

# PART V

## HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST

### A chronological outline (1933–45)

**1933**

**30 January**

Hitler appointed Chancellor. In the following weeks and months the Nazis assume total control of German state, abolishing its federalist structure, dismantling democratic government and outlawing political parties and trades unions.

**20 March**

Dachau concentration camp set up on Himmler's orders. First inmates include communists, socialists, homosexuals and Jews.

**1 April**

Nazi boycott of Jewish businesses and professions accompanied by a wave of terror.

**7 April**

'Restoration of the Professional Civil Service Act' dismisses Jews and those considered politically undesirable from the civil service.

**22 April**

Jews disqualified from working in hospitals.

**25 April**

'Law against the Overcrowding of German Schools' begins the elimination of Jewish teachers and pupils from German schools system.

**10 May**

Public book-burning in Berlin organized by Goebbels targets 'Jewish' books and other books considered 'degenerate' by the Nazis.

**August**

'Ha'avara' (transfer) agreement between German Ministry of Economics and Zionist Organization facilitates large-scale emigration of Jews from Germany to Palestine.

**29 September**

Hereditary farm law bans Jews from ownership of land. On the same day a further law bans Jews from all aspects of German cultural and sporting life.

**1934**

**1 May**

Nazi propaganda weekly *Der Stürmer* revives ritual murder accusation against Jews.

**30 June**

Murder of Röhm and other SA leaders in the 'Night of the Long Knives'.

**2 August**

Death of President Hindenburg. Hitler declares himself Führer.

**1935**

**15 September**

Hitler uses the occasion of the Nazi rally in Nuremberg to issue the Nuremberg Laws: (i) 'Reich Citizenship Law' which removes Jewish equality before the law; and (ii) 'Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour' which prohibits marriage or sexual relations between Jews and non-Jews.

<b>1 November</b>	Supplement to the ‘Reich Citizenship Law’ disqualifies Jews from German citizenship. Thirteen days later a further supplement defines categories of ‘Mischling’ or ‘part Jews’.
<b>1936</b>	
<b>March</b>	Spate of anti- Jewish pogroms in Poland, abetted by an inflammatory speech by Polish Cardinal Hlond against Jewish ‘usury, fraud and white slavery’.
<b>August</b>	Anti-Jewish discriminatory measures eased during Olympic Games in Berlin, but re-applied and extended after their conclusion to cover all areas of economic and social activity.
<b>1937</b>	
<b>19 July</b>	Buchenwald concentration camp established.
<b>1938</b>	
<b>12 March</b>	Nazi troops enter Vienna, effecting Austrian <i>Anschluss</i> with Germany. Rash of antisemitic incidents follow. German anti -Jewish laws swiftly applied to new province. Austrian Jews flee in their thousands.
<b>28 March</b>	Personal property of German Jews over 5,000 marks in value to be officially registered—first of a series of regulations aimed at registering all Jewish-owned domestic and foreign property, as a prelude to confiscation by the state.
<b>4 May</b>	Hungarian government introduces <i>numerus clausus</i> restricting Jewish entry into liberal professions, administration, commerce and industry.
<b>14 June</b>	All Jewish firms in Germany to be registered with the Ministry of Economics.
<b>6–15 July</b>	International conference held at Evian in France discusses and fails to find solution to Jewish refugee problem precipitated by the <i>Anschluss</i> .
<b>25 July</b>	Licences of Jewish doctors cancelled.
<b>August</b>	Eichmann opens a Vienna office for Jewish emigration.
<b>17 August</b>	Jewish women have to add ‘Sarah’ and Jewish men ‘Israel’ to their first names for official purposes.
<b>September–October</b>	Munich crisis culminates in Anglo-French decision to cede Czech Sudetenland to the Germans. Nazi occupation the following month leads to mass flight of Jews from region.
<b>27 September</b>	Licences of Jewish lawyers cancelled.
<b>5 October</b>	Following confiscation of Jewish passports, new passports to Jews now issued with suffix ‘J’. This followed a Swiss suggestion to make it easier for the Swiss border police to recognize which refugees seeking asylum were political refugees to be admitted, or Jews to be denied permission to entry.
<b>28 October</b>	17,000 Polish-born Jews living in Germany expelled.
<b>7 November</b>	Herschl Grynszpan assassinates German official in Paris in response to the expulsion of his parents.
<b>9–10 November</b>	Kristallnacht, the Nazi response to the assassination. Night-long campaign of violence and physical destruction against synagogues and shops leaves 91 dead. Jews held responsible by Nazis; c. 25,000 sent to concentration camps. 1,000 million marks required of Jews in ‘reparations’.

