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HOLOCAUST

A Teacher's Guide Based on NBC's Film Series

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## I. TO THE TEACHER

In both magnitude and savagery, the Holocaust--the persecution and mass murder of European Jews under Adolf Hitler's German dictatorship (1933-45)--remains an event unique in history. While the Second World War was raging across Europe, huge numbers of men, women and children were methodically segregated, degraded, starved, tortured, forced into slave labor, subjected to cruel pseudo-scientific experiments and eventually gassed and cremated in enormous death factories built expressly for the purpose. Carefully researched evidence documents the fact that of the 12 million people slaughtered by the Nazis (exclusive of those killed in actual warfare), over six million were Jews--more than one-third of all Jews in the world.

### Other Nazi Victims

Jews were tormented and killed because Nazi theory branded them as an "inferior, subhuman race"; but they were not the only victims of Nazi racism. Slavic peoples also ranked as subhuman in Nazi ideology and they too suffered enslavement and murder. Czechs and Slovaks were massacred. Of 27 million non-Jewish Poles, five million were herded into slave labor camps and over two million were systematically killed.

Soviet citizens were marked for mass murder not only because they were Slavs, but because they were Communists--"sociological criminals" in the eyes of the Nazis--and German troops were ordered to show no mercy to either Soviet soldiers or civilians. As many as four million Soviet prisoners of war are believed to have been murdered. Christian clergy, Masons, Jehovah's Witnesses, trade unionists, Socialists and many other racial, religious or political "enemies of the Third Reich" were also singled out for

persecution by the Hitler regime. But only two groups--gypsies and Jews--were slated for total extinction.

### Genocide

Genocide is the name given to a deliberate attempt to exterminate all members of a particular national or racial group simply because they are members of that group. Not every war crime or act of oppression, however unjust and horrible it may be, is genocide. The massacre of the Czech town of Lidice by the Nazis, though a staggeringly brutal act, was not genocide. Neither is the oppression of Jews in the Soviet Union, or the mistreatment of blacks in the U.S. While modern racism has much to answer for, only Hitler and his followers used it as a sanction for deliberately killing a whole people. What went on in the Nazi death factories, and what led up to it, was genocide in the truest sense of the term.

### Confronting the Holocaust

The Holocaust is hard to face and even harder to comprehend. The mind refuses to believe, wants to turn away, tries desperately to put some distance between itself and these horrors.

The temptation is either to treat the Holocaust as an inexplicable nightmare, a cataclysmic explosion of human depravity outside any context of time, place and history; or to obscure its enormity by cataloging it as one more episode in the long history of man's inhumanity to man. But the Holocaust, unique in its virulence and pervasiveness, had its roots in past political, social and religious history. And if it is not to happen again, in other places and to other people, we dare not turn away from the lessons to be learned from it.

About NBC's Film, "Holocaust"

Holocaust anchors the Nazi years in historical reality and dramatizes this history through the lives of three families in Hitler's "Third Reich." The families are fictitious, but the events depicted really happened. It is important to stress this point to students, because young viewers--and even adults--are not always clear about what is fact and what is fiction on TV.

About This Guide

This discussion guide was prepared with three goals in mind:

- (1) To help students understand both the reality and the uniqueness of the Holocaust.
- (2) To explore the ideas and prejudices that made the Holocaust possible--not only Nazi race theories, but centuries-old anti-Semitic traditions and practices on which the Nazis built.
- (3) To point out how bigotry dehumanizes both victim and perpetrator, and to help students think more clearly about moral issues and human values.

Each of the sections that follow asks questions for students to consider, provides background information to help them arrive at answers, and offers instructive excerpts from literature. A chronology and a bibliography will be found in the Appendix.

## II. HOW COULD IT HAPPEN?

### Religious Anti-Semitism

*In the spring of 1945, three trucks loaded with eight to nine tons of human ashes, from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, were dumped into a canal in order to conceal the high rate of Jewish executions. When a German general was asked at Nuremberg how such things could happen, he replied: "I am of the opinion that when for years, for decades, the doctrine is preached that Jews are not even human, such an outcome is inevitable"...The doctrine which made such deeds inevitable had been preached, not merely for years or for decades, but for many centuries...The German crime of genocide has its logical roots in the mediaeval theory that the Jews were outcasts, condemned by God to a life of perpetual servitude.*

*--Malcolm Hay, Thy Brother's Blood*

Anti-Semitism, meaning hatred or persecution of Jews, is an ancient evil. While it has figured in politics, economics and other areas of life, its oldest and most persistent root has been religious: the charge that Jews as a group are "Christ-killers," living under a curse and doomed to punishment in each succeeding generation. For many centuries, this idea was a staple of church teaching and policy; not until the 1960s did churches repudiate it and condemn anti-Semitism.

Many of the Nazi measures against Jews--excluding them from various occupations and from universities, confining them to ghettos, forcing them to wear identifying badges--harked back to medieval laws designed to degrade and punish the Jews for refusing to convert to Christianity. And religious oppression in earlier centuries often turned into bloody persecution despite papal edicts proscribing anti-Jewish violence. Tens of thousands of Jews were slaughtered by the Crusaders on their way to redeem the Holy Land from the Moslems, and similar massacres took place in other places and centuries.

*ant* ( Nor did the advent of Protestantism bring about a basic change. Martin Luther, at first sympathetic to Jews, turned vehemently

out  
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against them when he failed to convert them. His anti-Jewish writings enjoyed a revival in Nazi Germany.

[NBC's Holocaust notes the link between Christian hostility and Nazi anti-Semitism. When one of the Dorf children asks why everyone hates the Jews, the other answers: "'Cause they killed Christ. Didn't you learn that in Sunday school?" Heydrich remarks to Dorf: "Christians may disagree on a lot of things, but as men of conscience they can unite on hatred of Jews." In a conversation with Himmler, Dorf says: "The Führer himself said we were completing the work of Christianity, defending Western culture."]

Of course, not all Christians were anti-Semitic. In every century noble-hearted men and women spoke out for the Jews, defended them and tried to protect them. This was true under the Nazis, too.

[Father Bernhard Lichtenberg, portrayed in Holocaust, was one of a handful of courageous churchmen to condemn the Hitler Government for its persecution of the Jews, and to pray openly for them. Inge, Karl's young Christian wife in the film, is an example of individual Germans who rejected Nazi anti-Semitism and stood up against it.]

At Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem--Israel's international memorial and research center dedicated to the Holocaust--there is a tree-lined "Avenue of the Righteous," in which each tree is a living memorial to a non-Jew known to have saved at least one Jewish life at the risk of his or her own.

### German Nationalism

Modern German anti-Semitism was the bastard child of the union of Christian anti-Semitism with German nationalism.

--Lucy S. Dawidowicz, The War Against the Jews

German nationalism and bitter anti-liberalism had their beginnings in the late 19th century, when Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck defeated France in 1870-71 and united the splintered German nation. Bismarck's regime glorified militarism and the subordination of the individual to the state, and dedicated Germany to a national policy of "blood and iron," war and conquest.

In 1918, after Germany's defeat in the First World War, the Weimar Republic, a model constitutional democracy, was established; but there was no strong popular commitment to democratic principles. The humiliating peace terms imposed on Germany enraged the German people, and the inflation, poverty and depression that followed the war bred fear, despair and a search for scapegoats.

Capitalizing on this mass discontent, Hitler built his insignificant National Socialist German Workers' Party into a powerful political base. Promising a Greater Germany that would last a thousand years, he and his followers exalted the Germans as the "master race," and blamed the Jews for all of Germany's troubles. By the time Hitler came to power in 1933, the nation was ripe for his own virulent brand of racist anti-Semitism.

*[The opening scenes of Holocaust show how the Nazi philosophy and the growing authoritarianism of the Nazi state affected average Germans. The opportunities for jobs and power made available to young disillusioned Germans by the Nazi government's new institutions are illustrated in Erik Dorf's gradual espousal of the Nazi cause.]*

*The horror of the "Crystal Night" (1938)--the first wholesale physical persecution of Jews--and the ever-growing legal and social isolation of Jews accepted by the*



*German people in the months that followed provide a case history of the average person's potential for evil.]*

### Racism

Anti-Semitism was given a new pseudo-scientific rationale in 19th-century Europe, stressing the importance of race and "racial purity," and insisting that human races differed not only in physical features, but also in intelligence and even in virtue. Racial classification became a weapon in the nationalistic struggles of the time, and race came to be viewed by many as the determining factor in history. German nationalists now proclaimed that the Germans were the only pure "Teutonic race"--the purest form of the "Aryan" race, on which the future of civilization supposedly depended.

Serious scientists gradually abandoned these early race theories, but scientific quacks and portions of the general public clung to the notion of Aryan superiority, giving anti-Semites in Germany and elsewhere an additional weapon against the Jews.

At the same time that the Weimar Republic adopted a constitution guaranteeing German Jews, and all other Germans, political equality, Hitler and his National Socialists were hammering away at the need to rescue Germany from the "subhuman Jewish race." When Hitler came to power in 1933, the race theory became a state dogma, and anti-Semitism became government policy.

*[In Holocaust, Heydrich points out to Erik Dorf that although this "racial stuff" might be nonsense, it has its practical side: "Anti-Semitism is the cement that binds us together."]*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How did traditional religious anti-Semitism pave the way for the German people's acceptance of Hitler's program of mass destruction?
2. How did Germany's past history set the stage for the failure of the Weimar Republic?
3. What new elements did Hitler and the Nazis add to traditional anti-Semitism?
4. How did the theory of "Aryan racial superiority" enable Hitler to persecute minority groups more savagely than anybody before him?
5. Does anyone today still think in terms of "master races"?
6. What did Hitler's police state mean to Germans and others who were not Jews?



### III. HOW IT HAPPENED

#### Mounting Oppression

*It began with job dismissals and pressures on Jewish business enterprises. Later [came] forced sales of companies, discriminatory property taxes, blocking of bank deposits, compulsory labor, reduced wages, special income taxes, lowered rations, and confiscation of personal property, pensions and claims.... Later [came] a series of housing restrictions, movement limitations and identification measures. The Jews of Germany now were forced to undergo document stamping, name changes, and the marking of their clothes with a star....*

*--Raul Hilberg, Documents of Destruction*

With his rise to power, Hitler began to put into practice the anti-Jewish ideology he had outlined in his book, Mein Kampf, as an essential part of his blueprint for conquest. To make Germany judenrein (clean of Jews), the Nazis gradually instituted restrictions aimed at making life so intolerable for Jews that they would be forced to emigrate. In a caricature of lawmaking, they were progressively excluded from holding public office, practicing professions, attending public schools, and eventually even using public parks or transportation. As early as 1935, a set of laws decreed at a party rally in Nuremberg officially declared Jews to be second-class citizens without civil rights. Non-Jews were forbidden to marry Jews, and any close relationships between Jews and others were, in effect, barred.

At first, the Jews of Germany--a community of over half a million--could not understand what was happening. The ancestors of some of them had come to Germany with the Roman armies, 2,000 years back; their German roots were deep, and most were staunchly patriotic. The horrors of the Middle Ages were long past and Jews had gradually made their way in German society. Anti-Semitism was

visible and widespread but it was far less savage than in some other countries. Germany's relapse into barbarism found most Jews disoriented and incredulous.

*[Holocaust depicts the patriotism of German Jews in the character of Mr. Palitz, who takes great pride in the medal he won as a soldier in the First World War and identifies strongly with German history, which he considers his own.]*

Jews and other opponents of the Nazi regime were brutally mistreated in prisons and concentration camps from the start. By 1938 open violence and public atrocities or acts of degradation had become commonplace throughout Germany; they later became equally common in almost every country that came under German domination. In 1938--the year Hitler seized Austria--the Government staged a supposedly spontaneous nationwide terror action, called the "Crystal Night" or night of shattered glass (after the many broken windows of Jewish establishments). Synagogues were burned, Jews were brutalized on the streets, and Jewish-owned businesses and other properties were expropriated under transparent pretexts. Thousands of Jews were thrown into concentration camps, along with religious and other opponents of the regime.

*[Holocaust shows how the Nazis conspired to make the "Crystal Night" appear as a spontaneous eruption of popular anger against the Jews.]*

### Ghettoization and Destruction

At camps maintaining labor installations, like Auschwitz, 10 percent of the arrivals--those who looked fittest--were selected for work. The remainder were...instructed to undress; the women and girls had their hair cut. They were then marched between files of auxiliary police (Ukrainians usually) who hurried them along with whips, sticks, or guns, to the gas chambers.... These were identified as shower rooms. The Jews were rammed in, one person per square foot. The gassing lasted from ten to thirty minutes, depending on the facilities and techniques used. In Belzec, according to an eyewitness, it took thirty-two minutes and "finally, all were dead," he wrote, "like pillars of basalt, still erect, not having any space to fall."... Later the bodies were burned... "At night the red sky over Auschwitz could be seen for miles."

