

*This month, Classroom Focus features two Holocaust-related lessons by Paul Wieser, on the U.S. Press and the Holocaust, and on Anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1942. Also included are maps by George F. McCleary, Jr., Darin T. Grauberger, and Michael G. Noll, and a chronology of the Holocaust by Stephen Feinberg.*

## The American Press and the Holocaust

PAUL WIESER

The treatment accorded by the American press to the destruction of the Jews during World War II can be best described as a "sidebar," the name given by journalists to a story that is ancillary to the main story. The press coverage of the Nazi persecution of the Jews paralleled U.S. government policy on refugee rescue, which was not treated as an issue of primary importance. The behavior of the press reflected the United States' attitude of "rescue through victory." It was relatively rare for more than the isolated paper to call for action to assist Jews.

Information about the "Final Solution" and the systematic destruction of the Jews, was available from 1942, long before the end of the war. In spite of Nazi efforts to carry out mass murder in isolated areas and to swear participants to secrecy, executioners themselves talked, and occasional witnesses to mass shootings even more so. Underground organizations, particularly Jewish and Polish, made great efforts to let the world know what was happening and what would occur if the Nazis were not halted. The information was sometimes partial and even contradictory, but there were enough stories from enough sources that the outside world should have been able to discern a pattern by 1942. The Nazi regime was doing what Hitler had promised.

Practically no aspect of the Holocaust remained unknown by 1945. Some of the information about specific killings, and about hundreds of thousands of deaths, was published in the Western press, although not in complete or dramatic form in most of the major American newspapers, with facts often understated or qualified by cautious editors. Significant information was often buried on the inside pages of newspapers. For instance, the June 1942 announcement that two million Jews had been killed as

a result of planned annihilation was placed at the bottom of page 6 of the *Chicago Tribune* and given thirteen lines. The story was treated similarly by other major papers. Many readers probably missed this story and similar ones published well inside the paper. Those readers who did see it had cause to assume that the editors did not really believe it; had they believed it, a reader might have assumed, they would have accorded it more prominent placement.

From the beginning of the Nazi regime, the press in the U.S. generally failed to take Hitler's prewar and, in certain cases, wartime threats against Jews seriously. Unfortunately, after the outbreak of World War II, all too many people compared reports of the Nazi treatment of Jews to stories about German atrocities in occupied Belgium and northern France during World War I, claims that turned out after the war to have been invented by Allied propagandists. As a result, there was much skepticism about reports of Nazi mass killings. Another factor was that a great many Europeans were suffering under brutal Nazi occupation, and it was not always easy to see that the Nazi had different policies for different peoples. When Jews pressed outsiders to recognize the growing tragedy for their people, unsympathetic observers could perceive this as a request for special favors from the Allies.

The stakes of the military conflict were so high that many Allied government officials and citizens felt compelled to focus all efforts and concern on that task. They paid little attention to anything else that might complicate winning the war as quickly as possible. Finally and perhaps most importantly, there was the psychological barrier: what the Nazis were doing was not only logical and unprecedented, but literally inconceivable to many.

As 1942 went on, the mass killings of

Jews received some attention in U.S. newspapers. Until the second half of 1942, the outside world knew little about the gas chambers and extermination camps. There were no satellites to provide aerial photographs, no portable TV cameras yet in existence. But there were a few people willing to risk their lives to unveil the Final Solution.

One person willing to take a risk was Jan Karski, a courier from the Polish underground to the Polish government-in-exile in London. Karski had been inside the Warsaw Ghetto in August 1942 in the midst of the deportations, and in September inside Belzec, one of the six death camps in Poland. Karski's vivid report to the Polish government-in-exile had some impact. On December 10, the Polish government-in-exile issued a note to the Allied governments describing in detail the process of destruction being utilized by the Germans and of their intent to exterminate all the Jews of Poland. On December 17, the United States, Great Britain, and ten Allied governments-in-exile issued a joint declaration denouncing Nazi implementation of "Hitler's oft-repeated intention to exterminate the Jewish people in Europe." This statement was the first time the United States government had made or participated in a declaration about Nazi mass killings of Jews.

By the end of the year, the six extermination camps had streamlined and accelerated the Final Solution to the point where it had already claimed perhaps more than three million Jews. Scattered Jewish resistance inside and outside the ghettos had begun, but resistance organizers often had limited support from the Jewish community, very few arms, and limited or poor relations with non-Jewish partisans. And the governments of the United States and Great Britain were barely ready to recognize what was happening, and not prepared to do much about it.

By mid-1943 the news of the persecution of the Jews was regarded as an "old story," and therefore most newspapers carried it on their inside pages.

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#### Lesson Plan

*Title:* The American Press and the Holocaust

*Goal:* Through the reading and study of newspapers, students will come to a realization of the importance of primary sources to historical research. Specifically, they will attempt to determine the extent of knowledge the American public could have had about the destruction of European Jewry from simply reading the daily American newspapers.

*Objectives:* Upon completion of this unit of study the students will be able to do the following:

1. Read and analyze newspaper accounts of Holocaust-related items.
2. Compare and contrast the physical placement of Holocaust-related news items to other news items.
3. Compare and evaluate, in terms of importance, articles unrelated to the Holocaust to Holocaust-related items that appeared together on the same page of a particular daily newspaper.
4. Compare and evaluate, in terms of importance, front page news articles to Holocaust-related articles not appearing on the front page.
5. Compare and analyze their local newspaper coverage of the Holocaust to national treatment of these events, if materials are available at a local newspaper office.

