
THE HOLOCAUST HISTORY I

APPENDIX

Timeline of the Holocaust

The Holocaust Timeline below can be split up into two general sections. The years 1933-1939 were “years of persecution.” The Jews of Germany were dishonored, degraded, and gradually expelled from German society. They became objects of ridicule and hatred; their assets were confiscated, and their basic rights revoked. Anti-Semitic laws spread to other European countries, as well. In the years 1939-1945 the anti-Jewish action switched to a new gear. These were “years of extermination.” Hitler prophesied doom for the Jews of Europe, and he was not slow to act towards the fulfillment of his own prediction. He instituted diabolical means, each one more ghastly than the other, to murder six million Jews of Europe, including 1.5 million children.

1933:

January 30	Adolf Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany
March 22	Dachau concentration camp opens
April 1	Boycott of Jewish shops and businesses
April 7	Laws for Reestablishment of the Civil Service bars Jews from holding civil service, university, and state positions
April 26	Gestapo established
May 10	Public burning of books written by Jews, political dissidents, and others not approved by the state
July 14	Law stripping East European Jewish immigrants of German citizenship

1934:

August 2	Hitler proclaims himself Führer und Reichskanzler (Leader and Reich Chancellor). Armed forces must now swear allegiance to him
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1935:

May 31	Jews barred from serving in the German armed forces
September 15	"Nuremberg Laws": anti-Jewish racial laws enacted; Jews no longer considered German citizens; Jews may not marry Aryans; nor may they fly the German flag
November 15	Germany defines a "Jew" as anyone with three Jewish grandparents or someone who has two Jewish grandparents and who identifies as a Jew

1936

March 3	Jewish doctors barred from practicing medicine in German institutions
March 7	Germans march into the Rhineland, previously demilitarized by the Versailles Treaty
June 17	Himmler appointed the Chief of German Police
July	Sachsenhausen concentration camp opens
October 25	Hitler and Mussolini form Rome-Berlin Axis

1937

July 15	Buchenwald concentration camp opens
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1938

March 13	Anschluss (incorporation of Austria): all anti-Semitic decrees immediately applied in Austria
April 26	Mandatory registration of all property held by Jews inside the Reich
July 6	Evian Conference held in Evian, France on the problem of Jewish refugees
August 1	Adolf Eichmann establishes the Office of Jewish Emigration in Vienna to increase the pace of forced emigration
August 3	Italy enacts sweeping anti-Semitic laws

September 30	Munich Conference: Great Britain and France agree to German occupation of the Sudetenland, previously western Czechoslovakia
October 5	Following request by Swiss authorities, Germans mark all Jewish passports with a large letter "J" to restrict Jews from immigrating to Switzerland
October 28	17,000 Polish Jews living in Germany expelled; Poles refuse to admit them; 8,000 are stranded in the frontier village of Zbaszyn
November 7	Assassination in Paris of German diplomat Ernst vom Rath by Herschel Grynszpan, the 17-year-old son of one of the deported Polish Jews. Rath dies on November 9, precipitating Kristallnacht
November 9-10	Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass): anti-Jewish pogrom in Germany, Austria, and the Sudetenland; 200 synagogues destroyed; 7,500 Jewish shops looted; 30,000 male Jews sent to concentration camps (Dachau, Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen)
November 12	Decree forcing all Jews to transfer retail businesses to Aryan hands
November 15	All Jewish pupils expelled from German schools
December 12	One-billion mark fine levied against German Jews for the destruction of property during Kristallnacht

1939

January 30	Hitler in Reichstag speech: if war erupts it will mean the Vernichtung (extermination) of European Jews
March 15	Germans occupy Czechoslovakia
August 23	Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed: non-aggression pact between Soviet Union and Germany
September 1	Beginning of World War II: Germany invades Poland. The Nazis do not hide their intentions concerning the Jews of Poland. In the words of Der Stürmer, published by Julius Streicher: "The Jewish people ought to be exterminated root and branch. Then the plague of pests would have disappeared in Poland at one stroke."
September 21	Heydrich issues directives to establish ghettos in German-occupied Poland

October 12	Germany begins deportation of Austrian and Czech Jews to Poland
October 28	First Polish ghetto established in Piotrków
November 23	Jews in German-occupied Poland forced to wear an arm band or yellow star