<b>12 November</b>	Göring convenes conference of Nazi officials to plan the complete 'Aryanization' of Jewish businesses in Germany.
<b>16 November</b>	Decree forbids Jewish children to attend German schools. From now on they may only attend Jewish schools.
<b>1939</b>	
<b>24 January</b>	Heydrich assigned by Göring to remove all Jews from Reich through emigration. The <i>Reichsvertretung</i> , the Jewish representative organization in Nazi Germany, reformed as the <i>Reichsvereinigung</i> (State Association) under Nazi supervision for this purpose.
<b>30 January</b>	Hitler delivers Reichstag speech in which he threatens that if international Jewry plunge the world into war ( <i>sic</i> ), the Jews of Europe will be annihilated.
<b>21 February</b>	Decree requires Jews to surrender all gold and silver in their possession.
<b>15 March</b>	German troops enter Prague, absorbing formerly Czech provinces of Bohemia and Moravia into Greater Germany. Leads to mass flight of Czech Jews. Eichmann sets up a Jewish emigration office in Prague. Slovakia
<b>21 March</b>	becomes independent ally of Nazi Germany. German troops occupy Lithuanian-administered Memel. Jewish population flees.
<b>30 April</b>	Revocation of tenancy protection for Jews paves way for their relocation in 'communal Jewish houses'.
<b>May</b>	British government White Paper sets a limit for entry of 75,000 Jewish refugees into Palestine over following five years.
<b>22 August</b>	Hitler's speech to generals urges liquidation of Poles in forthcoming war in order to gain <i>Lebensraum</i> for Germany.
<b>23 August</b>	Non-aggression Pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, which includes secret conditions for the division of Eastern Europe, prepares the way for the Nazi attack on Poland.
<b>1 September</b>	Nazi invasion of Poland accompanied by accelerating violence against both Poles and Jews. <i>Einsatzgruppen</i> begin executions of Poles. German Jews placed under curfew and have radio sets confiscated.
<b>3 September</b>	Britain and France declare war on Germany.
<b>21 September</b>	Beginning of dissolution of traditional Polish Jewish communities. Parallel movement towards enforced resettlement of Jews in ghettos. Order for expulsion of all Jews and Gypsies from areas of Poland annexed to Greater Germany.
<b>28 September</b>	Total defeat of Poland leads to partition between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union under terms of Non-aggression Pact.
<b>October</b>	Euthanasia programme begins, leading to the deaths of over 70,000 mentally and physically disabled people by August 1941.
<b>23 November</b>	All Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe required to wear yellow Star of David.
<b>28 November</b>	Jewish Councils ( <i>Judenräte</i> ) ordered into existence in German-occupied Poland.
<b>12 December</b>	Labour camps set up throughout German-occupied Poland. All Jewish males between 14 and 60 required for forced labour.
<b>1940</b>	
<b>9 April</b>	German blitzkrieg in the west begins.

<b>1 May</b>	The Lodz Ghetto, containing 160,000 Jews and with Chaim Rumkowski at its head, is sealed off from outside world.
<b>22 June</b>	France defeated. Petain sues for peace leading to creation of collaborative Vichy government in the south.
<b>July</b>	German Foreign Office proposes that European Jews be deported to French Madagascar.
<b>October</b>	Deportations into Warsaw Ghetto begin. Wall is built to isolate Jews from rest of city. By early 1941, 400,000 are confined here in rapidly deteriorating conditions.
<b>3 October</b>	Vichy government debars Jews from public offices and most areas of French economic life, and a day later authorizes internment of foreign Jews. Similar anti-Jewish legislation enacted by Antonescu regime in Rumania.
<b>1941</b>	
<b>January</b>	Major anti-Jewish pogrom by Rumanian fascist Iron Guard in Bucharest.
<b>February</b>	Deportations of several hundred Dutch Jews to Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen concentration camps in reprisal for the self-defence killing of a Dutch Nazi. Two-day general strike in Amsterdam in support of Jews is crushed.
<b>1 March</b>	Himmler sets in motion plans for expansion of Auschwitz complex.
<b>6 April</b>	German invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece triggers pogroms against Jews and Serbs, carried out by pro-Nazi militia in Croatia.
<b>May</b>	Beginning of internment of foreign-born Jews in Paris.
<b>4 June</b>	German army directive to troops about to invade the Soviet Union to eliminate all resistance. Jews are included in this category. Commissar Order two days later spells out that all Soviet officials are to be liquidated.
<b>22 June</b>	Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union by Nazi Germany and her Hungarian, Rumanian and Finnish allies. Precipitates local massacres of Jews in Baltic States and the western Ukraine. Four commandos of <i>Einsatzgruppen</i> begin mass slaughter of Jews, Gypsies and Soviet officials.
<b>22 July</b>	Vichy government commences expropriation of French Jewish businesses.
<b>31 July</b>	Heydrich receives orders from Göring, on Hitler's instructions, to begin preparations for the 'intended Final Solution of the Jewish Question'.
<b>August</b>	Rumanians begin expelling Jews from Bessarabia and Bukovina, which they had re-occupied on Operation Barbarossa, into Transnistria across the river Dneister. Thousands perish on death marches.
<b>23 August</b>	Hitler officially calls off euthanasia programme after Bishop von Galen's denunciatory sermon on the subject.
<b>26 August</b>	Bloody massacre of Hungarian Jewish refugees by SS units and Ukrainian militia at Kamenets Podolsk in the Ukraine. Mass executions throughout Nazi-occupied Soviet regions intensify.
<b>September</b>	Zyclon B Gas tested for the first time at Auschwitz on Soviet prisoners of war. Construction of killing centre at Birkenau (adjacent to existing Auschwitz complex) begins.
<b>6 September</b>	Vilna Jews ghettoized.