*Procedure:* The following is written specifically for a class working in

groups. However this activity can easily be adapted for students working independently.

Students will be working with copies of pages from newspapers. The newspaper editions recommended for this lesson are the editions of *The New York Times*, and in one case, the *New York Herald Tribune*, listed below. (Editions of the *Times* and *Tribune* are on microfilm in most university libraries and many local libraries. Teachers may, however, wish to adapt the lesson by using other sources, including local newspapers.) All these editions contain Holocaust-related news articles. Some appear on the front pages, and some on inside pages.

Once the teacher has identified the makeup of the student groups, each group will be given a set of newspaper articles. The recommended sources are the *Times* editions of July 2, 1942 (pp. 1 & 6); July 23, 1942 (pp. 1 & 6); July 29, 1942 (pp. 1 & 7); and November 25, 1942 (pp. 1 & 7). The article from the *Tribune* dates from the November 25, 1942 edition, pages 1 & 10. These editions contain several items of interest. A front-page article in the *Times* (July 2), for example, reported the governor of New York giving up tennis and donating his playing shoes to the scrap rubber drive, while a story about the killing of 700,000 Jews appeared on page 6. A story in the same newspaper (July 23) on page 6 had a headline about 17,000 people being killed by the Nazis, while the text of the article referred not only to 17,000 persons being "murdered" since the invasion of Austria, but also to 53,000 Jews reported to have died in Poland "from starvation, exposure or torture." The November issues of both newspapers report a statement by Rabbi Stephen Wise, chairman of the World Jewish Congress, that he had learned from sources confirmed by the State Department that 2 million Jews in Europe had been killed in an extermination campaign. The *Tribune* carried the story on page 1, the *Times* only on page 10.

Along with the articles the students will also receive a set of instructions (attached) to guide them through the successful completion of the assignment.

Upon completion of the assignment, which may take two class periods,

each group will report their findings to the class. A teacher-led discussion may then focus on the following points:

- Do you think the American people, from simply reading the daily newspaper, had enough information so as to realize the Holocaust was actually taking place?
- Why did news of the Holocaust seldom appear on the front pages?
- How did local coverage differ from national coverage?

#### Student Instructions

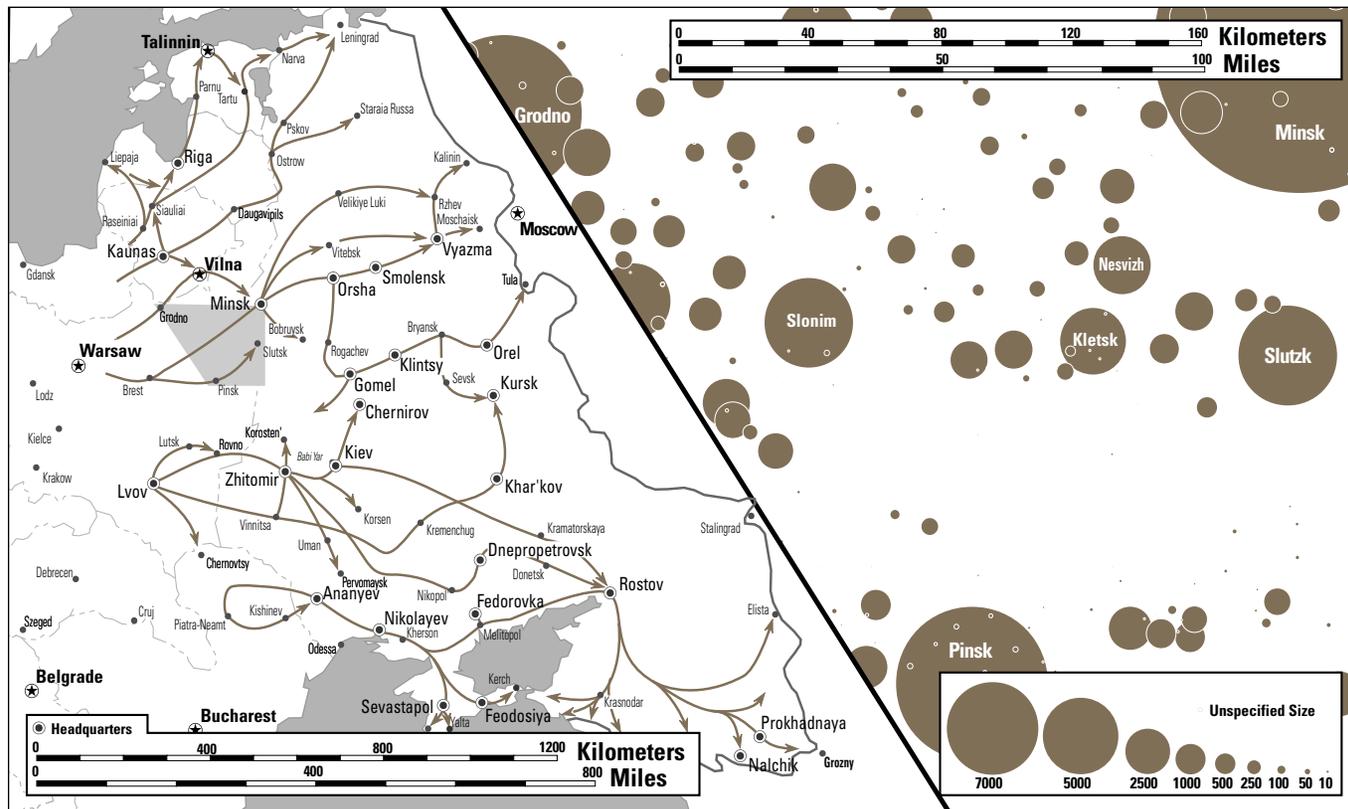
You have received copies of specific pages from a 1942 edition of *The New York Times* and/or the *New York Herald Tribune*. All contain Holocaust-related news items. Follow the directions below and answer the questions as they appear.