The "final solution"--the plan to annihilate all Jews in Europe --was put into practice in 1941, two years after Hitler's invasion of Poland and the start of the Second World War. German Jewry, alone, might have been dispersed to other lands; but no policy of forced emigration could have worked, even if the frontiers had not been closed by war, for Poland's 3-1/2 million Jews and millions more in the Soviet Union, Lithuania and other Eastern countries.

The original plan was to have the Jews killed by mobile squads that accompanied the German troops on their conquest of Eastern Europe. That was not efficient enough, so "death factories" were set up in a number of camps in Poland to gas Jews wholesale. The monstrous undertaking was kept secret for a long time; only gradually did the story leak out to the intended victims and the free world.

As the German armies moved eastward, the Jews in given towns and regions were segregated in walled-off ghettos, where they were forced to work as slave laborers and systematically starved to reduce their numbers. Jewish Councils (Judenräte), appointed by the Nazis, were responsible for governing the ghettos and for everything that went on there. They were also forced to select specified numbers of people to be transported to parts unknown, ostensibly for resettlement. Some councils complied, because they were told that those not sent away would be left undisturbed; others were defiant and became centers of resistance.

Those selected for resettlement--which eventually meant everybody--were shipped away by rail, in box cars. The trains were given the same priority as urgently needed troop trains--an indication of the haste and fanaticism with which the annihilation of Jews was pursued. At the end of the line stood the gas chambers and crematoria of the death camps.

[In Holocaust, these events are given human proportions. We experience the Buchenwald concentration camp with Karl Weiss; we witness the heroic efforts to maintain normality in the Warsaw ghetto. Through the experience of Dr. Weiss and the Lowys we sense the desperation of the deportations and the harrowing decisions to be made.

The horror of Auschwitz is epitomized by Hoess, the camp commandant: "We've got it down to a factory system, but I'm still behind schedule. They undress... we take the valuables...take them to the showers...burn them...bury the ashes."]

The Saving Remnant

By destroying the East European Jewish community, the Nazis smashed Jewry's biological center. In so doing...Eichmann felt he had struck Jewry a blow from which it would not recover. Had the state of Israel not come into being, Eichmann would have been confirmed by now.

--Irving Greenberg, "Israel Within World Jewry"  
(in Moshe Davis, ed., World Jewry and the State of Israel)

The near destruction of European Jewry by Hitler was followed by a great rebirth: the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. The Jewish State came into existence in part because the Holocaust survivors challenged the conscience of the postwar world; it survived because Jews were able to defend their homeland against repeated attack. cut

Unwelcome in their former homes and weary of suffering and horror, tens of thousands of the survivors made their way across Europe as soon as they were liberated, in search of a new life in the "promised land." They traveled alone or in family groups; and since the British would not let them into Palestine legally, they risked their lives anew to overcome the British blockade. Their odyssey, and the continued refusal of Western countries to open their doors to the survivors, were crucial factors in the establishment of the State of Israel. cut

[The scene in Holocaust where Rudi Weiss, at the request of the Jewish Agency representative in Terezin, becomes the leader of 40 Greek orphans headed for illegal immigration into Palestine provides some sense of the exodus of survivors from Europe to Palestine.]

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did German Jews find it so hard to see what the Nazi rise foreboded? Why did people like Berta Weiss and the Palitzes refuse to leave Germany, even when warned to do so?
2. How did the Jewish sense of being at home in Germany inhibit any effort to escape in spite of increasing legal and social disabilities? What did it take to convince Jews that they were facing catastrophe? Describe the various kinds of response.
3. Why did the majority of the German people fail to protest the "Crystal Night" violence against their Jewish neighbors, and later the murders in the concentration camps?
4. Could a "Crystal Night" have happened in other countries? In the U.S.?
5. Most Holocaust survivors went to live in what is now Israel or in the United States, but some have returned to their native countries or to Germany. Could you go back to live in those countries after the Holocaust experience?

IV. RESPONSIBILITY AND COMPLICITY

*In all our countries, when perhaps in the heat of passion or for other motives which impair restraint, some individual is killed,...our compassion is aroused, nor do we rest until the criminal is punished and the rule of law vindicated. Shall we do less when not one but on the lowest computation 12,000,000 men, women and children are done to death? Not in battle, not in passion but in the cold, calculated, deliberate... murder conducted like some mass production industry....*

*--Sir Hartley Shawcross, closing speech at the Nuremberg Trials, 1946*

When Hitler took over in Germany, a few voices at the League of Nations condemned Nazi brutality. But no effective international measures were taken either to discourage Hitler's excesses or to provide havens for those trying to flee. A majority of German and Austrian Jews managed, with the help of private, mostly Jewish, organizations, to escape before the Second World War. But all during this period the Western nations, including the United States, limited immigration sharply and refused to provide visas for more than a fraction of the refugees clamoring for admission. (James G. MacDonald, the League of Nations' High Commissioner for German Refugees, eventually resigned his post in protest against this international indifference, and his call for action against Hitler's policies was widely endorsed; but the world's major democracies continued to regard what was happening in Germany as an internal matter in a sovereign state.)

In 1938, a ship called "St. Louis" took a cargo of German Jewish refugees to Cuba, which rejected their entry permits as invalid. No asylum could be found elsewhere in the Western world, and the passengers of the "St. Louis" were eventually returned to Europe--most of them to Belgium, where the Nazis later caught up with them.

Even when the reports of the death camps had been documented, the Western nations concluded that rescue and relief would have to



wait for an Allied victory over the Nazis, lest rescue operations interfere with strategic military plans.

Immigration to Palestine might have saved many lives, and an "underground railway" carrying Jews to the Middle East did rob Hitler of thousands of victims. But Great Britain, which administered Palestine under a League of Nations mandate, showed more concern for politics than for people, and these efforts often ended tragically. In 1942, the refugee ship "Struma" was turned away from the Palestinian coast and later sank with everyone on board.

In the U.S., the Roosevelt Administration did make an ineffectual effort to aid persons who had to flee from the Nazis for political reasons, but closed its eyes to the far larger number of people slated for genocide. Not until 1944--the year before the war ended--was a U.S. War Refugee Board organized.

Some countries occupied by the Nazis showed more concern. In Denmark, many non-Jews wore the yellow star, and brave volunteers secretly ferried nearly all the Danish Jews to safety in neutral Sweden. In Italy, many government officials would not cooperate with deportations. In Bulgaria, both the people and the Government refused to hand over Jews. Half of all the French Jews were saved because their neighbors hid them; and courageous individuals in the Netherlands, Belgium, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, even Germany itself, risked their lives to hide Jewish adults and children or to help them to pass as non-Jews.

But these quiet heroes were in the minority. Most of the conquered peoples cooperated with their conquerors--some out of sympathy for the Nazi cause, some for the sake of their own safety. Some

avoided any awareness of what was happening to former friends and neighbors; others actually profited from the misfortunes of Jews and other Nazi victims by acquiring their property or collecting rewards for betraying them.

*[Holocaust shows Father Lichtenberg continuing to pray for the Jews despite Erik Dorf's warnings. But it is made clear that Father Lichtenberg (who was a real person) was one of very few to raise their voices in defense of the victims, and that most people--whatever their walks of life--accepted or blinked at the evils of nazism.]*

Even under <sup>the</sup> Nazi regime public opinion could make a difference. Early in its rule the government secretly set up a forced "euthanasia" program for cripples and mental patients, but the secret leaked out. So many groups and individuals (including some card-carrying Nazis) protested that the program was halted.

*[In Holocaust, young Anna Weiss is sent to a "sanatorium" to be gassed, together with mentally retarded and physically deformed children.]*

#### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What could the Allied countries have done to help the Jews slated for destruction by Hitler? Was it morally right for them to put all such matters aside until victory was won? Has the world made any progress in providing asylum for refugees since the Hitler era?
2. Why did the Danish rescue effort succeed? Just what does it take to help people whom you are forbidden to help? How important is it to take a stand in such situations?
3. Edmund Burke said: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." How does the Nazi period illustrate this point? In a showdown, would you protest, like Father Lichtenberg, or look away, like most of his fellow Germans? Why?
4. Compare the ranking Nazi criminals who planned and ordered the mass murder of Jews with the rank and file who carried it out, and with those who did not directly contribute to it but knew or could have known what was happening. What are the gradations of guilt? Where does doing nothing shade off into wrongdoing?

5. During his trial in Israel for war crimes, Adolf Eichmann--one of the masterminds of the Holocaust--defended himself by saying he had "only followed orders." The same defense was used by Lt. William Calley in his trial for crimes against Vietnamese civilians at My-Lai. Is "following orders" a valid excuse for criminal acts?

## V. RESISTANCE AND ARMED STRUGGLE

### From Non-Violence to Open Defiance

*...When rabbis and other leaders in those days counseled against taking up arms, they did not advocate giving in to the forces of evil; they meant that the struggle should be carried on, as long as possible, by other, life-affirming means. It was a strategy that seemed well-suited to the circumstances in 1940 and 1941, when no one could know how totally different Nazi persecution would be from any sufferings experienced before.*

*--Yehuda Bauer, They Chose Life*

Young people confronted with the Holocaust frequently ask:

"Why didn't the Jews fight back?"

The answer is that they did fight back. For many years after the Second World War this fact was not well known, because almost the only data available were from German documents, and the Germans, who kept full account of their successes, were far less meticulous in recording any defiance of their supposedly invincible war machine. But more recently, the true story has emerged--chiefly from papers and diaries secretly assembled by Jewish leaders and historians before they were murdered, and from the recollections of those who survived. At Terezin in Czechoslovakia--a camp which the Nazis maintained as a showcase--inmates, including children, left a record of their nightmarish experiences in drawings and paintings.

*[In Holocaust, the artist Karl Weiss recorded what he saw, and his drawings were recovered after the war.]*

Initially, most Jewish resistance was nonviolent. Its goal was not to destroy the Nazi juggernaut--an obviously impossible

task for unarmed and largely unaided resisters--but to preserve the continuity of Jewish life and the Jewish people. The Nazis forbade religious worship and cultural activities in the ghettos; the Jews secretly continued their religious celebrations, held lectures, plays and concerts to lift their spirits, even published illegal newspapers <sup>and</sup> operated illegal school systems for their children. The Nazis constantly reduced food allowances, cut off medical and social services; the Jews smuggled food and medicine over the walls and, with superhuman effort, kept hospitals and clinics operating.

Such tactics had helped Jews withstand earlier periods of oppression and plunder; and since the Nazis concealed their "final solution" so carefully, the victims did not know for a long time that they faced not merely persecution but annihilation. Not until 1942 did the ghetto dwellers learn that relatives and neighbors taken to be "resettled" were actually going to their deaths. When the truth finally became known, nonviolent resistance was replaced by armed struggle.

#### By Force of Arms

*It is pure myth that the Jews were merely "passive," that they did not resist the Nazis who had decided on their destruction. The Jews fought back against their enemies to a degree no other community anywhere in the world would have been capable of doing were it to find itself similarly beleaguered. They fought against hunger and starvation, against epidemic disease, against the deadly Nazi economic blockade. They fought against the German murderers and against the traitors within their own ranks, and they were utterly alone in their fight.... In the end it was ruse, deception and cunning beyond anything the world has ever seen, which accomplished what hunger and disease could not achieve. What defeated us, ultimately, was Jewry's indestructible optimism, our eternal faith in the goodness of man--or rather, in the limits of his degradation.... And when, finally, we saw how we had been deceived, and...took up arms, we inscribed in the annals of history the unforgettable epic of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.*

--Alexander Donat, "Jewish Resistance"  
(in Albert H. Friedlander, ed., Out of the Whirlwind)

The battle of the Warsaw ghetto has become a symbol for heroism before hopeless odds. In April and May 1943, young men and women armed with a handful of guns, grenades and bricks stood off Nazi tanks, guns and mortar for several weeks. They fought from rooftops, stairwells and sewers and from hidden bunkers that dotted the ghetto. And they fought until all of them were dead.

*[Holocaust movingly portrays how the people in the Warsaw ghetto struggled to give their lives a semblance of normality, and how they finally organized for the rebellion they knew would mean their death.]*

Warsaw was not the only case of armed resistance. Some 40 East European ghettos, possibly more, had armed underground units. Some were organized for fighting near home, others for escape and partisan fighting in the deep Polish or Russian forests, where the Nazis could not maintain full control. But the Jewish fighters found few allies, bases or places of refuge.

*out*  
In Poland, Lithuania and the western Soviet Union anti-Semitism had been endemic for centuries; few people were willing to risk their own lives to help the Jews, and many were glad to see them killed. And, of course, arms and ammunition were in short supply among the peoples conquered by the Nazis. But despite these handicaps, Jewish guerrillas fought bravely and also fed and protected unarmed Jews who fled to the woods. (One guerrilla leader saved some 1,200 Jewish men, women and children in this way.)

