### September 23

Armed resistance during the liquidation of the Tutzin ghetto, western Ukraine.

### September 30

Hitler publicly repeats his forecast of the destruction of Jewry.

### October 4

Nazis order German concentration camps to be made "free of Jews": all Jewish inmates deported to Auschwitz.

### October 18

The German Ministry of Justice transfers responsibility for Jews and citizens of German-occupied eastern countries to the Gestapo.

### October 22

Nazis suppress revolt by Jews at Sachsenhausen assigned for deportation to Auschwitz.

### October 27

Second conference pertaining to sterilization held.

### October 29

Mass execution of Jews in Pinsk, Belorussia (16,000 victims).

### November 25

First deportation of Jews from Norway to Auschwitz.

### December 10

First transport of Jews from Germany arrives at Auschwitz.

### December 17

Allies solemnly condemn the extermination of Jews and promise to punish the perpetrators.

## 1943

### January 18

First armed resistance against deportation in Warsaw Ghetto.

### January 20-26

Transports from the ghetto in Theresienstadt to Auschwitz.

### January 29

Germans order all Gypsies arrested and sent to concentration camps.



A German police officer shoots Jewish women still alive after a mass execution of Jews from the Mizocz ghetto, Poland, October 14, 1942.



A Gypsy couple at the Belzec concentration camp.

**January 30**

Ernst Kaltenbrunner becomes head of RuSHA (Race and Settlement Office).

**February 2**

German Sixth Army surrenders at Stalingrad—an event that marks the turning point in the war.

**February 15**

First "resettlements" in Bialystok Ghetto in Poland, with 1,000 Jews killed on the spot and 10,000 deported to Treblinka.

**February 18**

Nazis arrest "White Rose" resistance leaders in Munich.

**February 27**

Deportation of Jewish armament workers from Berlin to Auschwitz.



Tomas Kulka, a Jewish boy from Moravia shown here at age three, was gassed at Sobibor with his maternal grandmother in May 1942. He was two weeks shy of his eighth birthday.

**March**

Transports from Holland to Sobibor and from Prague, Vienna, Luxembourg, and Macedonia to Treblinka.

**March 1**

American Jews hold a mass rally at Madison Square Garden in New York to pressure the United States to aid European Jewry.

**March 13**

Disbandment of the ghetto in Krakow.

**March 15**

Deportations from Salonika and Thrace in Greece.

**March 22**

The first new crematorium in Auschwitz-Birkenau begins operation.

**April 19**

Bermuda Conference. Fruitless discussions by U.S. and British delegates on deliverance of Nazi victims.

**April 19 to May 16**

Revolt and destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto.

**June 11**

Himmler orders the liquidation of all



Polish ghettos. Expanded to Soviet Union by the edict of June 21.

### June 21-27

Liquidation of the ghetto in Lemberg (Lvov) (20,000 persons).



Surrounded by heavily armed guards, SS Major General Jürgen Stroop (center) watches housing blocks burn during the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

### June 25

Revolt and destruction of the ghetto in Czestochowa, Poland.

### July 1

Thirteenth order of the Reich's Civil Laws: Jews within Germany placed under police justice.

### July 25-26

Mussolini arrested and Fascist government in Italy falls. Marshal Pietro Badoglio takes over and negotiates with Allies.

### August 2

Revolts in Treblinka death camp and Krikov labor camp in the Lublin district.

### August 16-23

Revolt and destruction of the ghetto in Bialystok.

### September 11

Start of German raids against Jews in Nice, France.



Liquidation of the ghetto in Krakow, Poland, with belongings of deported Jews strewn about the streets, March 1943.

### September 11-14

Liquidation of ghettos in Minsk and Lida.

### September 11-18

Transports of families from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz.

### September 23

Liquidation of the Vilna Ghetto.

### September 25

Soviet troops recapture Smolensk, Russia. Liquidation of all ghettos in

Belorussia.

### October 2

Germans order expulsion of Danish Jews. Due to rescue operations by the Danish underground, some 7,000 Jews evacuated to Sweden. Germans capture only 475.

**October 13**

Italy declares war on Germany. Due to Allied headquarters' premature announcement of Italian move by Allied headquarters, Italian Jews are trapped before they can be evacuated to North Africa.

**October 14**

Revolt in Sobibor.

**October 18**

First transport of Jews from Rome to Auschwitz.

**October 20**

U.N. War Crimes Commission established.



Some of the uprisers in the Sobibor revolt, photographed in August 1944.

**November 3**

Liquidation of the Riga Ghetto. Nazis murder remaining Jews in Majdanek (17,000 victims).

**November 6**

Soviet troops recapture Kiev.

**November 28**

Conference in Teheran; Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin meet.

**December 15-19**

First trial of German war criminals in Charkow (Kharkov), Ukraine.

**1944****January 24**

Roosevelt creates the War Refugee Board, transferring control from Cordell Hull and Breckenridge Long of the State Department to Henry Morgenthau of the Treasury Department.

**March 19**

Germany invades Hungary.

**April 10**

Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler escape from Auschwitz and carry detailed



An Auschwitz warehouse full of shoes and clothes taken from prisoners gassed upon their arrival.

information about the death camp to outside world.

### **April 14**

First transport of Jews from Athens to Auschwitz.

### **May 15 to July 8**

Deportation of 438,000 Jews from Hungary to Auschwitz.

### **June**

Red Cross delegation visits Theresienstadt.

### **June 4**

Allies enter Rome.