1940

January	Quote from Nazi newspaper, Der Stürmer, published by Julius Streicher - "...The time is near when a machine will go into motion which is going to prepare a grave for the world's criminal - Judah - from which there will be no resurrection."
April 9	Germans occupy Denmark and southern Norway
May 7	Lodz Ghetto (Litzmannstadt) sealed: 165,000 people in 1.6 square miles
May 10	Germany invades the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France
May 20	Concentration camp established at Auschwitz
June 22	France surrenders
August 8	Battle of Britain begins
September 27	Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis
November 16	Warsaw Ghetto sealed: ultimately contains 500,000 people; the Lodz Ghetto contains 230,000, and the Krakow Ghetto 70,000

1941

January	Quote from Nazi newspaper, Der Stürmer: "Now judgment has begun and it will reach its conclusion only when knowledge of the Jews has been erased from the earth."
January 21-26	Anti-Jewish riots in Romania, over 2,000 Jews murdered
February 1	German authorities begin rounding up Polish Jews for transfer to Warsaw Ghetto

March	Adolf Eichmann appointed head of the department for Jewish affairs of the Reich Security Main Office, Section IV B 4
April 6	Germany attacks Yugoslavia and Greece; occupation follows
June	Germany invades the Soviet Union; in Romania thousands of Jews killed in a pogrom by Romanian troops
July	Heydrich appointed by Göring to implement the "Final Solution." The Einsatzgruppen is charged with the mass murder of Jews in the occupied territories. Jews are forced to dig their own communal graves before being killed in mass shootings. Ghettos are established in Kovno, Minsk, Vitebsk and Zhitomer, with accompanying pogroms that kill thousands; Majdanek concentration camp, outside Lublin, Poland, becomes operational
September 28-29	34,000 Jews massacred at Babi Yar outside Kiev; in the following days 35,000 Jews from Odessa are shot
October	Establishment of Auschwitz II (Birkenau), under instruction of Himmler, for the extermination of Jews, Gypsies, Poles, Russians and others
November 30	Mass shootings of Latvian and German Jews in Riga
December 7	Japanese attack Pearl Harbor
December 8	Chelmno (Kulmhof) extermination camp begins operations. Jews taken there are placed in mobile gas vans and driven to a burial place while carbon monoxide from the engine exhaust is fed into the sealed rear compartment. By April, 1943, 340,000 Jews lose their lives in the deadly vans
December 11	United States declares war on Japan and Germany
December 12	The ship "Struma" leaves Romania for Palestine carrying 769 Jews but is later denied permission by British authorities to allow the passengers to disembark. In Feb. 1942, it sails back into the Black Sea where it is intercepted by a Soviet submarine and sunk as an "enemy target"

December 19 During a cabinet meeting, Hans Frank, Gauleiter of Poland, states: "Gentlemen, I must ask you to rid yourselves of all feeling of pity. We must annihilate the Jews wherever we find them and wherever it is possible in order to maintain there the structure of the Reich as a whole..."

1942

January Mass killings of Jews using Zyklon-B begin at Auschwitz-Birkenau in Bunker I (the red farmhouse), with bodies being buried in mass graves in a nearby meadow; in Wannsee Conference in Berlin, Heydrich outlines plan to murder Europe's Jews

March 17 Extermination begins in Belzec; by end of 1942, 600,000 Jews murdered; deportation of European Jews to killing centers begins: from Lublin to Belzec, from Slovakia and France to Auschwitz

May Extermination by gas begins in Sobibor killing center; by October 1943, 250,000 Jews murdered

June Jewish partisan units established in the forests of Byelorussia and the Baltic States

July 22 Germans establish Treblinka concentration camp in occupied Poland, east of Warsaw. The camp is fitted with two buildings containing 10 gas chambers, each holding 200 persons. Carbon monoxide gas is piped in from engines placed outside the chamber. Zyklon-B is later substituted. Bodies are burned in open pits

Summer Deportation of Jews from Belgium, Croatia, France, the Netherlands and Poland to killing centers. Armed resistance by Jews in ghettos of Kletzk, Kremenets, Lachva, Mir, and Tulin

September SS begins cashing in possessions and valuables of Jews from Auschwitz and Majdanek. German banknotes are sent to the Reich's Bank. Foreign currency, gold, jewels and other valuables are sent to SS Headquarters of the Economic Administration. Watches, clocks and pens are distributed to troops at the front. Clothing is distributed to German families. By Feb. 1943, over 800 boxcars of confiscated goods have left Auschwitz