In Western Europe, too--in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany itself--Jews joined resistance groups or set up their own resistance units. Even within the electrified barbed wire of the concentration and annihilation camps, Jews fought back. There were prisoner uprisings at Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz and a num-

ber of other camps. The Sobibor camp was dismantled by the Germans two days after the rebellion; at Treblinka there was so much destruction that the death factory was not rebuilt.

*[In Holocaust, the bravery of the resistance fighters is exemplified by Rudi Weiss and by Helena, a Czech Jew, who brings Rudi into the Resistance, ~~makes~~ ~~him~~, and eventually is killed in the Polish forests.]*

#### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did few Jews engage in militant resistance during the early days of Nazi rule?
2. Why did the Nazis seek to hide evidence of Jewish defiance? How did the facts about Jewish resistance finally become known?
3. Are people more likely to resist oppression when they have some hope of succeeding, or when they feel their position is hopeless?
4. What made the Jews eventually rebel when they knew it was futile to resist their murderers?
5. Why, in Eastern Europe, did the Jews receive so little help in their struggle, even from the underground forces themselves fighting the Nazis?
6. How did the position of Jews in the Nazi ghettos compare with that of black slaves in the United States?

VI. THE LESSON TO BE LEARNED

*First the Nazis came for the Communists; and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews; and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. When they came for the trade unionists I didn't speak up, because I wasn't a trade unionist. And when they came for the Catholics I didn't speak up, because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me... And by that time there was no one left to speak for anyone.*

*--Attributed to Pastor Martin Niemöller*

*If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am for myself alone, who am I? And if not now--when?*

*--Hillel*

Not only did the Holocaust leave deep scars on those who perpetrated and condoned the atrocities, and on those who suffered them; it also destroyed the comforting illusion of men and women all over the world that the inhumanities of the past were safely in the past. Once it had happened, there was no avoiding the realization that it could happen again--to Jews or to some other group.

Neither education nor wealth nor sophistication nor religious affiliation necessarily immunized individuals against the infection of Nazism. The Holocaust was not simply the work of lunatics, sadists and criminals; it was planned by intellectuals and professionals and was carried out with the help of civil servants and businessmen, police officers and housewives, as well as military personnel and the entire SS.

*[Ernst Biberstein and Paul Blobel, portrayed in Holocaust as heads of mobile killing units, were real persons, whose units murdered thousands of civilians. Biberstein was a Protestant minister, Blobel an architect.]*

Such tragedies do not come out of nowhere; and the responsibility for preventing them from happening again lies with all of us. Nazism incorporated old prejudices and long-standing notions of national superiority.

The testimony of the Hitler years--in documented records and diaries, works of history, novels, dramatizations like Holocaust--can help us understand how the Hitler era happened and strengthen our resolve to guard against the hatred and fanaticism, bigotry and racism that can lead us--can lead any society--down the same grim path. We are--we must be our brothers' keepers.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do the statements of Martin Niemöller and Hillel tell us about an individual's responsibility to himself and to others in society?
2. Do you think the German people could have prevented the Holocaust if they had refused to go along with Hitler's campaign to destroy the Jews?
3. Do you believe that how you think about other groups and how you behave towards them can affect the way your community and your Government treats its citizens?
4. One characteristic of a totalitarian regime is the brutal elimination of all who might constitute an opposition. Can democracies like the United States do anything to prevent such atrocities in other parts of the world? Should they?
6. Do you know of any human rights violations now going on in other countries? In this country?
7. What did the philosopher George Santayana mean when he said that "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it?"



APPENDIX

Holocaust Chronology, 1933-1945

1933

- January 30 Adolf Hitler is appointed Reich Chancellor by President Paul von Hindenburg.
- March Dachau, the first concentration camp, is set up near Munich.
- April 1 General boycott of Jewish shops and enterprises begins.
- May 10 Books by anti-Nazi and Jewish authors are publicly burned.
- October 19 Germany withdraws from the League of Nations.

1935

- January 13 Saar region, taken from Germany after First World War, is reannexed.
- March 17 German Army enters the Rhineland, demilitarized under Versailles Treaty.
- September 15 Nuremberg Laws, instituting second-class citizenship for Jews, are enacted.

1937

- July 16 Buchenwald concentration camp is opened.

1938

- March 13 Austria is annexed by Germany.
- September 29-30 Great Britain and France agree to Germany's annexation of part of Czechoslovakia
- October "Aryanization" of Jewish property begins.
- November 10 "Crystal Night," a planned anti-Jewish riot, is staged throughout Germany and Austria.

1939

- March 15 Germany occupies all of Czechoslovakia.
- September 1 German army invades Poland, setting off the Second World War.

1939

September Ghettoes are established in occupied Poland.

1940

April 9 German Army occupies Denmark and southern Norway.

April 27 Concentration camp is established at Oswiecim (Auschwitz), Poland.

May 10 Germany invades the Netherlands, Belgium and France.

June French army surrenders; armistice with Germany is signed; northern and western France are occupied.

August 10 Anti-Jewish laws are adopted in Rumania.

August 17 Mass demonstrations are staged by starving ghetto inmates in Lodz, Poland. Jewish resistance in France begins.

September 27 A German-Italian-Japanese alliance, the "Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis," is formed.

October 3 The Vichy Government of occupied France adopts anti-Jewish laws.

November 15 The Warsaw ghetto is sealed off.

November 20-24 Hungary, Rumania and Slovakia join the Axis.

1941

April 6 Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.

May 15 Rumania adopts law condemning Jews to forced labor.

June 22 Germany attacks the Soviet Union.

October 10 A "model" ghetto is established at Terezin (Theresienstadt), Czechoslovakia.

December 7 Japanese attack Pearl Harbor

December 8 U.S. declares war on Japan.

Extermination camp is opened at Chelmno, near Lodz; 360,000 Jews are murdered there.

December 11 Germany and Italy declare war on the United States.

1942

- January Resistance groups are organized in Lithuanian ghettos of Vilna and Kovno; first partisan base is set up in the Polish forests.
- January 20 A conference held in the Wannsee district of Berlin drafts a detailed plan to exterminate eleven million European Jews.
- March 1 Sobibor death camp is opened; 250,000 Jews are murdered there.
- March 17 Belzec death camp is opened; 600,000 Jews are murdered there.
- March 26 60,000 Slovak Jews are deported to Auschwitz and Majdanek death camps.
- June 1 Treblinka death camp is opened; 700,000 Jews are murdered there.
- July 22 Liquidation of Warsaw ghetto begins; on September 13, 300,000 Jews are deported to Treblinka.
- Armed resistance slows liquidation of ghetto at Nieśwież, Poland (now Soviet Union).
- July 28 "Jewish Fighting Organization" is organized in the Warsaw ghetto.
- November 19 Beginning of Red Army's successful counterattack in the Stalingrad region, turning point in the war in the East.
- December 17 Eleven Allied nations formally condemn "cold-blooded extermination" of Jews.

1943

- April 19 U.S. and British delegates meet in Bermuda; fail to provide help for Nazi victims.
- April 19 to May 16 Warsaw ghetto revolt is crushed; ghetto is destroyed.
- June All ghettos in Poland and the U.S.S.R. are ordered liquidated.
- July Camp is set up at Bergen-Belsen, Germany, to hold prisoners of war, and Jews the Nazis hoped to exchange for Germans; 37,000 die there.
- August 16 Revolts break out in Bialystok ghetto and Krychow labor camp in Poland.

October 2 Order for deportation of Danish Jews is issued; Danish underground secretly evacuates some 7,000 Jews to Sweden.

November 28 Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill meet at Teheran to coordinate invasion of Europe.

1944

January Jewish underground in Budapest sets up a workshop to forge documents for rescue purposes. Over 10,000 persons are saved with such documents.

March 19 German army invades Hungary; 380,000 Hungarian Jews are deported to Auschwitz in three months' time.

June 6 Allies invade Normandy, begin counterattack on continent.

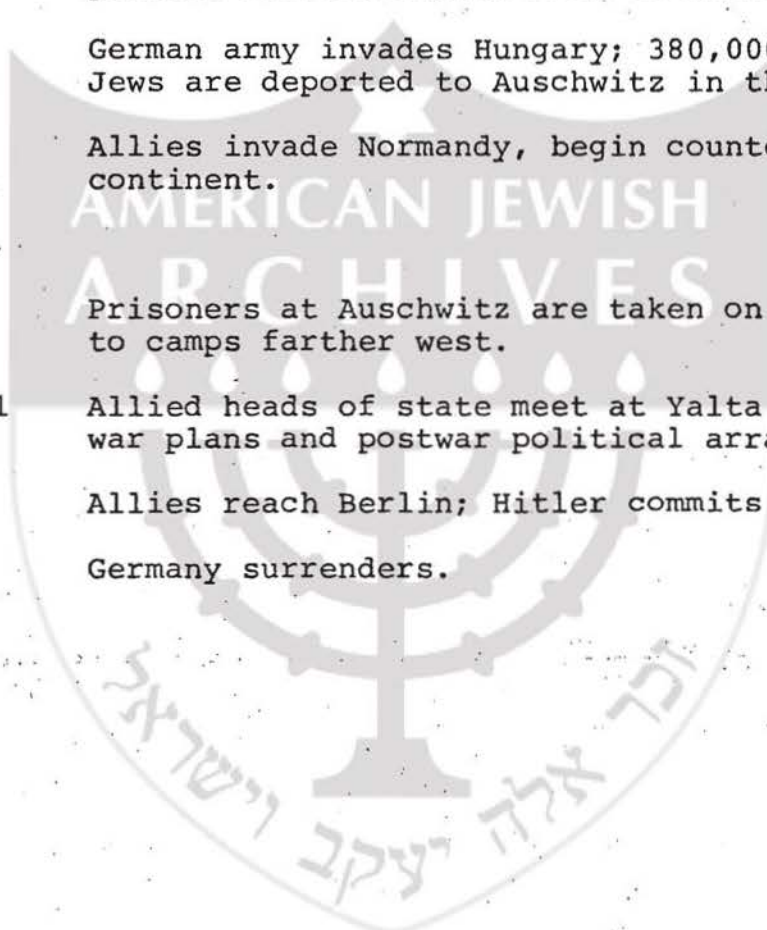
1945

January 17 Prisoners at Auschwitz are taken on "death march" to camps farther west.

February 4-11 Allied heads of state meet at Yalta to outline final war plans and postwar political arrangements.

April 30 Allies reach Berlin; Hitler commits suicide.

May 8 Germany surrenders.



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Shirer, William L. The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. 2 vols. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960. A history of Nazi Germany by a journalist formerly stationed in Berlin.

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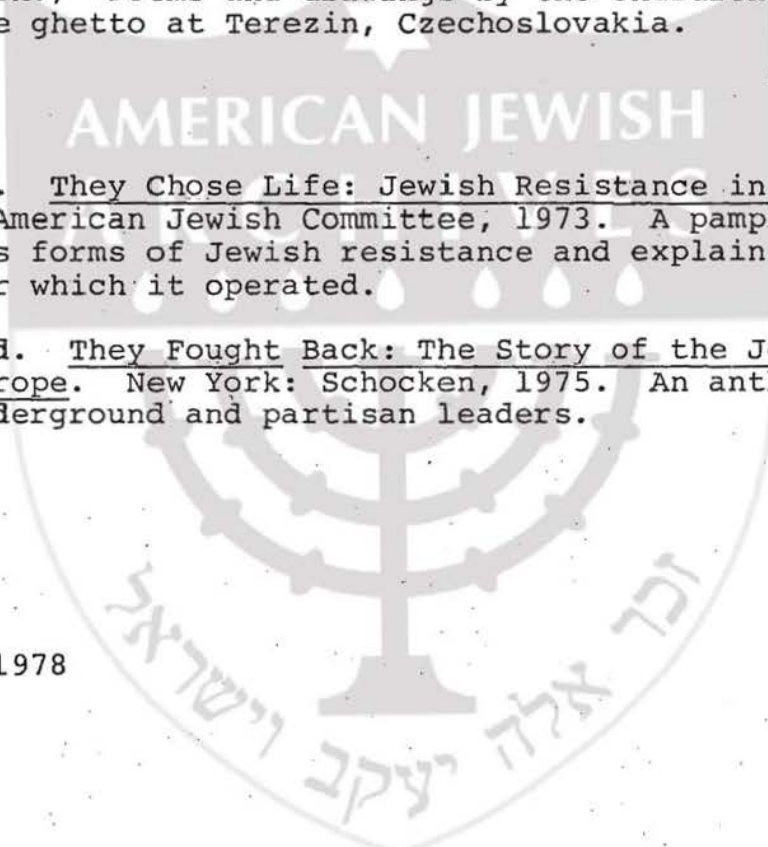
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February 21, 1978



## LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

"The Holocaust provides a 'plumbline' to test the debasement of education, the corruption of science, the criminalization of government, the dehumanization of man."