1. Read through the pages you have been given and locate any news items that relate to the Holocaust. Briefly summarize these articles.
2. On what pages did you find news of the Holocaust? What other kinds of articles appeared on that page? What message does this convey to you about how newspaper editors/publishers perceived the Holocaust?
3. For those dealing with the *Times* and *Tribune* editions of Nov. 25, 1942, what differences in coverage did you note? What do you think is responsible for such obvious differences?
4. Locate a copy of your local daily newspaper that corresponds to the date of the edition of *The New York Times* or *Tribune* with which you are working. Was there any news of the Holocaust in your local newspaper? If so, on what page did it appear? Briefly summarize the article. Compare and contrast the coverage in your local newspaper(s) with that of *The New York Times* and *Tribune*. What do you make of the differences?

*Paul Wieser is the Social Studies Coordinator for the Pendergast School District in Phoenix, AZ. He taught social studies at the junior high level for 16 years. He serves as chairman of the education committee for the Phoenix Holocaust Survivors' Association, and is a member of the Anti-Defamation League's education committee in Arizona.*

## The Path of the Einsatzgruppen

GEORGE F. MCCLEARY, JR., DARIN T. GRAUBERGER, MICHAEL G. NOLL



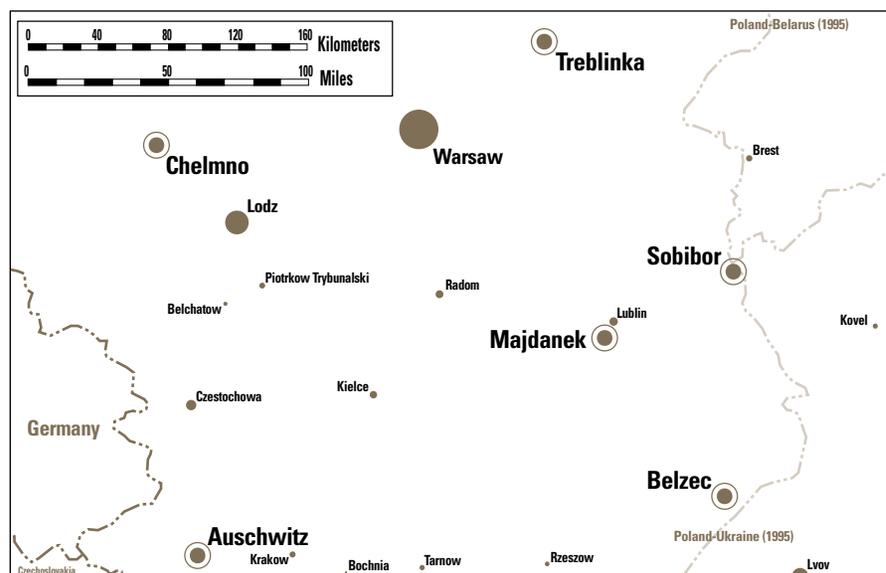
The *Einsatzgruppen*, mobile killing units of the SS, followed the army as the German military assault advanced eastward across the Soviet Union in 1941. From June 1941 to December 1942, the *Einsatzgruppen* murdered more than 900,000 Jews and several hundred thousand non-Jewish Russians.

The left-hand map traces the paths of the four mobile killing squads as they established headquarters at different sites and moved into the adjacent countryside eliminating Jewish communities. The map at the right shows destroyed

communities in the area south and west of Minsk. Useful sources include: Gary Mokotoff and Sallyann Amdur Sack, *Where Once We Walked: A Guide to the Jewish Communities Destroyed in the Holocaust* (Teaneck, NJ: Avotaynu, 1991), which has been used to compile the destroyed communities map; Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985); and Helmut Krausnick and Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm, *Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges: Die Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD, 1938-42* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981), from which the data for the left-hand map have been obtained.

## The Death Camps

GEORGE F. MCCLEARY, JR



This map shows the six extermination camps and the adjacent ghettos in wartime Poland (the eastern portion is now in Belarus and Ukraine). Circles representing the ghettos are proportional to their population size, from 3,500 in Bochnia to 205,000 in Lodz and 500,000 in Warsaw. The earliest, Piotrkow Trybunalski (population 18,000) was founded in October 1939 (and liquidated in October 1942). The last of these ghettos to be liquidated was Lodz, in May 1944. Data are from Israel Gutman (editor-in-chief), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (New York: Macmillan, 1990).