<b>29–30 September</b>	Bloodbath in Babi Yar gorge, near the Ukrainian capital of Kiev. Jews and Gypsies butchered by SS units and Ukrainian militia.
<b>14 October</b>	Mass deportations of Jews from Greater Germany to the east begins. Thousands are shot on arrival.
<b>23 October</b>	Nazi emigration policy towards Jews officially ends. No more Jews allowed to leave the Reich or Nazi sphere of influence. Concurrently Rumanian troops perpetrate horrendous massacre of Jews in Black Sea port of Odessa.
<b>24 November</b>	New ‘model’ ghetto created at Theresienstadt for thousands of Central European Jews.
<b>30 November</b>	Executions of Riga Jews in the Rumbuli forest.
<b>December</b>	Generalplan Ost (general plan for the East), drawn up under Himmler’s directions, proposes deportation of 31 million non-Germans in conquered east to make <i>Lebensraum</i> for German colonists.
<b>5 December</b>	Soviet counter-offensive in front of Moscow signals failure of Operation Barbarossa.
<b>8 December</b>	Gas killings of Jews and Gypsies in mobile vans begin in Chelmno, western Poland.
<b>11 December 1942</b>	Following Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour, Germany declares war on the USA.
<b>January</b>	Jewish resistance and partisan groups organized in Vilna and Kovno.
<b>20 January</b>	The Wannsee Conference in Berlin. Nazi officials agree plans for the coordination of the ‘Final Solution’.
<b>24 February</b>	The ship <i>Struma</i> , carrying Jewish refugees from Rumania, having been refused permission to sail to British-controlled Palestine is sunk in the Black Sea. All bar one passenger are drowned.
<b>16 March</b>	Operation Reinhard, the liquidation of Polish Jewry, begins. First transports to Belzec, Sobibor, Majdanek and Treblinka death camps.
<b>24 March</b>	First deportations of Jews to Auschwitz, from Slovakia. Followed four days later by first Jewish refugees from France.
<b>2 June</b>	BBC broadcasts extracts from a report smuggled out of Poland by the Jewish socialist Bund. It tells of extermination of 700,000 Jews at Chelmno and elsewhere.
<b>9 June</b>	Mobile gas van killings begin in Riga, Latvia.
<b>10 June</b>	Czech village of Lidice liquidated in revenge for the assassination of SS chief Heydrich. Additional round-ups of Czechs in Prague and Jews in Berlin.
<b>14 July</b>	Mass deportation of Dutch Jews to Auschwitz begins, followed shortly afterwards by Jews from Belgium and Luxembourg.
<b>22 July</b>	Deportation of Warsaw Jews to Treblinka death camp begins.
<b>28 July</b>	Underground Jewish Combat Organization formed in Warsaw Ghetto.
<b>8 August</b>	Gerhardt Riegner, the World Jewish Congress representative in Geneva, sends telegram to British and American governments with information about the ‘Final Solution’.
<b>15 October</b>	Horrendous slaughter of Jews by SS in Brest-Litovsk, Soviet Russia.