### **June 6**

D-Day, start of the Allied invasion in Normandy.

### **June 14**

Rosenberg orders the kidnapping of 40,000 Polish children ages 10-14 for slave labor in the Reich.

### **June 23**

Start of the Soviet offensive.



Some of the 40,000 children kidnapped from eastern Europe for "re-Germanization" in Germany await transport out of their temporary home at Auschwitz, July 1944.

### **July**

Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg arrives in Budapest, Hungary and begins to issue diplomatic papers to save Hungarian Jews.

### **July 20**

Soviet troops liberate concentration camp Majdanek. German assassination attempt on Hitler fails.

### **July 25**

Ghetto in Kovno, Lithuania, evacuated.

### **August 4**

Gestapo arrests Anne Frank's family in Amsterdam.

### **August 6**

Deportation to Germany of 27,000 Jews from camps east of the Vistula River in Poland.

### **August 23**

Holding camp Drancy (near Paris) liberated. Romania capitulates.

### September 5

Lodz Ghetto evacuated.

### September 11

British troops arrive in Holland.

### September 13

Soviet troops reach the Slovakian border.

### September

Transport of all Jews in Dutch camps to Germany. New deportations from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz. Last transport from France to Auschwitz.

### September 14

American troops reach the German border.

### September 23

Massacre of Jews in the concentration camp in Kluga, Estonia. Resumption of deportations from Slovakia.



An aerial reconnaissance photo of the main camp at Auschwitz, shot at 23,000 feet by members of the 15<sup>th</sup> U.S. Army Air Force, September 13, 1944.

### October 7

Escape attempts in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

### October 15

Germany installs new puppet Hungarian government, which resumes deportation of Jews.

### October 18

Hitler orders the establishment of the *Volkssturms* (mobilization of all men from 16 to 60).

### October 23

Allied armies liberate Paris.

### End October

Survivors of concentration camp Plaszow (Krakow) transported to Auschwitz.

### October 31

Approximately 14,000 Jews transported from Slovakia to Auschwitz.

### November



Trial of the leaders of the extermination camp Majdanek held in Lublin.



Door to an Auschwitz gas chamber. The sign reads, "Harmful gas! Entering endangers your life."

### **November 2**

Gassings in Auschwitz terminated.

### **November 3-8**

Soviet troops near Budapest.

### **November 18**

Eichmann departs 38,000 Jews from Budapest to the concentration camps at Buchenwald and Ravensbruck and other camps.

### **November 26**

Himmler orders destruction of the crematorium at Auschwitz-Birkenau, as Nazis try to hide evidence of the death camps.

### **December 17**

Members of Waffen SS (an arm of the SS) murder 81 U.S. POWs at Malmedy.

## **1945**

### **January 16**

Soviet troops liberate 800 Jews at Czestochowa and 870 in Lodz.

### **January 17**

Soviet troops liberate Warsaw.  
Liberation of 80,000 Jews in Budapest.  
Nazis evacuate Auschwitz and "Death March" of prisoners begins.

### **January 27**

Soviet troops liberate Auschwitz.



Auschwitz prisoners greet Soviet troops during liberation in January, 1945.

### **March 3**

American troops reach the Rhine River.

### **March 19**

Hitler orders destruction of all German military, industrial, transportation, and communications facilities to prevent them from falling under enemy control.

### **April**

Allies discover Nazi-stolen art and wealth hidden in salt mines.

### April 6-10

Evacuation of 15,000 Jews from Buchenwald.



Three young survivors stand behind a barbed-wire fence at Buchenwald, April 1945.

### April 12

American troops liberate Buchenwald. President Roosevelt dies. Truman becomes President.

### April 15

British troops liberate concentration camp Bergen-Belsen southeast of Hamburg.

### April 20

American troops occupy Nuremberg.

### April 23

Soviet troops near Berlin.

### April 23-May 4

Evacuation of inmates from concentration camps Sachsenhausen and Ravensbruck. SS guards conduct last massacre of Jews.

### April 25

Meeting of American and Soviet troops on the Elbe River in Germany.

### April 28

Mussolini captured and hanged by Italian partisans.

### April 29

American troops liberate Dachau.

### April 30

Hitler commits suicide.

### May 2

Berlin capitulates. Representatives of International Red Cross take over at Theresienstadt.

### May 5

Liberation of Mauthausen.

### May 7-9

Unconditional surrender of Germany: end of war in Europe.



Survivors of Dachau concentration camp, May 1945.

**May 8**

V-E (Victory in Europe) Day.



Hermann Göring was sentenced to death at the International Military Tribunal trial of war criminals at Nuremberg. Just two hours before his scheduled execution on October 15, 1946, however, Göring committed suicide by swallowing a cyanide pill he had managed to smuggle into prison.

**May 9**

U.S. troops capture Göring.

**May 23**

Himmler captured and commits suicide.

**June 5**

Allies divide up Germany and Berlin and take over government.

**June 26**

United Nations Charter signed in San Francisco.

**August 6**

Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

**August 15**

Japan surrenders: end of World War II.

**October 24**

United Nations officially born.

**November 22**

Start of Nuremberg Trials. Trials end January 10, 1946, with 12 defendants sentenced to death, three to life imprisonment, four to various prison terms, and three acquitted.

Adapted with permission from the Web site of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise ([www.us-israel.org](http://www.us-israel.org)). Thanks to Dr. Paul Bookbinder of Harvard University for reviewing this timeline. All images in this feature are courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives.

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