*George F. McCleary, Jr. is Associate Professor of Geography at the University of Kansas, where he teaches cartography. His maps and papers have appeared in many publications. Darin T. Graubeger is a freelance cartographer and a co-owner of Stellar Cartography. He earned his B.G.S. in Cartography at the University of Kansas. Michael G. Noll is a Ph.D. candidate in Cultural Geography at the University of Kansas. He is studying indigenous people and conservation issues in Central America.*

# Anti-Semitism: A Warrant for Genocide

PAUL WIESER

**Goal of this lesson plan:** Students will arrive at an understanding and appreciation of the breadth and scope of German anti-Semitic policy. Students will develop an empathy for the situation German Jewry found itself in after the rise of National Socialism in 1933. Hopefully, they will be able to identify with young Jews their own age, who were forced to tiptoe their way through a minefield of restrictive regulations.

**Objectives:** Upon completion of this unit of study the students will be able to do the following:

1. List the Nazi anti-Semitic regulations from year-to-year.
2. By developing a chart, categorize the different types of anti-Semitic measures.
3. In writing, indicate and provide a rationale as to which measures would have had the greatest effect on Jewish youth.
4. List and analyze the reasons for such an enormous body of anti-Semitic legislation.
5. Identify and describe those anti-Semitic measures that they feel would have had the greatest negative impact on their lives had they been a Jewish teenager growing up in Nazi Germany.

**Procedure:** The following can be used in group situations or with students working independently. Students will be working with four lists which contain some of the anti-Semitic measures implemented by the National Socialist government. The lists are organized in the following groupings: 1933-37, 1938, 1939-1940, and 1941-1942. Students will be working with one list at a time beginning with 1933-37 and moving chronologically through 1942. After completing each list, the students respond to the questions and complete a chart activity. At the end of each list in the assignment, before moving on to the next list, the teacher may choose to hold a class discussion. At the time the students finish all four lists, a teacher-led discussion should take place. Such a discussion might focus on the following points:

- Is there any reason why the Germans seemingly “took their time” in dealing with their Jewish neighbors? Did not the Nazis have the authority and wherewithal to quickly find a solution to the “Jewish Question?”
- In 1938 what options, if any, were open to Jewish youth?
- The Jewish people have had a long history of persecution and suffering. Do you think this history and the fact that they always seemed to survive had any effect on the way the German Jews viewed Nazi anti-Semitism and their responses to it?

## Class Activities

1. After reading through each list, students should indicate which of the measures (there could be more than one) they consider to be the most se-

### List 1: German Jewry & Nazi Anti-Semitic Legislation, 1933-37

1933

*April 1:* A one-day boycott of all Jewish businesses.

*April 7:* Most Jews holding civil service (government) jobs are forced to retire.

*April 25:* The number of Jews that can attend German high schools is limited.

*May 10:* Books published by or about Jews are burnt in public.

*May:* Jews are forced to leave the German Armed Forces.

*Spring:* Jewish professors are expelled from the universities.

*Summer:* Jewish writers and artists are prohibited from practicing their professions.

1935

*Sep. 6:* Jewish newspapers cannot be sold on the street.

*Sep. 15:* Nuremberg Laws passed: Jews are no longer German citizens; Jews cannot display the German flag; Jews cannot employ Germans in their homes under the age of 45; marriages and relations between Jews and Germans are forbidden.

1937

*Nov. 16:* Jews can obtain passports to travel abroad only in special cases

rious and why. Answers should be explained in detail.

2. After each list, students should study the character of the measures, and compare those in the second, third and fourth lists with previous measures. Suggested questions include:

**1933-37.** As the years pass, what patterns do you see developing? Provide several examples, and explain your answers.

**1938.** Compare the anti-Semitic measures on your first list (1933-37)

### List 2: German Jewry & Nazi Anti-Semitic Legislation, 1938

1938

*Apr. 26:* Jews must register all property valued over 500 Reichsmarks.

*Jun. 15:* Any Jew who had ever been convicted of any offense, including traffic violations, was arrested.

*Jul. 23:* All Jews over 15 had to carry a special ID card at all times. Jews must state they are Jewish as well as show the card in any dealings with the government.

*Jul. 25:* Jewish doctors have their licenses canceled. They can only treat Jewish patients.

*Jul. 27:* Any street names in Germany that are of Jewish origin are replaced.

*Aug. 17:* Effective Jan. 1, 1939, newly born Jewish children are to be named from an approved list of names. (A few examples are: for boys, Feibisch and Faleg; for girls, Scheindel and Scharne.)

*Nov. 9-10: Kristallnacht:* 200 synagogues destroyed; 7500 shops looted; 30,000 Jews sent to concentration camps, and as many as 1000 Jews killed.

*Nov. 11:* Jews cannot own or bear arms.

*Nov. 12:* Jews cannot own retail stores or mail order firms. Jews cannot attend plays, movies, concerts or exhibitions. Jews must pay 1.25 million Reichsmarks for damages caused on *Kristallnacht*.

*Nov. 15:* Jews are expelled from German schools, and must now attend Jewish schools.

*Dec. 3:* Jews must hand in their drivers' licenses and car registrations.

*Dec. 8:* Jews cannot attend German universities.

**List 3: German Jewry & Nazi Anti-Semitic Legislation, 1939-40**

1939

*Jan. 1:* A law that all Jews must add "Sarah" or "Israel" to their names became effective.

*Feb. 21:* Jews must surrender all their gold, platinum, silver objects, precious stones and pearls.