Franklin H. Littell  
Holocaust Studies Newsletter

The frenzy of torture and massacre perpetrated by Nazi Germany has deeply scarred humanity's self-image and shaken our belief that a high-culture imposes some restraints on bestiality. There are some people today who wish us to turn our back on these events, who oppose teaching about the Holocaust; there are a few who pretend it never happened. "There is no subject linked more to justice, for today the greatest injustice is being accomplished - the obliteration of those memories, the erasing of those events," writes Elie Wiesel.

The Holocaust remains utterly unique and resists understanding, but it may teach us something about the ways in which specific groups can be targeted as victims, made scapegoats for all the problems of a nation, separated out from the rest of humanity in the minds of fellow human beings, so that normal bonds of human fellowship are dissolved, and finally, subjected to escalating violence and mass murder. Jews were the primary victims of Hitler's fury, but another group might be next.

One lesson to be learned is that neither education, wealth, class, culture, occupation nor religious affiliation guaranteed resistance to the Nazi infection. The Holocaust was not the work of lunatics, sadists and criminal elements; it was planned by professionals and intellectuals, and

involved the cooperation and support of enormous numbers of civil servants, lawyers, police, engineers, truck drivers, trainmen and average citizens, in addition to military personnel and the entire SS. (Ernst Biberstein and Paul Blobel, portrayed in the film "Holocaust" as heads of mobile killing units, were indeed historical figures, whose units murdered thousands of civilians. They were, respectively, a Protestant minister and an architect.)

Those who resisted and protested -- many at the cost of their lives -- did so on the grounds of individual conscience, sometimes deeply rooted in religious conviction.

Another lesson to be learned is that public opinion can make a difference -- and did, even in Nazi Germany, where dissent was ruthlessly suppressed. The involuntary euthanasia program (in the film young Anna Weiss is sent to a "sanatorium" where she is gassed to death along with mentally retarded and physically deformed children) was discovered, despite the secrecy surrounding it, and overt protest against it came from German civilians including Nazi party members, and from both the Vatican and the German Catholic Church. As a result, the Euthanasia Program was ordered to a halt. Similarly, organized public resistance in such countries as Denmark, Bulgaria and France frustrated Nazi plans to annihilate the entire Jewish population.

Nazi antisemitism appropriated a pervasive, pre-existing antisemitism, and the Nazi theory of racial supremacy appropriated a pre-existing streak of fanatical nationalism in Germany. The Holocaust thus compels us to resist and struggle against all forms of bigotry and fanaticism, all claims of racial superiority and inferiority, all instances of racial and religious prejudice.



We cannot cancel out the Holocaust, but we can prevent the seeds of neo-Nazism from falling on fertile ground. We must learn to cherish the differences within the human family, not fear them. Religious, cultural, linguistic diversity and distinctive modes of living must be respected. Educators must be particularly alert to any attempt to blame a particular racial, religious or ethnic group for the ills and problems of society, or accusations that a particular group "controls the media" or "owns the banks" or is out to "take over" our institutions. Such charges have been made in the very recent past, in our own country.

Another lesson to be learned is that indifference to the fate of fellow human beings is a form of complicity in that fate. "It was this spirit of indifference, this cold aloofness of the bystanders, which made it possible for Hitler to turn Europe into a Jewish cemetery," writes Malcolm Hay. "Holocaust" may help us to identify with victims of persecution here or elsewhere, and strengthen our determination to prevent present or future attempts to dehumanize and kill human beings at will.

A comment following the execution of Adolf Eichmann (a historical figure, portrayed in "Holocaust," most directly in charge of the massive deportation and annihilation activities of the Third Reich):

"He seems to have lived, like the rest of us, on clichés and popular pieties: that one must be loyal to one's superiors, that patriotism excuses many excesses, that only a few men are responsible for the crimes of many, that the individual can do very little....

"We can at least teach men - by opening the book of Adolf Eichmann's career - that any evil they participate in is their evil; that neither duty nor loyalty nor ignorance nor some purported higher value can excuse us from choosing for ourselves."

The Commonwealth

That, perhaps, is the final lesson of "Holocaust."



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February 16, 1978

Ms. Judi Banki  
American Jewish Committee  
165 East 65th Street  
New York, New York

Dear Judi:

I must say in all candor that of the presentations made at the NJCRAC meeting yesterday, I found your proposed discussion guide outline to be most meaningful and impressive. I would very much like to see a copy of it as soon as it is available and at your discretion.

I must tell you between us that Henry Feingold and I have had a great deal of difficulty with the JWB package. Henry, who is a scholar on the Holocaust, has many questions about the treatment and I had to battle to change the media listing which was prepared for them by the Jewish Media Project out of Boston.

With warmest regards.

Sincerely,

*Julius*  
Julius Schatz

JS:mm

Julius Schatz, Director

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FIRST DRAFT

A GENERAL EDUCATIONAL GUIDE FOR NBC'S DOCU - DRAMA

"HOLOCAUST"

Containing:

1. A 'mini-history of the Holocaust keyed to the show's story line
2. An historical analysis of the major characters, places and themes depicted in the script
3. A concise bibliography of works related to the major themes and subjects generated by the show

P. 295

Prepared by:

Byron L. Sherwin

Professor

Spertus College of Judaica

Chicago, Illinois

Gerald Green's 'Holocaust' is a blend of fiction and non-fiction. The fictional aspects of his filmscript are, however, rooted in historical facts. The purpose of this discussion will be to present some historical data which the filmscript assumes. To better understand the filmscript, to better understand the Holocaust, it is important to elucidate the historical references, direct and indirect, explicit and implicit. Though by no means a complete analysis, the following pages will hopefully provoke a commitment for additional study and investigation of the Holocaust experience.

The beginning of the film is set in August 1935. Hitler had been chancellor of Germany for a year and a half. Overt, but not serious actions have begun. The following month in September 1935 the Nuremberg laws, depriving German Jews of citizenship and other basic civil rights, are enacted.

In subsequent years additional anti Jewish laws are passed in Germany. Some of these laws are mentioned in our story. For example, Dorf warns Dr. Weiss that it is forbidden for Jewish physicians to treat Aryan patients. Such a law was passed in Germany on July 25, 1938. On September 1, 1941 Jews in Germany had to wear a badge indicating they were Jews.

As our story continually informs us, the Nazis took every measure to "legalize" their anti-Jewish actions. The policies and programs they adopted were always "legally" articulated. These policies were implemented largely by educated and cultured people such as the fictional Dorf and the historical Heydrich. In the following pages, we shall try to elucidate the factual underpinnings of some of these policies and programs. We shall also identify the major characters of our story who are based upon actual individuals. We shall also briefly offer some information regarding the scenes of the story and the events which took place there. Where relevant, suggestions for further reading will be offered. At this point, however, the following general works are worthy of mention.

The major bibliographical resource work on the Holocaust is Jacob Robinson and Philip Friedman, eds. Guide to Jewish History Under Nazi Impact (NY: Ktav, 1975).

The following works are standard histories of the Holocaust:

Lucy Dawidowicz. The War Against the Jews (NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975; also in Bantam paperback);

Raul Hilberg. The Destruction of the European Jews (NY: New Viewpoints, 1973; available in paperback);

Nora Levin. The Holocaust (NY: Schocken, 1973; available in paperback);

Leon Poliakov. Harvest of Hate (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1954);

Gerald Reitlinger. The Final Solution (NY: Barnes, 1953; also in paperback).

#### I. THE CAST

Most of the Nazi officers portrayed in our story are historical figures. The Weiss family and the Helms family seem to be largely fictional characters (though the events in the story in which they participate are largely factual).

In presenting these characters -- Weisses and Helmses -- Green often attempts to construct a stereotyped composit. For example, the German Jews of the Weiss family especially Bertha & Mr and Mrs Palitz, are depicted as highly assimilated marginal Jews, totally at home in German culture, fully secure in their German identity. The German Catholics of the Helms family are depicted as working - class, economically insecure, anti-Semitic burghers. As the script progresses, the Weiss and Palitz families' illusions of security becomes increasingly evident. The Helms family's anti-Semitism becomes increasingly overt.

For further study of Jews in modern Germany, George Mossé's Germans and Jews (Grosset and Dunlap paperback) is most enlightening. For a fictional account of Jewish life in Germany from the nineteenth century through the Holocaust years, see the extraordinary novel by I.J. Singer, The Family Carnovsky (available in paperback). Green's development of some of his characters seem to rely somewhat upon those depicted by Singer. To better understand people in Germany, such as the Helms family, and to better understand how such people were won over to Nazism, the following works will be immensely enlightening: Milton Mayer, They Thought They Were Free (Quadrangle paperback) and William Sheridan Allen, Nazi Seizure of Power (paperback)

Besides Green's artistic success in constructing stereotypic characters, events in the lives of identifiable persons are integrated into the experiences of some of these characters. For example, Dr. Weiss' efforts in Warsaw to save people from being transported to Auschwitz, is based upon the actions of Dr. Nachum Remba. Like Weiss in the story, Remba was a member of the Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Warsaw. He set up a make-believe First Aid Station near the railway siding. He would then remove from the transport people who he claimed too weak to undertake the journey "East". During the Ghetto uprising, the Nazis caught Remba and deported him to Maidenek (Lublin) death camp where he perished. (See Yuri Suhl, They Fought Back pp. 94-97). As we shall note below, Karl Weiss is partially based upon a Terezin artist named Otto Unger (see below "Thereisenstadt") and the Nazi Dorf bears some resemblance to a Nazi general named Ohlendorf (see below "Ohlendorf").

Since most of the Nazis portrayed are clearly identifiable historical characters, while the Jews are largely fictional composites, most of the characters discussed below are well known Nazis.



ERNST BIBERSTEIN, a Protestant minister, was head of division "6" of EINSATZGRUPPE ("mobile killing unit") "C" which operated in Southern Russia. He was appointed to this post in the Spring of 1942 after Heydrich's assassination. His unit murdered two or three thousand people. Biberstein was sentenced to death by a US military tribunal, but the sentence was commuted to life by the Clemency Board. (On "Einsatzgruppe," see below).

PAUL BLOBEL, like Biberstein, was head of a sub-unit of Einsatzgruppe "C". Blobel directed the murders of over 5,000 Jews in the area of Kiev. It was his unit which was later responsible for the massacre at Babi Yar. In 1942 when word of these atrocities began to filter out to the West, Blobel organized a special unit to try to destroy evidence of the activities of the Einsatzgruppe. After unsuccessfully trying to destroy the remains of Einsatzgruppen victims with dynamite, Blobel, an architect, constructed huge pyres to consume the remains of the corpses in order to fulfill Himmler's order that not even ashes should remain. When the Russians overran occupied territories, Blobel's job remained largely undone. The evidence remained. Blobel was condemned to death by a US military tribunal and executed in 1951.

ADOLF EICHMANN was head of the Gestapo's Jewish Affairs Section. Between 1941 and 1944, his office was to be most directly in charge of the massive deportation and extermination activities of the Third Reich.

We meet Eichmann often throughout our story in the context of the variety of operations he supervised. We first meet Major Eichmann in Vienna in 1938 (actually he was a lieutenant then) where he is in charge of the Immigration office which attempted to deport as many Jews as possible from Germany-Austria.

Because of the "success" and efficiency Eichmann demonstrated in Vienna, he gained a reputation as an expert on Jewish affairs.

In 1942 Eichmann was put in charge of the deportation system which was the necessary and penultimate step in the destruction process.

It was Eichmann with whom Rudolf Hoss was ordered by Himmler to consult regarding the details for constructing Auschwitz. Eichmann visited Hoss in Auschwitz in the summer of 1941 for this "consultation".

The scene which depicts Eichmann in Thereisenstadt is historically accurate. Though Thereisenstadt was created by Heydrich, it was staffed by Eichmann's men. The interrogation of the artists occurred on July 17, 1944. Eichmann participated in the interrogation. As the story indicates, he entered into a lengthy discussion with the artists regarding the history of art and the function of art and artists. The interrogation ended with the condemnation of the artists for having spread "lies" about Nazi policies in Tereisenstadt. As depicted by the script, the artists were imprisoned in the terrible "Little Fortress" prison and torture center. Most of the artists were deported and subsequently perished.

At the end of the War (1946), Eichmann escaped unrecognized from an internment camp in the American zone of occupation. He was apprehended by Israeli agents in Argentina and flown to Israel for trial. He was hanged in Israel for crimes against the Jewish people.

Much has been written about Eichmann and about the Eichmann trial. For a succinct summary, see the chapter "Eichmann and the Eichmann Trial," by Gabriel Bach in Holocaust (Jerusalem: Keter Bookd). This book contains all the important

articles on Holocaust from the Encyclopedia Judaica and provides a good introduction to the Holocaust event.