<b>25 October</b>	Deportation of Norwegian Jews to Auschwitz begins, despite resistance and escape routes provided by many Norwegians.
<b>2 November</b>	Start of major round-up of all Jews in Bialystok region of Poland. 170,000 killed in one week.
<b>4 November</b>	Tide of war turns with British victory at El Alamein, followed on 19 November by Russian counter-offensive at Stalingrad.
<b>27 November</b>	Mass expulsion of Poles from Zamosc region of Poland to provide ' <i>lebensraum</i> ' for Germans.
<b>16 November</b>	Deportations of German Gypsies to Auschwitz begins.
<b>17 November</b>	Inter-Allied declaration denounces murder of European Jewry and states that those responsible will be punished.
<b>1943</b>	
<b>January</b>	Jewish transport to Treblinka attacks guards on arrival.
<b>8 March</b>	Deportations of Greek Jews to Treblinka (and later Auschwitz) begins.
<b>14 March</b>	Cracow Ghetto liquidated.
<b>17 March</b>	Bulgarian Parliament vetoes proposed deportation of Bulgarian Jews to the death camps.
<b>5 April</b>	Massacres of Lithuanian Jews in Ponary woods.
<b>19 April</b>	Warsaw Ghetto uprising begins as SS finalizes plans for its complete liquidation. At the same time, Bermuda Conference of American and British officials fails to implement plans for rescue of European Jewry or to provide assistance for European refugees.
<b>12 May</b>	In despair at his failure to gain Allied military assistance for the uprising, Bundist leader Shmuel Zygielboym commits suicide in London. Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto is completed.
<b>June</b>	Himmler's Unit 1005 slave labour battalions begin work exhuming corpses from death camps and execution sites in order to obliterate evidence of the Holocaust.
<b>21 June</b>	Lwow Ghetto liquidated.
<b>1 July</b>	Final order of Reich Citizenship Act removes all legal protection from the Jews of Germany.
<b>2 August</b>	Attempted mass revolt and break-out from Treblinka crushed.
<b>16 August</b>	Bialystok Ghetto liquidated. Attempted Jewish revolt is put down.
<b>September-October</b>	Danes sabotage Nazi deportation plans for Danish Jews, most of whom are ferried to safety in neutral Sweden.
<b>23 September</b>	Vilna Ghetto liquidated.
<b>14 October</b>	Partial break-out of Jews and Soviet prisoners of war from Sobibor.
<b>16 October</b>	Deportation of Italian Jews to Auschwitz begins following Nazi occupation of northern Italy.
<b>1944</b>	
<b>22 January</b>	United States President Roosevelt sets up War Refugees Board to assist relief and rescue efforts.
<b>19 March</b>	Nazis occupy Hungary following fears that the Hungarian regime is about to sue for peace with the Allies. Eichmann arrives to supervise anti-Jewish measures.

<b>May</b>	Proposals from Jewish leaders to Allies that they bomb railway lines leading to Auschwitz.
<b>15 May</b>	Deportations of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz begins and quickly accelerates as Red Army breaks into eastern Hungary.
<b>6 June</b>	Allies open 'Second Front' with Normandy landings.
<b>8 June</b>	International pressure from Sweden, the Red Cross, the Vatican and the Allies leads to Hungarian government halting deportations. Eichmann concurrently involved in negotiations with Jewish leaders, offering to exchange lives of Hungarian Jews for war materials.
<b>20 July</b>	Bomb plot to assassinate Hitler fails.
<b>23 July</b>	Red Army advance liberates Majdanek concentration camp in Poland coinciding with large-scale German evacuations of death camp inmates to Dachau, Bergen-Belsen and Stutthof.
<b>6 August</b>	70,000 remaining Jews in Lodz, including the Judenrat leader Chaim Rumkowski, are deported to Auschwitz (except for several hundred Jews who are mysteriously left behind).
<b>7 October</b>	Inmates blow up one of the four Auschwitz crematoria in abortive and suicidal revolt—conducted by Jewish inmates against express direction of general prisoner underground.
<b>15 October</b>	The Arrow Cross, the Hungarian fascist party, stages successful coup in Budapest in the Nazi interest.
<b>2 November</b>	Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg intervenes to save 4,000 Budapest Jews as SS and Arrow Cross begin six-day orgy of mass murder.
<b>28 November 1945</b>	Last gassings in Auschwitz. Himmler orders gas chambers to be destroyed.
<b>January</b>	Death marches of Jewish and non-Jewish slave labour from east towards Germany at their height.
<b>28 January</b>	Auschwitz-Birkenau complex liberated by Red Army.
<b>March-April</b>	Himmler in series of secret negotiations with Swedish Red Cross and with Jewish World Congress to stop the continuing concentration camp killings.
<b>11 April</b>	Buchenwald liberated by American troops.
<b>15 April</b>	British troops liberate Bergen-Belsen. Reality of Nazi atrocities send shock waves throughout the world. Simultaneously, SS death march evacuations continue from camps still under Nazi control.
<b>25 April</b>	Soviet and American forces meet on the Elbe. Red Army engages German army remnants in Berlin.
<b>28 April</b>	Dachau liberated.
<b>30 April</b>	Hitler commits suicide in his Berlin bunker, after dictating a last political testament in which he blames international Jewry for Germany's downfall.
<b>2 May</b>	Berlin captured by Red Army.
<b>1-5 May</b>	Continuing death marches in diminishing Nazi enclave.

- 8 May** Nazi Germany surrenders unconditionally to Allies. War in Europe ends but many liberated camp survivors continue to die from malnutrition, sickness and exhaustion.

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