

Teaching and Studying the Holocaust

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Edited by

Samuel Totten

Stephen Feinberg

Foreword by

John K. Roth

*Russell K. Pitzer Professor of Philosophy
Claremont McKenna College*

Allyn and Bacon

Boston ■ London ■ Toronto ■ Sydney ■ Tokyo ■ Singapore

APPENDIX A

Holocaust Chronology

From Acquisition of Power to Nuremberg Trials 1933–1946

COMPILED BY STEPHEN FEINBERG

1933

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| January 30 | Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany by President Paul von Hindenburg |
| February 3 | Hitler secretly addresses leaders of the German armed forces, outlining the aims of the new Germany |
| February 27 | <i>Reichstag</i> fire |
| February 28 | Civil and basic constitutional rights in Germany suspended by the Reichstag |
| March 5 | <i>Reichstag</i> elections; Nazis win 44 percent of the vote |
| March 6 | Emergency degree, "For The Protection of the German People," restricts opposition press and information services |
| March 13 | Josef Goebbels becomes Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda |
| March 22 | First concentration camp opens at Dachau |
| March 24 | "Enabling Law" passed by Reichstag; used to establish dictatorship. Henceforth, Hitler ruler by decree |
| April 1 | Nationwide boycott of Jewish-owned businesses |
| April 7 | Jews excluded from government employment; includes teachers and university professors |
| April 26 | Gestapo (Geheime Staatspolizei) begins functioning as a state-sanctioned terror organization |
| May 2 | Dissolution of free trade unions |
| May 10 | Public burning of books written by Jews and opponents of Nazis |
| July 14 | Nazi party (NSDAP) declared the only political party in Germany |
| July 14 | "Law for the Prevention of Progeny with Hereditary Diseases" (sterilization law) enacted |
| July 20 | Concordat signed in Rome between the Vatican and the Third Reich |

- September 17 "Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden" (Reich Representation of German Jewry) established
- October 14 German withdrawal from the League of Nations
- December 1 Legal unity of German state and Nazi Party declared

1934

- January 26 Ten-year nonaggression pact signed with Poland
- January 30 "Law for the Reorganization of the Reich" strips German states of their sovereignty
- March 21 Hitler initiates the "*Arbeitsschlacht*" (Battle for Work), emphasizing the necessity of employing jobless citizens
- April 20 Himmler appointed head of the Gestapo
- April 22 Reinhard Heydrich becomes head of the Gestapo central office
- June 30 "Night of the Long Knives"; SA is purged
- July 1 Ernst Röhm, head of the SA, is murdered
- July 20 SS established as an organization independent from the SA
- August 2 Death of President von Hindenburg; Hitler declares himself Führer of the German state; armed forces are required to take a personal oath of loyalty to Hitler
- September 3-10 Nuremberg Party Day; filming of Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*

1935

- March 16 In violation of Treaty of Versailles, military conscription introduced; no response from other powers
- April 1 Jehovah's Witnesses banned from civil service jobs; many arrested throughout Germany
- April 30 Nazi decree forbids Jews from exhibiting the German flag
- July 16 Reich Interior Minister Frick instructs registrars not to solemnize any more "mixed marriages"
- September 15 Swastika becomes part of official flag of the Third Reich
- September 15 Nuremberg Laws announced at Nuremberg Party Days; Jews deprived of citizenship and racial laws promulgated
- October 1 German Propaganda Ministry, to avoid offending Arabs, explains that Nazism is anti-Jewish rather than antisemitic
- November 26 Prohibition of racially mixed marriages ("Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor") applied to "Gypsies" and persons of African heritage
- December 13 *Lebensborn* ("Spring of Life") organization founded by the SS

1936

- March 3 Jewish doctors no longer permitted to practice in government institutions in Germany
- March 7 Nazi army enters Rhineland in violation of Treaty of Versailles; no response from other powers