REINHARD HEYDRICH had been Himmler's assistant before the war. In 1939, he was appointed head of the Gestapo. The 'Hitler order' regarding the "Final Solution of the Jewish problem" was conveyed from Hitler to Heydrich both by Goering and Himmler. Heydrich and his assistant, Eichmann, were largely responsible for executing this policy. Thus, Green's portrayal of Heydrich is accurate, except that it seems that Heydrich himself formulated many of the policies and programs which Green ascribes to Dorf. Green also makes constant reference to the popular theory that Heydrich had a Jewish grandfather. This theory, however, has been proven incorrect. Furthermore, Green refers to the assassination of Heydrich by Czech partisans on May 27th, 1942. The retaliation for his death was swift and brutal. The entire village of Lidice was razed and ploughed under. In Heydrich's memory, AKTION RHINEHARD, the destruction of Polish Jewry, was undertaken in earnest.

HEINRICH HIMMLER, portrayed in our story, was an early member of the Nazi party, and later chief of the SS. Himmler was technically Heydrich's superior and gave Heydrich the order to destroy European Jewry. The implementation of the order fell to Heydrich and his subordinate, Adolf Eichmann. Himmler, like other leading Nazis, continually tried to "justify" the "Final Solution" on the grounds that unless the Jews were eliminated, they would murder the entire German people and would destroy Western Civilization. Hence, Himmler perceived the "War against the Jews" as a "moral necessity" and as a self-defensive war. One of his speeches to SS soldiers making these points is portrayed by Green, as is Himmler's order (November 2, 1944) to dismantle the extermination camps

and to destroy all evidence. Himmler gave this order because he hoped for better peace terms with the Allies and was afraid of Allied reprisals after the war. Upon his capture in 1945, Himmler committed suicide. The scene of Dorf's suicide after his capture by the Americans in our story may be based upon Himmler's suicide.

On Himmler see, R. Manvell and H. Fraenkel. Heinrich Himmler and the memoirs of Himmler's masseur, Felix Kerstein, The Kersten Memoirs 1940-45.



RUDOLF HOESS (Hoss), commandant of Auschwitz, had contemplated entering the priesthood. A decorated soldier during World War I, he was convicted of murdering a French civilian and served five years in prison. Joining the SS in 1933, he rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel. Unlike the intellectuals who led the Einsatzgruppen, Hoess was an uneducated man who did his job efficiently and dispassionately.

In the summer of 1941 Himmler himself appointed Hoess commandant of Auschwitz. At this meeting, Hoess was informed that his major task would be to destroy the Jewish people, lest the Jewish people later on destroy the German people. Working closely with Eichmann, Hoess turned his camp into the largest center for murder ever known.

Hoess built Auschwitz slowly, but methodologically. He replaced the use of carbon monoxide for gassings with the quicker-working gas, Zyklon B. Gas chambers and crematoria began operation in the summer of 1942 and ceased operation in November, 1944. During this approximately sixteen month period about 2,500,000 people perished. Of these about two million were Jews. While hundreds of thousands died from hunger, starvation and disease, most perished in the gas chambers. A peak in the killing process was reached in May-June, 1944 when 12-15,000 people per day were murdered, mostly newly arrived Hungarian Jews. Hoess was condemned to death in Poland where he was executed in 1947.

Hoess wrote his autobiography while incarcerated in Poland after the War: Rudolf Hoess, Commandant of Auschwitz (NY: World Publishing, 1959).

HANS FRANK served as administrator of occupied Poland. Besides being charged with the job of governing Poland, he was responsible for squeezing food, supplies and forced labor out of Poland. In addition, his assistance was fully given in the massive extermination of Polish Jewry and of Jews transported into Poland. Though Frank was often in jurisdictional conflict with the SS forces in the regions under his control, this did not prevent his efforts on behalf of the process which ultimately led to the extermination of Polish Jewry. For example, it was his order on November 28, 1940 which instituted the formation of Judenrate i.e. Jewish Councils (see below) in each community of Jews exceeding 500 people. He personally directed the forced evacuation of Jews from Polish cities, such as the Polish capitol, Krakow, and the creation of most major ghettos in Poland, such as the Warsaw ghetto (October, 1940).

Frank was deeply committed to the extermination of the Jews. In a speech he delivered in Krakow on December 16, 1941, Frank declared that unless Jewry is eliminated, any German victory in the War, would be but a partial victory. Therefore, he insisted, Jews must be annihilated wherever they are found.

The destruction process in Poland was directed by Himmler and Frank. As rivals, they competed only in ruthlessness. This competition only helped accelerate the destruction of the Jews in Poland.

On July 11, 1943 Frank told a delegation of German physicians that the extermination of Polish Jews was unavoidable for reasons of public health.

Despite his exuberance regarding the "Final Solution" Frank was not directly involved in the death camps. In fact, he once tried to visit Auschwitz to confirm rumors he had heard about what was happening there, but his car was turned away at the gate.

At Nuremberg, Frank was convicted of crimes against humanity by the International Military Tribunal. He was hanged in 1946.

ERNST KALTENBRUNNER became head of the "Reich Security Main Office". After the assassination of Heydrich and rose to the rank of Major General. Eichmann was an early protegee of his. During his trial for war crimes, Kaltenbrunner claimed that he had nothing to do with the Jews, but that everything was done by his subordinates. Nevertheless, he was sentenced to death by the International Tribunal at Nuremberg for Crimes against Humanity and was hanged in 1946.

FATHER BERNHARD (BERNARD) LICHTENBERG, portrayed accurately in the script, was one of a handful of courageous churchmen to condemn the Nazi government for its persecution of the Jews. On the eve of massive deportations of Jews from Berlin, Lichtenberg prayed openly for the Jews at his Church, St. Hedwig's in Berlin. He was denounced and arrested. At his trial Lichtenberg requested to be sent with the Jews to the East so that he could pray for them there. He was sentenced to two years in prison. Upon his release, he was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Dachau. Too ill to travel, he died on the way.

For most of the war, ARTUR NEBE served as director of Kripo (Criminal Police),

a major sub-division of the RHSA (under the direction of Heydrich who had previously held the position as head of both Kripo and the Gestapo). Among other functions, Kripo was in charge of internal security and corruption within the Nazi government and armed forces, but especially within the SS. Nebe rose to the rank of Brigadier General. For five months he served as head of Einsatzgruppe "B" while it was active in White Russia. During that time, his unit executed about 45,000 Jews. In 1944 he was instrumental in initiating sea-water drinking experiments with Gypsies at Auschwitz. (Gypsy affairs were his specific jurisdiction). Nebe was reported to have been executed at the end of the War.

OTTO OHLENDORF was born in 1907. In the period described in the script he was a man in his thirties. A lawyer by training, he had established a reputation as an economist before the war. After working for the "Reich Security Main Office" under Heydrich between 1939 and 1943, he became a deputy minister in the Economic Ministry. Because Heydrich doubted Ohlendorf's loyalty to him, Heydrich assigned Ohlendorf to be commander of Einsatzgruppe "D". Soon after Heydrich's assassination (May 29, 1942), Ohlendorf returned to Germany with the rank of Major General after having directed the murder of 90,000 Crimean Jews. At his trial in 1947 before a U.S. tribunal at Nuremberg, Ohlendorf, unlike other defendants, made no excuses for his actions. He admitted his crimes and defended the "necessity" of his actions and claimed to have no personal hatred of Jews. Nor did Ohlendorf try to evade responsibility by claiming that he was only following orders, but claimed he was doing his duty then and that he would do it again if asked. Ohlendorf was condemned to death by the tribunal and was executed in 1951. Ohlendorf's personality and career seems to have been utilized by Green in his construction of the character, Dorf.



## II. PLACES

The story portrays a number of places which were central to the Holocaust. To better understand our story, some background information is provided about some of the geographical places.

AUSCHWITZ. Dr and Mrs Weiss, Karl Weiss and other characters of the story perish in Auschwitz.

"Auschwitz" was the largest of six extermination camps (actually it was the generic name for a complex of camps). The others were: Kulmhof, Belzec (created by Hans Hoefle who appears in our story), Sobibor (mentioned in our story), Lublin and Treblinka. Besides extermination camps, there were hundreds of concentration camps and slave labor camps. Mass killings of Jews at Auschwitz went on from the summer of 1942 until December, 1944 (see entry for Rudolf Hoess).

At least one million and as many as two and a half million perished there. The script mentions that 12,000 people were killed per day. In fact, during May-June, 1944 12-15,000 were murdered daily. The crematoria which had 46 ovens, had a capacity to burn 12,000 corpses a day; hence, this figure in the script.

Basic information about Auschwitz may be found in the standard histories and in the autobiography of Commandant Hoess (see above "Hoess"). Also see O. Kraus and E. Kulka Death Factory. For poignant autobiographical memoirs which depict life in Auschwitz, see Elie Wiesel's Night (Avon paperback) and Primo Levi's Auschwitz (published many times by different publishers).

BABI YAR. The script powerfully depicts the massacre at Babi Yar. The murder of about 35,000 Jews there took place within 48 hours (September 29-30, 1941). Paul Blobel the officer in charge of one unit of Einsatzgruppe "C" was in command. This mass murder was ostensibly a reprisal for sabotage activities in Kiev, after the Germans had captured that city. Green depicts these activities, including the dynamiting of the Continental Hotel. Despite the fact that the vast majority of people killed at Babi Yar were Jews, the memorial which stands on that sight makes no mention of Jews. (Altogether over 100,000 people were killed there). The only eternal memorial is the poem Babi Yar by the Russian poet, Yevgeny Yevtushenko and the documentary account by Anatoly Kuznetsov.

For a compelling documentary novel on this subject, see: Anatoly Kuznetsov. Babi Yar (NY Dial, 1966; also in paperback); Yevgeny Yevtushenko's famous poem, "Babi Yar" is found in his Selected Poems (Baltimore: Penguin, 1962), pp. 82-85.

BUCHENWALD. Karl Weiss is sent to Buchenwald soon after Krystallnacht (see below). Of the approximately 20,000 young Jewish men sent to concentration camps after Krystallnacht, over half were sent to Buchenwald.

Though there were hundreds of concentration camps (as opposed to extermination camps such as Auschwitz), Buchenwald along with Dachau, Sachsenhausen and Ravensbruck were the most infamous. Buchenwald was situated near the city of Weimar in Germany.

As was indicated in the script, there were many different kinds of prisoners in Buchenwald, besides Jews. These prisoners were identified by cloth patches

on their uniforms; e.g., red triangle -- political prisoner; purple triangle -- Jehovah Witness; brown--gypsies; pink-- homosexuals. We have discussed the gypsies elsewhere in this analysis. A word should be said, however, about some of the other prisoners of Buchenwald and other camps.

In the view of this writer, the Jehovah Witnesses were the only group persecuted by the Nazis exclusively for their religious belief (persecution of Jews was primarily "racial"). Since it is a doctrine of faith amongst the witnesses to recognize only G-d's sovereignty, they hold only minimal recognition of the state. Therefore, they refuse to take oaths of loyalty to any government. (In the United States, the Supreme Court has ruled that they cannot be compelled to pledge allegiance to the flag). Since they refused to take an oath of allegiance to Hitler, as was required by Nazi law, they were considered a politically dangerous, a-social element. Because of their continued non-compliance with the requirement to take the oath, many Witnesses were arrested in 1936 and were sent to concentration camps and in 1937 they were put under the control of the Gestapo. In 1938 and 1939 they were offered freedom if they would take the oath, but they refused despite brutal torture and the murder of many of their group. Of the 6,034 Witnesses in Germany from 1933 to 1945, 5,911 were arrested and sent to concentration camps. Of these, about 2,000 were murdered. Homosexuals were also persecuted by the Nazis as an a-social element. Himmler, for example, had his own nephew killed for being a homosexual. Unfortunately, the fate of homosexuals under the Nazis has not been adequately researched and described.

As in the case of Karl Weiss, Buchenwald was frequently a camp from which people were transferred elsewhere. Unlike Karl who was sent to Thereisenstadt, most were sent to other camps such as Mauthausen. Towards the end of the war,

as the Russians pressed forward from the East, prisoners from Polish Camps such as Auschwitz, were transported to Buchenwald, inside Germany. On April 11, 1945 Buchenwald was liberated by the American army. Of the 238,380 prisoners the camp held since it opened in July, 1937, 56,549 had died or had been murdered there.

Perhaps the best description and analysis of life in a Nazi concentration camp is Eugen Kogon. The Theory and Practice of Hell (NY: Farran Straus, 1950; available in Berkley Windhover paperback, 1975). Much of the discussion is specifically based upon Buchenwald.