*Mar. 4:* Jews leaving Germany cannot take any possession they acquired after Jan. 30, 1933. They can take things acquired before this date except for gold, silver, jewels, pearls, etc. Wedding rings, silver watches and used silverware (two knives, two forks, two table spoons and two soup spoons) are allowed.

*Sep. 3:* A Jewish curfew is imposed at 9:00pm in summer, 8:00pm in winter.

*Sep. 23:* Jews must hand in all their radios.

*Dec. 1:* Jewish food rations reduced. No more cocoa or rice are allowed, and smaller amounts of meat and butter are allocated.

1940

*Feb. 6:* Jews are not issued ration cards for clothes or shoes.

*Jul. 19:* Jews cannot have phones.

*Jul:* Beginning of the systematic murder of German Jewish patients (mentally ill and infirm) in Brandenburg, the first Jews murdered by gas in the euthanasia program.

with those for 1938. Are there any similarities? Is the situation about the same or worse? Explain your answer by providing examples to support your position.

**1939-40.** Compare the anti-Semitic measures on your first two lists (1933-37, 1938) with those for 1939-1940. What are the similarities and differences? Please explain your answers.

**1941-42.** Compare the anti-Semitic measures on your first three lists (1933-37, 1938, 1939-40) with those for 1941-42. Are there any similarities? What are they and how are they similar? Do things appear to be worsening? If so, specifically how are they worsening?

3. After each list, students should at-

**List 4: German Jewry & Nazi Anti-Semitic Legislation, 1941-1942**

1941

*Sep. 19:* All Jews over the age of six must wear "a black, 6-pointed star on yellow material, as big as the palm of the hand, with the inscription 'Jew' sewn above the heart."

*Oct. 1:* Jews are forbidden to emigrate from Germany.

*Oct. 16:* The general deportation of all Jews from German soil begins. These individuals are sent to Lodz, Poland.

*Oct. 31:* Employers of Jews must make sure that Jews receive no sick pay, vacations with pay, and no additional pay for overtime.

*Dec. 26:* Jews cannot use public phones.

1942

*Jan. 5:* Jews must hand in any woolen and fur clothing in their possession.

*Feb. 17:* Jews cannot subscribe to magazines or newspapers.

*Mar. 26:* Jews must affix the "Star of David" to their doors.

*Apr. 17:* Jews are prohibited from using public transportation.

*May 15:* Jews cannot have pets.

*May 29:* Jews cannot use non-Jewish hairdressers or barber shops.

*Jun. 19:* Jews must hand in all electric appliances, typewriters, and bicycles.

*Jun. 30:* All Jewish schools are closed.

*Sep. 18:* Jews will no longer receive meat, eggs, wheat products, milk, et al.

*Oct. 9:* Jews cannot buy books

tempt to gauge the impact of the measures on different groups in the Jewish population by assigning scores to the measures, as described in (d) below. They will need to make charts for each of the four lists. Relative to the chart activity, teachers might consider having the outline and headings on the charts drawn up in advance. This will certainly save a lot of time and allow students to get right to labeling and filling in the appropriate information.

**Student Instructions**

a. After each list, on a piece of paper make a chart that allows for at least six columns (more if you want).

b. After each list, record the measures

on the chart in the left-hand column. **1933-37.** The left hand column should be entitled, "Anti-Semitic Measures 1933-37." Under this title you should list all the measures that appear on your list for 1933-37. It is OK to abbreviate. For example: "1-day boycott"; "Jews lose gov't. jobs," etc.

**1938.** The left hand column should be entitled, "Anti-Semitic Measures 1938." Under this title you should list all the measures that appear on your list for 1938. For example: "Jews over 15 must carry special ID"; "Jews attend Jewish schools only," etc.

**1939-40.** The left hand column should be entitled, "Anti-Semitic Measures 1939-40." Under this title you should list all the measures that appear on your list for 1939-40. For example: "Jews add Sarah or Israel to names"; "Jews must give up all precious metals and stones," etc.

**1941-42.** The left hand column should be entitled "Antisemitic Measures 1941-42." Under this title you should list all the measures that appear on your list for 1941-42. For example: "All Jews must wear star," "Deportation of Jews begins," etc.

c. After each list, use the columns to the right of the "Anti-Semitic Measures" column for the names of the different Jewish groups that were affected by these measures. These should be listed next to the title in the left-hand column, with one group per column. Groups might include: men, women, businessmen, young people, adults, elderly, professionals, etc. It will be up to you to decide which to include. You can have as many groups as you wish, but do not forget to make enough columns.

d. Once your columns have been labeled and the legislation written in, you will be ready to begin to rate how each anti-Semitic measure affected a particular group of Jews in Germany.

Using a rating system of 1-5 (five being the highest), determine the impact you think a particular law had by placing a number in the space directly below the group's name and directly across from a particular law. For example, in the 1933-37 list, if

you think the burning of books had a greater affect on adults than teenagers, then you should place a higher number in the adult column and a lower one in the teenager's column. In the 1938 list, if you think that Jewish doctors being limited to treating Jewish patients had a greater affect on adults than young people, then you should place a higher number in the adult column and a lower one in the young people's column. Complete the entire chart in this manner. Total the number of "points" you have given each group at the

bottom of each column. After you have had the chance to read all four listings, which will take you through 1942, you will be asked specific questions based upon your ratings.