Winter Deportation of Jews from Germany, Greece and Norway to killing centers; Jewish partisan movement organized in forests near Lublin

1943

January German 6th Army surrenders at Stalingrad

March Liquidation of Krakow ghetto

April 19	Warsaw Ghetto revolt begins as Germans attempt to liquidate 70,000 inhabitants; Jewish Underground fights Nazis until early June
June	Himmler orders the liquidation of all ghettos in Poland and the Soviet Union
Summer	Armed resistance by Jews in Bedzin, Bialystok, Czestochowa, Lvov, and Tarnów ghettos
Fall	Liquidation of large ghettos in Minsk, Vilna, and Riga
October 14	Massive escape from Sobibor as Jews and Soviet POWs break out, with 300 making it safely into nearby woods. Of those 300, fifty will survive. Exterminations then cease at Sobibor, after over 250,000 deaths. All traces of the death camp are then removed, and trees are planted
October- November	Rescue of Danish Jewry
November 4	Quote from Nazi newspaper, Der Stürmer: "It is actually true that the Jews have, so to speak, disappeared from Europe and that the Jewish 'Reservoir of the East' from which the Jewish pestilence has for centuries beset the peoples of Europe has ceased to exist. But the Führer of the German people at the beginning of the war prophesied what has now come to pass." The statement is published a day after Operation Harvest Festival kills 42,000 Jews in occupied Poland

1944

March 19	Germany occupies Hungary
May 15	Jews from Hungary arrive at Auschwitz. Eichmann arrives to personally oversee and speed up the extermination process. By May 24, an estimated 100,000 have been gassed. Between May 16 and May 31, the SS report collecting 88 pounds of gold and white metal from the teeth of those gassed. By the end of June, 381,661 persons – half of the Jews in Hungary – are sent to Auschwitz
June 6	D-Day: Allied invasion at Normandy
Spring/Summer	Red Army repels Nazi forces
July 20	Group of German officers attempt to assassinate Hitler

July 24	Russians liberate Majdanek
August	Anne Frank and family arrested by Gestapo in Amsterdam, then sent to Auschwitz. Anne and her sister Margot are later sent to Bergen-Belsen where Anne dies of typhus on March 15, 1945. The last Jewish ghetto, Lodz, is liquidated, and its 60,000 Jews sent to Auschwitz
October 7	Revolt by inmates at Auschwitz; one crematorium blown up
November	Last Jews deported from Terezin to Auschwitz
November 8	Beginning of death march of approximately 40,000 Jews in rain and snow from Budapest to Austria; this is followed by a second march ending at Mauthausen

1945

January 17	Evacuation of Auschwitz; beginning of death march; ten days later, Auschwitz is liberated by Soviet troops
January 25	Beginning of death march for inmates of Stutthof
April 6-10	Death march of inmates of Buchenwald
April	Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, and other camps (ending with Dachau in Germany), are liberated; Hitler commits suicide
May 8	V-E Day: Germany surrenders; end of the Third Reich
August 6	Bombing of Hiroshima
August 9	Bombing of Nagasaki
August 15	V-J Day: Victory over Japan proclaimed.
September 2	Japan surrenders; end of World War II

NUMBERS OF JEWS MURDERED BY COUNTRY

Estimates by Jacob Lestchinsky, American Jewish Congress, 1946
(From Nora Levin, *The Holocaust*, Shoken Books, p. 718)

Country:	Jewish Population Sept. 1939:	Number of Jews Murdered:
Poland	3,250,0000	2,850,000
USSR (Occupied Area)	2,100,000	1,500,000
Romania	850,000	425,000
Hungary	400,000	200,000
Czechoslovakia	315,000	240,000
France	300,000	90,000*
Germany	193,000	110,000**
Austria	90,000	45,000
Lithuania	150,000	130,000
Holland	150,000	105,000
Latvia	95,000	80,000
Belgium*	90,000	40,000
Yugoslavia	75,000	55,000
Greece	75,000	60,000
Italy	57,000	15,000
Bulgaria	50,000	7,000
Denmark, Estonia, Norway, Luxembourg, Danzig	15,000	5,000
Totals	8,225,000	5,957,000

* Including refugees

**Not including Jewish victims killed between 1933 and 1939, estimated at between 30,000 and 40,000