On the Jehovah Witnesses, see Kogan and Philip Friedman. Wiener Library Bulletin 5 (1951)

THERESIENSTADT ghetto, called "Terezin" in Czech, was created by Heydrich. Thirty five miles from Prague, Terezin had been a small fortress of 7-8,000 soldiers and peasants. It was named after Maria Theresa who had been Empress of Austria in the Eighteenth Century.

In the beginning of 1942, Jews began arriving in significant numbers at Terezin. Originally, the Ghetto was to be a place for three kinds of people: (1) old sick people who could not survive the rigors of "resettlement!"; (2) decorated and disabled Jewish war veterans of the First World War; (3) prominent Jews whose disappearance might invite inquiries from other countries. Later, others were sent there as well.

By the end of 1942, over 90,000 Jews were jammed into confines which normally

housed 7,000. Nazi propoganda portrayed Terezin as the "Paradise Ghetto," and described it as a resort. Consequently, many German Jews, bribed their way into Terezin, thinking that they would have better treatment there than they were getting in Germany.

Deportations from Terezin to extermination camps such as Auschwitz and Treblinka took place from January 1942 until October, 1944. During this time, disease and starvation claimed the lives of thousands of the inhabitants of Terezin. Most who survived were transported to the "East." Altogether, a total of 139,654 Jews were sent to Thereisenstadt, (approximately Jan 1942 - October, 1944). Of these, 17,320 survived until the liberation in May 1945. 33,419 died in the ghetto and 86,934 were transported to extermination camps.

There were many intermarried couples such as Karl and Inga Weiss in Terezin. Many Aryans followed their Jewish mates to this ghetto. Furthermore, the portrayal of Karl Weiss as one of the "artists of Terezin" and the events described in our story regarding these artists, actually took place.

A special drafting workroom was constructed where artists worked. They painted reproductions of famous works and "selected" scenes of Ghetto life to be used for propoganda purposes, charts and graphics, etc. They lived apart from other prisoners, constantly under the specific supervision of the SS. Despite the restricted and controlled life they led, a number of these artists expressed their horror and anti-Nazi sentiments in secretly prepared art work. Some of this art was smuggled out of Terezin, some was hidden in Terezin and a number have survived the War. Unfortunately, a number of anti-

Nazi drawings were found by the Nazis and the artists responsible were punished for conducting "propoganda" injurious to the State. Three artists in particular were interrogated in this regard. While Green names the artists Frey and Felsher (the third being Karl Weiss), their names were actually Lev Haas, Otto Ungar and Fritta (Fritz Taussig). The initial interrogation occurred on July 17, 1944 with Eichmann present (see discussion of Eichmann). All three were tortured in the "Little Fortress" (A special prison in Terezin where harsh torture took place). The mangling of Karl's hands in our story is based upon the torture and amputation of the fingers of Unger's right hand. Unger was sent to Buchenwald where he perished. Only Haas survived the war. Though not as technically good as the works as those of the artists of Terezin, the drawings and poetry of the children (under 16) of Terezin are better known. Of the 15,000 children of Terezin, only 100 survived the war.

Our story also makes reference to visits by the Red Cross to Terezin. In fact, a number of such visits took place. In August, 1944 a delegation of the German Red Cross visited Terezin. A commission from the Danish Red Cross also visited Terezin in 1943. A "show" was put on for these commissions and glowing reports of life in Terezin were forwarded by these visitors to the International Red Cross in Stockholm.

Thereisenstadt has been described in many books, articles and films. Most impressive is Arnost Lustig's collection of short-stories, Night and Hope (Washington Inscape, 1977; Avon paperback, 1978) and the film based upon this book, Transport from Paradise. Gerald Green's description of the artists in Terezin, is drawn from his earlier book, The Artists of Terezin (NY Hawthorn, 1969). On the children's drawings, see I Never Saw Another Butterfly.

Additional visual art and textual data on Terezin art is to be found in Alfred Kantor The Book of Alfred Kantor (NY: Mc Graw Hill, 1971).

WARSAW GHETTO Green portrays life in the Warsaw ghetto. It is difficult however, for us to imagine how horrible it actually was. Ghetto life was characterized by extreme poverty, starvation, disease, crowding, and anxiety. In 1941, in the Lodz ghetto, for example, the following diet was provided:

2 kilos flour

185 grams sugar

1½ quarts milk

100 grams bread

per person, per month. The average caloric intake in many ghettos was 170-227 calories a day. In the Warsaw ghetto, twenty to twenty five people lived in a room four by six meters, at one point. There was little or no heat, despite the -13<sup>o</sup> F. temperature of January, 1940 in Warsaw. Sanitary conditions were virtually unknown, epidemic (esp. typhus and dysentory .) were rampant. Corpses were left in the streets. There were cases of cannibalism. There were continuous raids, searches and beatings. Laws and rules changed almost daily. Everyone was anxious about sheer survival, from minute to minute. The threat of deportation or forced labor was a daily reality. Much more, of course, could be said.

Despite these despicable conditions, cultural and educational activities continued. Green describes these activities in Terezin and in the Warsaw ghetto. For portraits of life in the Warsaw ghetto, see the two best known diaries of Warsaw ghetto life:

Emmanuel Ringleblum. Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto (NY: Schucken, 1958; paperback, 1974); The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan (NY: Collier, 1965; paperback, 1973). On the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, see "Resistance."

#### TERMS, THEMES AND MISCELLANEOUS

In addition to identifying people and places, it is necessary to shed some light upon various themes and terms, discussed or alluded to, in the story. Though not a complete list, the following material should provoke discussion while providing information.

CHRISTIANITY Throughout our story, Green makes constant reference to a link between Christian teachings and Nazi anti-Semitism.

For example, when Dorf's children ask their mother why everyone hates the Jews, she responds,

"Cause they killed Christ. Didn't you learn that in Sunday School?"

In a conversation between Dorf and Heydrich, Heydrich comments,

"Anti-semitism is the cement that binds us together. Christians may disagree on a lot of things, but as men of conscience they can unite on hatred of Jews."

Finally, in a conversation with Himmler, Dorf remarks,

"The Fuhrer himself said we were completing the work of Christianity, defending Western culture."



Much recent scholarship has attempted to link well-established anti-Semitic motifs in Christian teachings with Nazi anti-Semitism. Indeed, such stereotypes of Jews as: Christ-Killers, traitors, demonic enemies, corrupters of Western culture, exploiters, etc., are well established in Christian theological literature. Rooted in the New Testament, developed by the Church Fathers, nurtured in medieval Christian culture and supplemented by racist doctrine in the modern period, Christian anti-Semitism provided some of the basic raw material for Nazi anti-Semitism. Thus, when Hitler spoke to the German people about the Jews, he was speaking a well-established language which had been given long-standing respectability by the Church. Indeed, Hitler is reported to have once told a German Catholic Bishop that in his policies regarding the Jews, he was only putting the 1500 year old teachings of the Church into practice.

Because of this link between Christian and Nazi anti-Semitism, a number of Christian scholars have asserted that the Holocaust raises more difficult problems for Christian faith than it does for Jewish faith after the Holocaust. For discussion on this matter, see:

Alan Davies. Anti-Semitism and the Christian Mind: The Crisis of Conscience After Auschwitz (NY: Herder, 1969).

Franklin Littell. The Crucifixion of the Jews (NY: Harper, 1975)

Rosemary Ruether. Faith and Fratricide (NY: Seabury, 1974).

DEPORTATION FROM GERMANY OF POLISH JEWS After Krystallnacht, (see below)

Dr. Weiss is deported to his native Poland along with other Jews in Germany holding Polish passports. In fact, such a deportation did occur, some weeks before Krystallnacht.

On October 7, 1938 the Nazi government decreed that all passports and identity papers of Jews in Germany be stamped with the letter "J". On the same day, the Polish government prescribed another kind of stamp for Polish nationals living abroad. Those lacking the stamp were to lose their Polish nationality. The Polish consulates had been instructed not to renew or to stamp passports of Jews who had been abroad for more than five years. Thus, Polish Jews in Germany and Austria were to become stateless residents of Germany. The German government responded by arresting all Jews in Germany with Polish passports, despite the duration of their residency in Germany. About 20,000 people were effected by this action. On October 28, 1938 a trainload of people left Germany and arrived at the Polish border the following day. Like Dr. Weiss, each person was stripped of all possessions except 10 marks, which was all the money one could take out of Germany according to the law. Until the Polish government could discern what to do with these people they were billeted in stables at a military camp. Amongst these exiles were the parents of Herschel Grynszpan, a Jewish youth living in Paris with his uncle. From Poland, Lindel Grynszpan wrote to his son about what had happened. In an act of revenge and in an attempt to attract world attention to the plight of the Jews, Grynszpan assassinated vom Rath. This assassination provided the "excuse" for "reprisals" against the Jews in Germany. These "reprisals" are known as Krystallnacht.

EINSATZGRUPPEN. The "open air killings" in Eastern Europe, so vividly portrayed by Green, may have claimed as many as 1,500,000 Jewish lives. Whereas in the extermination camps the victims were brought to the murderer, in the "open air killings," the murderers came to the victims.

The "open air killings" seem to have been part of an order given by Hitler as part of his plan for the invasion of Russia. Until his assassination, Heydrich was in charge of the organization and execution of this plan of mass murder. Heydrich "negotiated" a plan which insured the cooperation of the Wehrmacht. Thus, the German army became a partner with the Gestapo and the SS in mass murder of civilians.

Four Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing units), with a total strength of about three thousand men operated in Eastern Europe. Their numbers were often supplemented by regular soldiers and by units of local collaborators including Lithuanians, Estonians, Latvians and Ukrainians. The leaders of the four Einsatzgruppen and of the sub-units of each Einsatzgruppe were largely men of high intellect with professional backgrounds. They were in no way gangsters, perverts or hoodlums. Ohlendorf and Biberstein, portrayed in the script, were a lawyer and a Protestant minister, respectively. Fortunately, about a million and a half Jews eluded the grasp of the mobile killing units by fleeing eastward before their arrival. Many Jews, however, remembering the kindness showed them by German troops during World War I relied upon their memories rather than believe the rumors about mass murder. Not only Jews, but gypsies and "Bolsheviks" were killed by the Einsatzgruppen.

As Green notes, the actions of the mobile killing units were "justified" both during and after the war on the ground that Jews were the natural enemy of Germans and had to be killed, lest they kill all Germans and destroy Western civilization. The massive killings were also claimed to be merely "reprisals" against Jews for acts of sabotage and for spreading disease amongst German troops.

Bureaucratically engendered "rationalizations" were always forthcoming regarding these massive killings. As Green aptly notes, the words "killing" and "murder" were never used with regard to this program. Only such terms as: "actions," "resettlement," "cleansing," "special treatment," "elimination," or "executive measure," were used.

The Einsatzgruppen are discussed in some detail in the standard histories of Hilberg and Levin.

### EMIGRATION

When Inga tries to convince the Weiss family to emigrate from Germany, Karl responds, "There is no place left to go." In about 1940, this statement was terribly accurate.

The original Nazi plan was to "solve" the "Jewish problem" by ridding Europe of Jews by forcing them to emigrate. When Poland and Western Russia were conquered by Germany, this solution proved impractical. Too many Jews had fallen under German jurisdiction. Thereupon, another "Final Solution" was devised -- extermination.

In the 1930's masses of Jews left Germany and Austria. Of the approximately 500,000 Jews in Germany in 1933, 350,000 emigrated before 1939. With the outbreak of the war, emigration became difficult, if not impossible. Jews who had fled to Western Europe -- France, Belgium, Holland -- found themselves under German rule once again, by 1941. Eastern Europe was also overrun. The "White Paper" closed the gates to Palestine.

The United States would not change its quotas on immigration. Central and South America also restricted Jewish immigration. Even if Jews wanted to escape,

escape was hardly possible. Paradigmatic of this predicament is the story of a ship-load of Jewish refugees in search of a home: The Voyage of the Damned by Gordon Thomas and Max M. Witts (Fawcett Crest Paperback) and the film of the same name, based upon this book.

EUTHANASIA PROGRAM. Various scenes, early in the script, make reference to the gassing to death of mongoloids, mentally retarded people, individuals with birth defects and with physical disabilities. This program of "involuntary euthanasia" takes place secretly. Families of the victims are told that their loved ones had perished from natural causes in a hospital or in a sanitorium. The remains of the victims are cremated (so as to prevent autopsies from revealing the true cause of death).

After she is raped, Anna is brought by Inga to such a "sanitorium" with the hope that she might be cured of the ensuing psychological trauma which put her in a catatonic state. Unknowingly, Inga has condemned her sister-in-law to certain death.

The "Eutanasia Program" actually occurred and was, in a sense, a "trial run" for the massive murder of Jews and others in extermination camps later in the war. The same method of deportation - gassing - cremation took place. The first use of gas chambers, camouflaged as showers, was used in the Euthanasia Program. Many of the personnel later to direct massive murders at extermination camps -- e.g. Franz Stangl, commandant of Treblinka -- received their "training" in the Euthanasia Program.