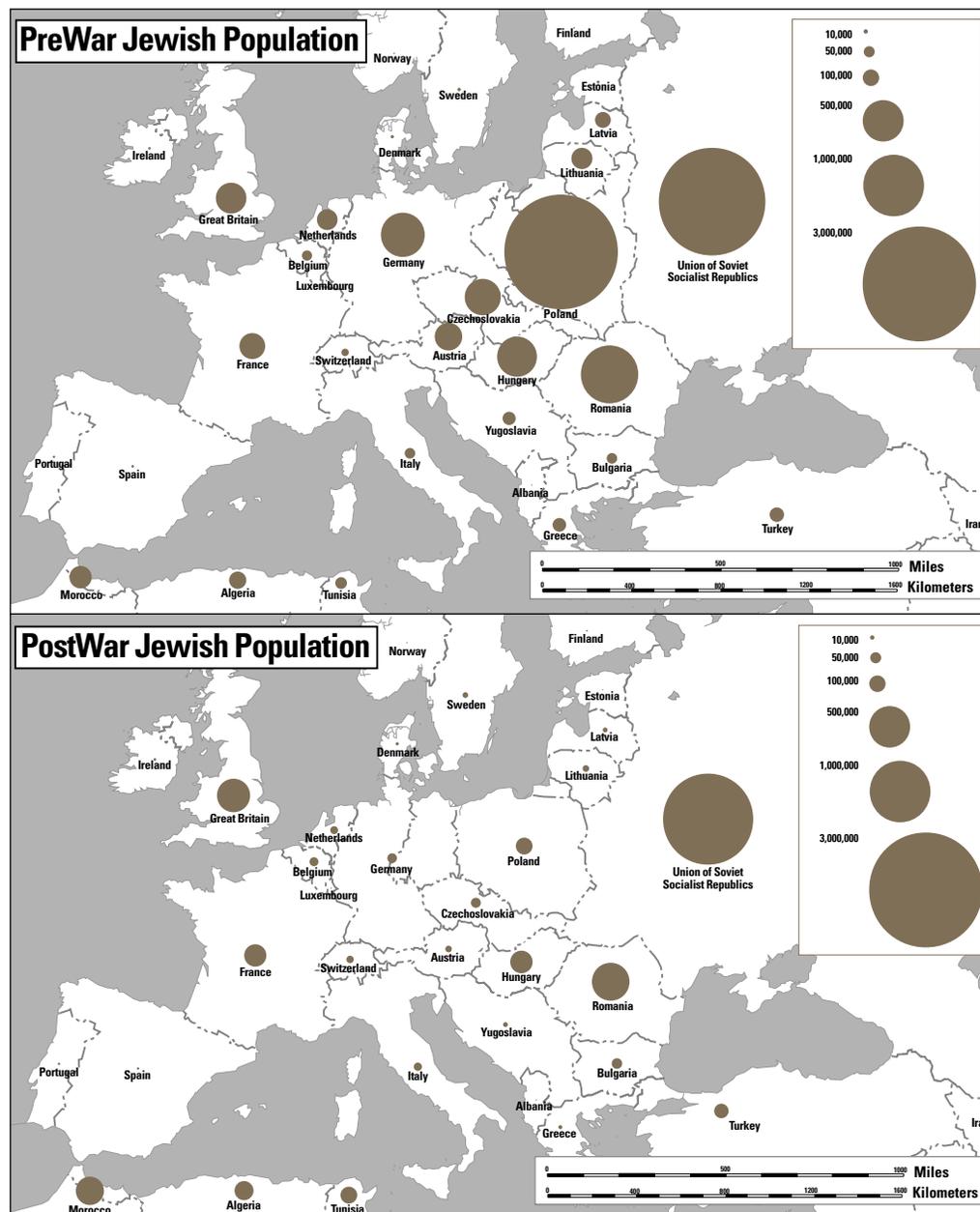
4. Now that you have completed all four lists for the years 1933-42, compare them and answer the following questions:
  - a. As the years pass, do you notice any pattern developing? Provide several examples, and explain your answers.
  - b. Which group did you rate the highest (meaning receiving the most "points") for each time peri-

od? Overall which group scored highest? Especially in this latter case, what reasons can you give why this group seems to be under attack more than others? Explain why you think this is so.

- c. Which time period was particularly hard for young German Jews? Which restrictions do you think were most difficult for them to deal with? Explain your answers.
- d. As a parent of Jewish children, which anti-Semitic measures would have affected you the most? Explain your answers.

## The Jewish Population of Europe Before and After World War II

GEORGE F. McCLEARY, JR.



The Holocaust devastated the Jewish population of Europe. These maps tell the grim story. The circles represent the size of the Jewish communities in the different countries of Europe before and after World War II. Looking just at countries that had prewar Jewish populations of more than 100,000, in Austria, the Jewish population was reduced from 250,000 to 20,000 (perhaps as few as 5,000); in Czechoslovakia, from 400,000 to 42,000; in France, from 220,000 to 170,000; in Germany, from 564,000 before the war to 40,000 (perhaps as few as 6,000); in Hungary, from 476,000 to 174,000; in Lithuania, from 155,000 to 20,000 (perhaps only 2-3,000); in the Netherlands, from 150,000 to 28,000; in Poland, from 2,978,000 to less than 100,000; in Romania, from 900,000 to 300-320,000; and, in the Soviet Union, from 3,000,000 to 1,800,000.