March 26	Jews no longer permitted to run or lease a pharmacy
June 17	Himmler appointed head of German police (<i>Reichsführer-SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei</i>)
June 26	Himmler merges the Gestapo and the Criminal Police into the Security Police under Heydrich
July 12	First arrest of German Gypsies; sent to Dachau
August 1	In anticipation of 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, antisemitic signs removed from most public places
August 28	Mass arrest of Jehovah's Witnesses
October 25	Rome-Berlin Axis agreement signed
1937	
March 14	Publication of the Papal Encyclical <i>Mit brennender Sorge</i> (<i>With Burning Sorrow</i>) denouncing Nazi persecution of the church and clergymen
July 19	Establishment of Buchenwald concentration camp (originally called Ettersberg); most early inmates are political prisoners
August 19	Jews in Germany may only patronize Jewish-owned bookstores, while owners are forbidden to sell works by Aryan authors
September 7	Hitler declares end of Treaty of Versailles
November 25	Political and military pact signed by Germany and Japan
1938	
March 13	Austria is annexed by Germany; "Anschluss"
July 6–15	Thirty-two countries at Evian Conference discuss refugee policies; most countries refuse to let in more Jewish refugees
August 17	All Jewish men in Germany required to add "Israel" to their names; all Jewish women required to add "Sarah"
Sept. 26– Oct. 8	Seventeen thousand Jews with Polish citizenship are expelled from the German Reich, and transported to the Polish border
September 29	Munich Agreement is signed
November 7	Shooting of Ernst vom Rath in Paris by Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jew, whose family was forcibly deported from Germany
November 9–10	"Kristallnacht," a nationwide pogrom; thirty thousand Jews sent to concentration camps (ten thousand to Buchenwald)
November 12	Fine of one billion reichsmarks levied on Jews of Germany
November 15	All Jewish children expelled from public schools
December 2–3	Gypsies in Germany required to register with police
1939	
January 24	Goring instructs Frick to establish a Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration; Heydrich appointed Director
January 30	In a speech to the Reichstag, Hitler threatens that another war will mean the "extermination of the Jewish race in Europe"

March 15	Germans invade Czechoslovakia; no immediate response from other powers
May 15	Ravensbruck concentration camp for women established
June	Jewish refugees aboard the S.S. St. Louis denied entry to the United States and Cuba; forced to return to Europe
August 23	Hitler-Stalin Pact signed
August 25	Polish-British treaty
September 1	Germany invades Poland; World War II begins
September 2	Stutthof concentration camp established in Poland
September 3	Britain and France declare war on Germany
September 21	Reinhard Heydrich (SS) orders establishment of Judenräte and concentration of Polish Jews
September 28	Partition of Poland between Germany and USSR
October	Hitler authorizes "euthanasia program" (T-4) in Germany; doctors to kill institutionalized mentally and physically handicapped
October 8	First Polish ghetto established in Piotrkow Trybunalski
November 8	Failure of the attempt of Johann Georg Elser to assassinate Hitler in Munich

1940

January	First gassing of mentally handicapped
February 8	Establishment of Lodz Ghetto ordered
April 9	Germans invade Denmark; Danes continue to govern
April 27	Himmler (SS) orders establishment of Auschwitz concentration camp (Auschwitz I); first prisoners, mostly Poles, arrive in early June; Rudolf Höss appointed commandant
April 30	Lodz Ghetto, first enclosed ghetto, is sealed
April-May	Twenty-five hundred Sinti and Roma deported from Reich to Poland
Spring	Germans conquer Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, and France
September 27	Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis is established
October 3	Anti-Jewish laws passed by Vichy government in France
November 15	Warsaw Ghetto is sealed

1941

January 10	Dutch Jews required to register with police
March	Himmler orders construction of camp at Birkenau (Auschwitz II); construction begins in October 1941 and continues until March 1942
March 3	Krakov Ghetto established
March 24	Germans invade North Africa
April 6	Germans invade Yugoslavia and Greece
April 24	Lublin Ghetto is sealed
June 22	Operation "Barbarossa"; Germans invade the USSR