Directed mostly against non-Jewish Germans, the euthanasia program began September 1, 1939 (the first day of World War II when the Germans invaded Poland) and was ended by an order from Hitler in August, 1941. It is estimated that over a quarter of a million individuals classified as "useless mouths to feed", or as people with "lives unworthy to be lived" were murdered in this fashion.

Despite the secrecy surrounding this program and the use of euphemisms to "cover up" what was happening (as later occurred during the extermination of the Jews), overt protest against this program was forthcoming from German civilians including Nazi party members and from Church leaders. In the summer of 1941, Hitler's private train pulled into Nuremberg as people were being loaded onto trucks. In spite of the fact that Hitler was then at the height of his power, German civilians in the station openly jeered Hitler. Soon after, the Euthanasia Program was ordered to a halt. The fact that this protest against a "secret" program seems to have been successful appears to demonstrate that knowledge of, and successful protest against "secret" programs was possible in Nazi Germany. But, Germans only protested the Euthanasia Program and not the "Final Solution".

The Euthanasia Program appears to have been directed not by Heydrich or Himmler, but by Hitler's personal chancellery together with the Department of Health. While primarily used as a means of murdering people with physical and mental defects, the program was also used against political dissidents and other "asocial" individuals. An additional ulterior motive was the desire of the State to expropriate the money of certain individuals. It is estimated that about

one billion marks was confiscated by the Nazi government from the accounts of individuals murdered in the Euthanasia Program.

As Green suggest, the Euthanasia Program was a preview of the "Final Solution." The two are linked. Simon Wiesenthal has best described the Euthanasia Program as formal "schools for murder." As Wiesenthal puts it, the program "was organized like a medical school -- except that the 'students' were not taught to save human life but to destroy it, as efficiently as possible." Finally, it should be noted that the Vatican and the German Catholic Church did strongly protest the Euthanasia Program, but with few exceptions, did not offer any hint of protest regarding extermination of the Jews.

The "Euthanasia Program" is discussed in the standard histories by Poliakov and Reitlinger. A more extensive discussion is Gitta Sereny. Into That Darkness: From Mercy Killing to Mass Murder (NY: Mc Graw Hill, 1974).

GYPSIES Green aptly describes the Gypsies in Buchenwald. Actually, Gypsies were present at at least two other scenes portrayed in the script-- the Warsaw Ghetto and Auschwitz. Like the Jews, Gypsies were marked for extermination by the Nazis. For Nazi ideology, the Gypsies represented a racially inferior people who had racially polluted the Aryan people. It is uncertain as to how many Gypsies were actually killed. Estimates range from 100,000 to 400,000. Gypsies were ghettoized, shot by the "action groups" in Eastern Europe and gassed at Auschwitz and other camps. In addition, they were often used as subjects for medical experiments; e.g. - how long can a human being live on sea-water.

On the plight of the Gypsies, see especially:

Dora Yates. "Hitler and the Gypsies," Commentary 8 (1949) 455-59.

Philip Friedman. "Nazi Extermination of the Gypsies," Jewish Frontier 18:1 (1951) 11-14.

I.G. FARBEN, referred to in our story, is not the name of a person or of a place, but of one of the first giant international conglomerate cartels. Though not anti-Jewish before the War, Farben adopted the policy of the Reich regarding the Jews during the War and used it for their own purpose -- greater profit. Hence, Farben's one rule -- like so many business enterprises -- was profit and productivity despite moral and humane considerations. The Nazi occupation of Eastern Europe, coupled with Nazi racial policy regarding Jews and Slavs, was seen by Farben as an opportunity for higher profit, higher productivity and lower costs through the use of slave laborers who could be worked to death. (Not only Farben, but other German conglomerates, such as Krupp, exploited this "opportunity".) Consequently, Farben made extraordinary investments at Auschwitz in building factories so that it might utilize the "slave labor" available there. The Board of Directors of Farben were aware of this program and members of the board visited Auschwitz to inspect their investments.

The average life expectancy of a "slave" at the Farben synthetic rubber plant near Auschwitz was four months, while in the Farben coal mines, life expectancy was one month. Not only did Farben profit from "slave labor" but also from the production of Zyklon B gas, manufactured by its subsidiaries, which was used to kill people at Auschwitz and elsewhere. The president of one of these subsidiaries which manufactured Zyklon B was Dr. Bruno Tesch who appears in our story. At the end of the war the head of Farben was sentenced to four years in prison and was released from prison in 1950. The members of the Farben



board responsible for the Auschwitz plant joined the boards of other corporations after the War. Krupp is still a large German conglomerate. Thus, not only the SS and the German army were essential partners in the "Final Solution," German business also played a major role.

JEWISH ARMED RESISTANCE The script depicts Jewish armed resistance primarily in two places: the Warsaw Ghetto and the forest of Nazi occupied Russia and Poland. The portrayal of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising jives with other more extensive descriptions. Mordecai Anielewicz is indeed the name of the primary leader of the uprising.

Rudi, the Weiss' son, joins a group of Jewish partisans led by "Uncle Sasha." The description of this partisan leader and of the group's activities seem to be based upon the activities of a partisan group which operated in the forests of the Soviet Ukraine led by Misha Gildenman, who was called "Uncle Mi'sha."

As additional evidence comes to light, the very wide-spread occurrence of Jewish armed resistance in camps, ghettos and forests is now becoming known.

Some of Green's portrayal regarding Jewish resistance is drawn from Yuri Suhl, ed. They Fought Back (Paperback Library and other editions). The most extensive study of resistance is the huge work by Ruben Ainstein. Jewish Resistance in Nazi Occupied Europe (NY: Barnes and Noble, 1974).

On the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, see the journalistic account by Dan Kurzman. The Bravest Battle (NY: Putnam, 1976). For fictionalized but true

accounts, see John Hersey: The Wall (Bantam paperback) and Leon Uris Mila 18 (Bantam paperback). In addition, see relevant sections of Holocaust (Keter, 1974).

JEWISH COUNCIL (JUDENRAT) The Weiss brothers become members of the Jewish Council in the Warsaw Ghetto. These councils are called Judenrat (pl. Judenrate in German). It was the responsibility of these councils to administer life in the ghettos. They were responsible for all aspects of ghetto life: food distribution, housing arrangements; health care; educational, recreational and religious activities, etc. They were in charge of the Jewish ghetto police and of dealing with the Nazi authorities. When deportations began, they were responsible for composing the lists of people for transport.

The behavior of the Judenrate is one of the greatest moral problems of the Holocaust. To be sure, Judenrate differed in moral quality from ghetto to ghetto and the integrity of individual members of individual Judenrate was also of a variety of levels. However, problems still persist. The accusers of the Judenrate contend that they collaborated, knowingly or unknowingly, with the Nazis in the destruction of their own people. The defenders of the Judenrate argue that they did the best job one could expect in an intolerable situation, that their efforts saved as many Jews as possible. The truth is probably somewhere in the middle, somewhere between compliance and defiance, collaboration and resistance, cowardice and heroism.

Green's portrayal of the Judenrat in the Warsaw Ghetto embodies many of the tensions which characterized their day-to-day existence. The debate, depicted by Green, over compliance or resistance, captures the essence of the dilemma which Judenrat members faced.

In the vast and growing literature on the Judenrat, Hilberg and Hannah Arendt (Eichmann in Jerusalem) adopt the collaborationist posture. Jacob Robinson attempts to refute Arendt in The Crooked Shall be Made Straight. Dawidowicz attempts to give a more "understanding" description of the problems of the Judenrat than Hilberg and Arendt. Isaiah Trunk's Judenrat (Mac Millan, 1972; now in paperback) is close to being a definitive work on the Judenrat.

KRYSTALLNACHT Using the assassination of German diplomat vom Rath by Herschel Grynzspan as an excuse, an orgy of arson, property damage, beatings and desecration of synagogues in Germany was launched. Actually, Goebells had already notified Nazi party leaders that a major anti-Jewish demonstration was to take place. Heydrich, however, coordinated the pogrom. At 1:20 AM on November 10, 1938 he sent a teletype to all headquarters and stations of police and Gestapo, instructing them that anti-Jewish demonstrations were expected the night of November 9-10. These demonstrations were to appear spontaneous and unrelated to Nazi party activities. Heydrich ordered that Jewish property and synagogues were to be destroyed as long as Aryan property was not damaged and that local police were not to interfere. Furthermore, he ordered massive arrests of young, healthy Jewish men, who were then to be sent to concentration camps. Thus, the arrest of Karl Weiss and his subsequent interment in Buchenwald correlates with known facts. About 20,000 Jewish males were arrested and of them, over 10,000 were sent to Buchenwald. Green incorrectly puts the number at 30,000. Green's statement that 36 Jews were killed in the action is based upon Heydrich's report to Goring. However, it is reasonable to assume that more than 36 were actually killed. In the aftermath of Krystallnacht, as the script reveals, the Nazi leadership (except Goebells) felt that since mob

violence could not be controlled a more systematic way with which to deal with the Jews had to be devised.

SALONIKA JEWRY. The story ends with Rudi going to Palestine with a group of Jewish orphans from Salonika. The Jews of Salonika were Sefardic Jews and by referring to their plight, Green may be attempting to show that not only Ashkenazic Jews, but also Sefardic Jewry (to a lesser, but not insignificant) degree was effected during the Holocaust.

Before the war, most Greek Jews (50,000 out of 70,000) lived on Salonika. Most perished at Auschwitz in 1943. Of the 60,000 Greek Jews deported to Auschwitz, only 1,475 survived the war.

On the fate of the Jews of Salonika, see Hilberg and Levin; also, Cecil Roth, "The Last Days of Jewish Salonika," Commentary (July, 1950), pp.50-51.

SLAVS References, sprinkled throughout the story, are made regarding the enslavement of the Slavic people, especially Poles and Russians. To be sure, the Nazi plan was the enslavement and eventual extermination of the Slavs. Himmler had told his SS generals that 30,000,000 Slavs would have to be killed. In fact, the "plan" regarding the Slavs had some "success." For example, about 5,000,000 non-Jewish Poles were used as slave-laborers by the Nazis and about 2,200,000 non-Jewish Poles were systematically murdered. We can better understand the Nazi devastation of Poland if we consider the following statistics. Before World War II there were approximately 30 million Poles of which about 3,300,000 were Jews. Of these 3 million Jewish Poles and 2.2 million non-Jewish Poles were systematically murdered; thus, more than one of six Poles was murdered by the Nazis. Add to this figure

the five million enslaved and you see that one of every three Poles was either murdered or enslaved by the Third Reich.

B  
Though massacres of other Slavic groups than Poles-- such as Bohemians and Slovaks-- were undertaken by the Nazis, it was the Russian Slavs who were the real target of Nazi policy regarding the Slavs. The Reich's racial policy condemned the Slavs, but its political policy considered Communism a "sociological crime." Therefore, the Nazi leadership ordered its troops to show no humanity for Russians-- soldiers or civilians. It has been estimated that as many as four million Russian soldiers, held as prisoners of war, were murdered by the Nazis. Because of Nazi racial and political ideology, they deemed the Geneva Convention inapplicable to Slavic Russians.

When contemplating the experience of the Slavic people under the Nazis, one should become aware of the fact that, while the Holocaust was primarily a Jewish experience, it was not only a Jewish experience. Other groups -- Slavs, Gypsies, Jehova Witnesses, homosexuals -- were also marked for persecution. One must speak not only of the six million Jews murdered, but also of the more than 12 million people systematically exterminated by the Nazis. But even this astronomical figure does not represent the as many as 100 million people -- soldiers and civilians -- who perished in World War II.

SUICIDE Mr and Mrs. Palitz, commit suicide soon after the Krystallnacht (November, 1938). The basic assumption of their lives, that they were true and complete Germans had been shattered. Unable or unwilling to cope with this realization, they take their own lives.

Suicide was not uncommon amongst German Jews, (especially in Berlin) in the 1930's. In 1933, hundreds of German Jews committed suicied. When deportations began about 1200 Jews from Berlin alone took their lives.



## LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

"The Holocaust" provides a 'plumbline' to test the debasement of education, the corruption of science, the criminalization of government, the dehumanization of man."

Franklin H. Littell  
Holocaust Studies Newsletter

The frenzy of torture and massacre perpetrated by Nazi Germany has deeply scarred humanity's self-image and shaken our belief that a high culture imposes some restraints on bestiality. There are some people today who wish us to turn our back on these events, who oppose teaching about the Holocaust; there are a few who pretend it never happened. "There is no subject linked more to justice, for today the greatest injustice is being accomplished - the obliteration of those memories, the erasing of those events," writes Elie Wiesel.