Data have been taken from Abraham J. Edelheit and Hershel Edelheit, *History of the Holocaust; A Handbook and Dictionary* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), and from the *American Jewish Yearbook*. For the prewar statistics, an attempt has been made to use data from the early 1930s; the postwar map uses the *Yearbook's* volumes for 1949 and 1950.

# Holocaust Chronology

STEPHEN FEINBERG

## 1933

- Jan. 30** Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany.
- Feb. 27** *Reichstag* fire.
- Feb. 28** Hitler given emergency powers by presidential decree.
- Mar. 5** *Reichstag* elections; Nazis win 44% of the vote.
- Mar. 20** First concentration camp opens at Dachau.
- Mar. 24** "Enabling Law" passed by *Reichstag*; used to establish dictatorship.
- Apr. 1** Nationwide boycott of Jewish-owned businesses.
- Apr.** Jews excluded from government employment; includes teachers and university professors.
- Apr. 26** Formation of the Gestapo (*Geheime Staatspolizei*).
- May 10** Public burning of books by Jews and opponents of Nazis.
- Jul. 20** Concordat signed in Rome between the Vatican and the Third Reich.
- Oct. 14** German withdrawal from the League of Nations.
- Nov. 12** Reichstag elections; Nazis "win" 93% of the vote.
- Dec. 1** Legal unity of German state and Nazi Party declared.

## 1934

- Jan. 26** Ten-year nonaggression pact signed with Poland.
- Jun. 30** "Night of the Long Knives"; Ernst Roehm, head of the SA, is murdered; SA purged.
- Aug. 2** Death of President von Hindenburg; Hitler declares himself Fuehrer of the German state; armed forces are required to take a personal oath of loyalty to Hitler.
- Oct.-Nov.** First major arrests of homosexuals throughout Germany.

## 1935

- Mar. 16** In violation of Treaty of Versailles, military conscription introduced; no response from other powers.
- Apr.** Jehovah Witnesses banned from civil service jobs; many arrested throughout Germany.

- Sep. 15** Nuremberg Laws announced; Jews deprived of citizenship.

## 1936

- Mar. 3** Jewish doctors no longer permitted to practice in government institutions in Germany.
- Mar. 7** Nazi army enters Rhineland in violation of Treaty of Versailles; no response from other powers.
- Jul. 12** First arrest of German Gypsies; sent to Dachau.
- Aug. 1** In anticipation of 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, anti-Semitic signs removed from most public places.
- Oct. 25** Rome-Berlin Axis agreement signed.

## 1937

- Jul. 16** Establishment of Buchenwald concentration camp.
- Sep. 7** Hitler repudiates Treaty of Versailles.
- Nov. 25** Political and military pact signed by Germany and Japan.

## 1938

- Mar. 13** Anschluss: Austria is annexed by Germany.
- Jul. 6-15** Thirty-two countries at Evian Conference discuss refugee policies; most countries refuse to let in more Jewish refugees.
- Aug. 17** All Jewish men in Germany will be required to add "Israel" to their names; all Jewish women will be required to add "Sarah."
- Sep. 29** Munich Agreement is signed by Germany, France, Italy and Great Britain; Czechoslovakia loses Sudetenland to Germany.
- Oct. 28** First deportation of Polish Jews from Germany.
- Nov. 7** Shooting of Ernst vom Rath, a low-level Nazi functionary, in Paris by Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jew.
- Nov. 9** "*Kristallnacht*," a nationwide pogrom; 30,000 Jews sent to concentration camps.

- Nov. 12** Fine of 1 billion *reichsmarks* levied on Jews of Germany.
- Nov. 15** All Jewish children expelled from public schools.
- Dec. 2-3** Gypsies in Germany required to register with police.

## 1939

- Mar. 15** Nazis invade Czechoslovakia; no immediate response from other powers.
- May 15** Ravensbruck concentration camp for women established.
- Jun.** Jewish refugees aboard the S.S. *St. Louis* denied entry to the United States and Cuba; forced to return to Europe.
- Aug. 23** Hitler-Stalin Pact signed.
- Sep. 1** Germany invades Poland; World War II begins.
- Sep. 2** Stutthof concentration camp established in Poland.
- Sep. 3** Britain and France declare war on Germany.
- Sep. 21** Reinhard Heydrich (SS) orders establishment of *Judenrate* and concentration of Polish Jews.
- Sep. 28** Partition of Poland between Germany and USSR.
- Oct.** Hitler authorizes "euthanasia program" (T-4) in Germany; doctors to kill institutionalized mentally and physically disabled.
- Oct. 8** First Polish ghetto established in Piotrkow Trybunalski.

## 1940

- Feb. 8** Establishment of Lodz Ghetto.
- Apr. 27** Heinrich Himmler (SS) orders establishment of Auschwitz concentration camp; first prisoners, mostly Poles, arrive in early June.
- Apr. 30** Lodz Ghetto is sealed.
- Spring** Nazis conquer Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, and France.
- Sep. 27** Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis established.
- Oct. 3** Anti-Jewish laws passed by Vichy government in France.
- Oct. 12** Establishment of Warsaw Ghetto.
- Nov. 15** Warsaw Ghetto is sealed.
- Nov. 20** Hungary, Rumania, and Slovakia join the Nazis and Italians.