June 23	Einsatzgruppen begin their mass murder of Jews, Gypsies, and communist leaders in the USSR
July 20	Minsk Ghetto established
July 24	Kishinev Ghetto established
July 31	Hermann Göring gives Reinhard Heydrich the authority to prepare a "final solution" to the "Jewish question" in Europe
August 1	Bialystok Ghetto established
August 24	"Euthanasia program" (T-4) in Germany officially halted, but unofficially continued; between seventy thousand and ninety-three thousand people had been murdered during the course of this program
September 3	The first experimental gassing of Soviet prisoners of war at Auschwitz
September 3–6	Two ghettos established at Vilna
September 19	German Jews required to wear yellow badge in public
September 29–30	At Babi Yar, 33,771 Kiev Jews murdered
Oct–Nov	First deportation of German and Austrian Jews to ghettos in Eastern Europe
October	Construction of Majdanek-Lublin extermination camp
October 15	Start of the mass deportation of Jews from the Reich to ghettos in Kovno, Lodz, Minsk, and Riga
November 1	Construction of Belzec extermination camp begins
November 24	Theresienstadt (Terezin) concentration camp established
Nov–Dec	Medical experiments begin at Buchenwald
December 7	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor
December 8	Gassing operations begin at Chelmo extermination camp; vans are used
December 11	Germany and Italy declare war on the United States
1942	
January	Deportations from Theresienstadt to ghettos (Riga, Warsaw, Lodz, Minsk, and Bialystok) in the East begin
January 20	Wannsee Conference; coordination of the "Final Solution" planned
February 8	First Jews from Salonika, Greece sent to Auschwitz
March 1	Construction of Sobibor extermination camp begins; Jews first killed there in May 1942
March 17	Killings begin at Belzec extermination camp
March 27	First Jews from France sent to Auschwitz
April 29	Dutch Jews ordered to wear yellow badge
April 30	Pinsk Ghetto established
June 7	Jews in occupied France ordered to wear yellow badge
July	Removal of non-Jewish population from Theresienstadt (Terezin) completed

July 15–16	First transports of Dutch Jews to Auschwitz
July 22	Treblinka extermination camp completed; by August 1943, 870,000 Jews murdered at Treblinka
July 22–Sept. 12	Mass deportations from Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka
July 28	Jewish fighting organization set up in Warsaw Ghetto
September	Completion of Monowitz (Auschwitz III), the I.G. Farben “Buna” synthetic oil and rubber factory
October	Deportations of Jews from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz and Treblinka begin
October 16	Over one thousand Roman Jews are deported to Auschwitz
November 24	Knowledge of the extermination of the Jews of Europe publicly announced by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise

1943

January 18–22	Jewish Fighting Organization offers armed resistance to deportation of five thousand Jews from Warsaw to Treblinka
February 2	Germans defeated at Battle of Stalingrad
February 26	First transport of Gypsies arrive at Auschwitz; Gypsy Camp established
March	Gustloff armaments works, a large factory producing aircraft parts, constructed at Buchenwald
April 19–May 16	Warsaw Ghetto uprising; Jews resist Germans’ effort to deport them to death camps
June 21	Himmler orders the complete and final liquidation of all ghettos in the Ostland
August 2	Inmate uprising at Treblinka extermination camp
August 16	Revolt in Bialystok Ghetto
October 2	Germans attempt round-up of Danish Jews; Danish people use boats to smuggle most Danish Jews (seventy-two hundred) to neutral Sweden
October 14	Inmate revolt at Sobibor extermination camp
October 20	United Nations War Crimes Commission established

1944

March 19	Germans occupy Hungary
April 7	Alfred Wetzler and Rudolf Vrba escape from Auschwitz with detailed information about the extermination of the Jews; their report, from Slovakia, reaches the free world in June
May 2	First transport of Hungarian Jews reach Auschwitz; by July 9, over 437,000 Hungarian Jews are sent to Auschwitz; most of them are gassed upon arrival
June 6	Allied invasion of Normandy
July 20	Unsuccessful attempt made to assassinate Hitler
July 23	International Red Cross visit to Theresienstadt (Terezin)

- July 24 Soviet army liberates Majdanek extermination camp
- August 2 Gypsy camp at Auschwitz destroyed by Nazis; three thousand Gypsies gassed
- October 6 Prisoners blow up one of the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp

1945

- January 17 Germans forcibly evacuate prisoners of Auschwitz on "death marches"
- January 27 Soviet army liberates Auschwitz
- April 11 Buchenwald "self-liberated" and liberated by the American army
- April 15 British army liberates Bergen-Belsen concentration camp
- April 28 Mussolini executed by Italian partisans
- April 29 American army liberates Dachau concentration camp
- April 30 Ravensbruck concentration camp liberated
- April 30 Hitler commits suicide in Berlin
- May 2 Soviet troops capture Berlin
- May 3 Germans hand over Theresienstadt (Terezin) to the International Red Cross
- May 5 American army liberates Mauthausen concentration camp
- May 7 Nazi Germany surrenders; end of World War II in Europe
- May 8 Theresienstadt (Terezin) liberated by Soviet troops
- August 14 Japan surrenders; end of World War II
- November 20 First major Nuremberg War Crimes Trials begin

1946

- October 1 Conclusion of first major Nuremberg Trials; twelve Nazis to be executed, three sentenced to life imprisonment, four receive various prison terms, and three are acquitted
- October 16 Execution of Nazi war criminals

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