## 1941

- Mar. 1** Himmler orders construction of camp at Birkenau (Auschwitz II); construction begins in October 1941 and continues until March 1942.
- Mar. 3 - 20** Krakow Ghetto established and sealed.

**Mar. 24** Nazis invade North Africa.  
**Apr. 6** Nazis invade Yugoslavia and Greece.  
**Apr. 24** Lublin Ghetto is sealed.  
**Jun. 22** Operation “Barbarossa,” the Nazi invasion of the USSR.  
**Jun. 23** *Einsatzgruppen* begin their mass murder of Jews, Gypsies, and Communist leaders in the USSR.  
**Jul. 20** Minsk Ghetto established.  
**Jul. 21** Hermann Goering gives Reinhard Heydrich the authority to prepare a “total solution” to the “Jewish question” in Europe.  
**Aug. 1** Bialystok Ghetto established.  
**Sep. 1** “Euthanasia program” (T-4) in Germany ended; between 70,000 and 93,000 people had been murdered in Germany during the course of this program.  
**Sep. 3** The first experimental gassing of Soviet prisoners of war at Auschwitz.  
**Sep. 3-6** Two ghettos established at Vilna.  
**Sep. 19** German Jews required to wear yellow badge in public.  
**Sep. 29-30** At Babi Yar, 33,771 Kiev Jews murdered.  
**Oct-Nov.** First deportation of German and Austrian Jews to ghettos in Eastern Europe.  
**Oct.** Construction of Majdanek-Lublin extermination camp.  
**Nov. 1** Construction of Belzec extermination camp begins.  
**Nov. 24** Theresienstadt (Terezin) concentration camp established.  
**Dec. 7** Japan attacks Pearl Harbor.  
**Dec. 8** Gassing operations begin at Chelmo extermination camp.  
**Dec. 11** Germany and Italy declare war on the United States.

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#### 1942

**Jan. 20** Wannsee Conference (coordination of the “Final Solution” planned).  
**Feb. 8** First Jews from Salonika, Greece sent to Auschwitz.  
**Mar. 1** Construction of Sobibor extermination camp begins; Jews first killed there in May 1942.  
**Mar. 17** Killings begin at Belzec extermination camp.  
**Mar. 28** First Jews from France sent to Auschwitz.  
**Apr. 29** Dutch Jews ordered to wear yellow badge.  
**May 27** Belgium Jews ordered to wear

yellow badge.

**Jun. 7** Jews in occupied France ordered to wear yellow badge.  
**Jul. 22** Treblinka extermination camp completed; by August 1943, 870,000 Jews murdered at Treblinka.  
**Jul. 22-Sep. 12** Mass deportations from Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka.  
**Jul. 28** Jewish fighting organization set up in Warsaw Ghetto.  
**Aug. 13-20** Majority of Croatian Jews sent to Auschwitz.  
**Oct. 16** Over 1,000 Roman Jews are deported to Auschwitz.  
**Nov. 24** Knowledge of the extermination of the Jews of Europe publicly announced in U.S. by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.

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#### 1943

**Jan. 18-22** First Warsaw Ghetto uprising breaks out.  
**Feb. 2** Nazis defeated at Battle of Stalingrad.  
**Feb. 26** First transport of Gypsies arrive at Auschwitz; Gypsy Camp established.  
**Apr. 19-May 16** Warsaw Ghetto uprising; Jews resist Nazis’ effort to deport them to death camps.  
**Jul. 21** Himmler orders the liquidation of all ghettos in Poland and USSR.  
**Aug. 2** Inmate uprising at Treblinka extermination camp.  
**Aug. 16** Revolt in Bialystok Ghetto.  
**Oct. 2** Nazis attempt round-up of Danish Jews; Danish people use boats to smuggle most Danish Jews (7,200) to neutral Sweden.  
**Oct. 14** Inmate revolt at Sobibor extermination camp.  
**Oct. 20** United Nations War Crimes Commission established.

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#### 1944

**Mar. 19** Nazis occupy Hungary.  
**Apr. 5** Hungarian Jews ordered to wear yellow badge.  
**Apr. 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.  
**Jun. 6** Allied invasion of Normandy.  
**Jul. 20** Unsuccessful attempt made to assassinate Hitler.

**Jul. 24** Soviet army liberates Majdanek extermination camp.  
**Aug. 2** Gypsy camp at Auschwitz destroyed by Nazis; 3,000 Gypsies gassed.  
**Oct. 7** Prisoners blow up one of the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp.

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#### 1945

**Jan. 17** Nazis evacuate Auschwitz; “death marches” toward Germany.  
**Jan. 27** Soviet army liberates Auschwitz.  
**Apr. 11** American army liberates Buchenwald concentration camp.  
**Apr. 15** British army liberates Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.  
**Apr. 28** Mussolini executed by Italian partisans.  
**Apr. 29** American army liberates Dachau concentration camp.  
**Apr. 29-30** Ravensbruck concentration camp liberated.  
**Apr. 30** Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.  
**May 2** Soviet troops capture Berlin.  
**May 3** Nazis hand over Theresienstadt 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.  
**Aug. 14** Japan surrenders; end of World War II.  
**Nov. 20** First major Nuremberg War Crimes Trials begin.

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#### 1946

**Oct. 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.  
**Oct. 16** Execution of Nazi war criminals.

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#### 1948

**May 14** State of Israel established.

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