The Holocaust remains utterly unique and resists understanding, but it may teach us something about the ways in which specific groups can be targeted as victims, made scapegoats for all the problems of a nation, separated out from the rest of humanity in the minds of fellow human beings, so that normal bonds of human fellowship are dissolved, and finally, subjected to escalating violence and mass murder. Jews were the primary victims of Hitler's fury, but another group might be next.

One lesson to be learned is that neither education, wealth, class, culture, occupation nor religious affiliation guaranteed resistance to the Nazi infection. The Holocaust was not the work of lunatics, sadists and criminal elements; it was planned by professionals and intellectuals, and

involved the cooperation and support of enormous numbers of civil servants, lawyers, police, engineers, truck drivers, trainmen and average citizens, in addition to military personnel and the entire SS. (Ernst Biberstein and Paul Blobel, portrayed in the film "Holocaust" as heads of mobile killing units, were indeed historical figures, whose units murdered thousands of civilians. They were, respectively, a Protestant minister and an architect.)

Those who resisted and protested -- many at the cost of their lives -- did so on the grounds of individual conscience, sometimes deeply rooted in religious conviction.

Another lesson to be learned is that public opinion can make a difference -- and did, even in Nazi Germany, where dissent was ruthlessly suppressed. The involuntary euthanasia program (in the film young Anna Weiss is sent to a "sanatorium" where she is gassed to death along with mentally retarded and physically deformed children) was discovered, despite the secrecy surrounding it, and overt protest against it came from German civilians including Nazi party members, and from both the Vatican and the German Catholic Church. As a result, the Euthanasia Program was ordered to a halt. Similarly, organized public resistance in such countries as Denmark, Bulgaria and France frustrated Nazi plans to annihilate the entire Jewish population.

Nazi antisemitism appropriated a pervasive, pre-existing antisemitism, and the Nazi theory of racial supremacy appropriated a pre-existing streak of fanatical nationalism in Germany. The Holocaust thus compels us to resist and struggle against all forms of bigotry and fanaticism, all claims of racial superiority and inferiority, all instances of racial and religious prejudice.



We cannot cancel out the Holocaust, but we can prevent the seeds of neo-Nazism from falling on fertile ground. We must learn to cherish the differences within the human family, not fear them. Religious, cultural, linguistic diversity and distinctive modes of living must be respected. Educators must be particularly alert to any attempt to blame a particular racial, religious or ethnic group for the ills and problems of society, or accusations that a particular group "controls the media" or "owns the banks" or is out to "take over" our institutions. Such charges have been made in the very recent past, in our own country.

Another lesson to be learned is that indifference to the fate of fellow human beings is a form of complicity in that fate. "It was this spirit of indifference, this cold aloofness of the bystanders, which made it possible for Hitler to turn Europe into a Jewish cemetery," writes Malcolm Hay. "Holocaust" may help us to identify with victims of persecution here or elsewhere, and strengthen our determination to prevent present or future attempts to dehumanize and kill human beings at will.

A comment following the execution of Adolf Eichmann (a historical figure, portrayed in "Holocaust," most directly in charge of the massive deportation and annihilation activities of the Third Reich):

"He seems to have lived, like the rest of us, on clichés and popular pieties: that one must be loyal to one's superiors, that patriotism excuses many excesses, that only a few men are responsible for the crimes of many, that the individual can do very little....

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## TO THE TEACHERS:

The Holocaust, which generally refers to the systematic persecution and murder of six million Jews during the Hitler era (1933-1945), was a crime without precedent in history. The film "Holocaust" attempts to dramatize these events by following what happens to the members of one German-Jewish family from 1935 to 1945. Since the film is a drama rather than a documentary, students may be confused as to whether the events described actually took place. This is particularly true of youth who generally have the most difficulty in distinguishing fact from fantasy in television. It is, therefore, important for the teacher to stress the authenticity of the events which this film dramatizes. The terrifying inhumanity of the Nazi period is a fact of history. During this period, some six million Jews -- one-third of all the Jewish people living in the world -- were murdered as part of a deliberate and systematic plan.

The Jews were not alone as victims of the Nazis. Some five million non-Jewish victims of Nazism were also systematically destroyed. Any study of the period must acknowledge the suffering of all who were considered enemies of the Third Reich. But only the Jews and the Gypsies were singled out by the Nazis for total liquidation.

AIM To try to comprehend the reality of the horror of the Holocaust. To follow the concrete events as they developed, from the discriminatory legislation and enforced resettlement, through wanton violence and murder against individuals, to the "final solution" and the establishment of the death camps. To explore the

It is extremely difficult to confront the Holocaust, and perhaps impossible to comprehend its reality; that human beings were systematically and methodically segregated, starved, tortured, experimented upon, utterly degraded, gassed and cremated in enormous death factories built for that purpose along. The temptation to dismiss these events in one of two ways is enormous; either the Holocaust is seen as



some nightmarish episode, a cataclysmic explosion of human depravity with no specific context in time or place, no roots in history and no developmental process; or it is subsumed, along with events such as My Lai and Hiroshima, as another example of "man's inhumanity to man." To yield to the first temptation is to deny that any lessons may be learned; to yield to the second is to deny the uniqueness of the Holocaust.

The Holocaust was a crime of genocide -- that is, an attempt to exterminate all members of a particular national or racial group simply because they were members of that group. Not every war crime or oppressive action is genocide, however unjust and horrible it may be. The massacre of the Czech town of Lidice by the Nazis was an act of staggering brutality, but it was not genocide. Neither is the oppression of Jews in the Soviet Union, or the mistreatment of Blacks in the United States. While modern racism has much to answer for, only the Nazis used it as a sanction for deliberately killing a whole people.

The aim of this discussion guide is threefold: (1) to help students understand the Holocaust in its concreteness and its uniqueness; (2) to explore the ideologies and the prejudices which help make these events possible -- both the Nazi racial theories, and the centuries-long tradition of virulent antisemitism which the Nazis appropriated and exploited for the purpose of genocide; (3) by achieving a better understanding of the nature of prejudice and its dehumanizing affect on both victim and perpetrator, to encourage students to clarify their own thinking in regard to moral issues and human values.

This discussion guide is divided into seven sections, each section raising possible questions for consideration by students, providing some factual responses and appropriate excerpts from relevant literature. An appendix provides a chronology of major

developments connected with the Holocaust, a glossary of terms, and a recommended bibliography.



February 3, 1978

Ms. Beatrice Rothenbuecher  
19 East 88th Street, #14B  
New York, New York 10028

Dear Bea:

As we just discussed on the telephone, I am sending over to you by messenger this package including your draft for the Holocaust study guide you were working on. Because of time pressure, we haven't had a chance to have this retyped but I think you will find the notations and changes by Jim Rudin and me quite clear. You can, of course, call me if there are any questions about why we suggest that taking certain things out and emphasizing others might be more effective.

Also enclosed is the Holocaust bibliography which Marc Tanenbaum asked me to prepare for you. Judy is also sending you the first draft of the Alan Bennett paper on "Teaching the Holocaust to Jewish Teenagers" as well as the paper on the rationale for teaching Holocaust studies.

We are all very grateful for the hard work you are putting into this extremely important subject.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Inge Lederer Gibel  
Program Specialist  
Interreligious Affairs

ILG/es

Enclosures

cc: Marc H. Tanenbaum

~~Dictated but not read~~

bcc: Judith Banki  
A. James Rudin

### Lesson to Be Learned

Remembering the Holocaust will help us to use our power and moral strength to speak up, demand, compel mankind to change, to give up intolerance and hate, bigotry and fanaticism.

The testimony of the history of the Holocaust through fact and fiction, through the Nuremberg trials and programs like "Holocaust" help assure our future capacity to protect against indigent attempts to dehumanize and kill human beings at will. The extensive frenzy of torture and massacre perpetrated by Germany during the Nazi ascendancy, heavily scarred man's image of himself with effects which will long be with us. Danger to Jewish survival is always present in the world. Even where there is no clear and present danger, no physical harassment, there are always signs that the old hatred has not been uprooted - as when an African dictator voices undisguised approval of Hitler's Final Solution, or when notorious anti-semitic falsehoods are translated into contemporary anti-Zionism.

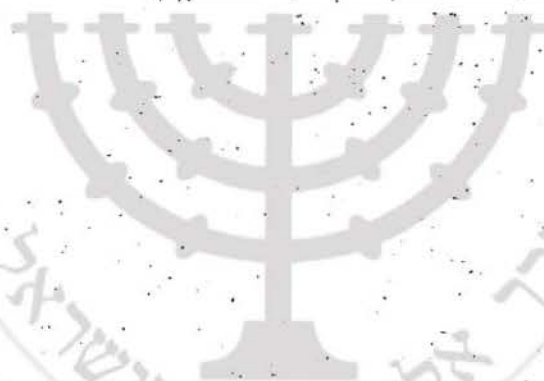
The Holocaust happened to people who were Jews, and it was unprecedented in its fury; but now that it has happened, right here in our modern world, we know that comparable disasters could befall others.

This being so, it is essential to realize that any group's ethical, religious and cultural traditions are not just fossils or historical curiosities, to be retained or discarded at a whim; they are previous possessions that may



spell the difference between choosing life and death. Thus, all men and women have a moral obligation to understand and uphold the positive, life-sustaining values of their particular culture and to transmit them to those who come after them - as well as to respect the different values of their neighbors. There are lessons for survival, whether physical or moral, which only a knowledge of one's past, one's traditions and history, can teach.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES



זכר אלה יעקב וישׂראל

Was there any protest? Did it accomplish anything? American students, particularly those who may recall the great outpouring of citizens to support the cause of civil rights during the March on Washington, or the widespread opposition to the U.S. Government's policies during the Vietnamese War, may find it hard to believe that mass murder could be implemented with so little protest within Germany and the lands occupied by Germany. For those raised within a democratic tradition which allows considerable dissent, it is extremely difficult to convey the atmosphere of a totalitarian regime. Political dissent was ruthlessly suppressed in Nazi Germany, as was organized resistance in the Nazi-occupied countries. Yet, certain protests when supported by the entire populace and enforced by civic and religious leadership, were successful. It is instructive to see in which areas, and on what issues, this protest achieved some success.

In the film, "Holocaust," young Anna Weiss, who is suffering a psychological and emotional trauma after being raped, is sent to a "sanitorium" where, along with mentally retarded and physically deformed children, she is gassed to death. This program of involuntary euthanasia actually occurred, and was a "trial run" for the massive murder of Jews and others in extermination camps later in the war. (Fritz Stangl, commandant of Treblinka, received his "training" in the Euthanasia Program.)

Despite the secrecy surrounding this program -- which began the first day of World War II and resulted in the murder of more than a quarter of a million people classified as "racially valueless" -- it was discovered, and overt protest against it came from German civilians including Nazi party members, and from church leaders. Both the Vatican and the German Catholic Church strongly protested the Euthanasia Program.

In the summer of 1941, Hitler's private train pulled into Nuremberg as people were being loaded onto trucks. In spite of the fact that Hitler was then at the height of his power, German civilians in the station openly jeered Hitler. Soon after, the Euthanasia Program was ordered to a halt. The fact that this protest against a "secret" program seems to have been successful appears to demonstrate that knowledge of, and successful protest against "secret" programs was possible in Nazi Germany. But, Germans only protested the Euthanasia Program and not the "Final Solution."

In the Nazi-occupied countries, public resistance to the deportation of Jews played some role in determining their fate, although this fate derived also from the degree of autonomy permitted by the Germans. In Denmark, for example, despite efforts by Nazi spokesmen to convince the Danes that the Jews were an alien element, Jews remained under the protection of the Danish government. No anti-Jewish legislation was enacted and no Jewish property was expropriated. After Denmark came under martial law, German plans to deport the Danish Jews -- leaked by a German to Danish Social democratic leaders -- were frustrated through an extraordinary operation involving ~~the~~ the Danish people, who hid nearly all the Jews and ferried them across to neutral Sweden in fishing boats. The Germans managed to round up some four hundred Jews, whom they sent to Theresienstadt (Terezin). Their internment deeply concerned the Danish government, which repeatedly requested permission to inspect the camp. As a result of this persistent interest, no Danish Jews were sent to Auschwitz.

Bulgaria provides another example of the efficacy of public resistance. A member of the Axis, Bulgaria retained autonomy in internal administration. While the government did adopt a number of anti-Jewish measures, it refused to accede to German pressure to deport Bulgarian Jews because of the counter-

pressure of public opinion, especially of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

What would have happened if a great outpouring of public protest, both inside and outside of Germany, had greeted the initial anti-Jewish measures? What would have happened if everyone had insisted on wearing the yellow star which Jews were commanded to wear on their clothing?



QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

For use with campus and adult groups.



## QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the illusions of German Jewry as portrayed in the story.
2. How does Jewish optimism prove itself deadly in our story?
3. Were all Nazis anti-Semites and racists?
4. Were all Germans, Nazis?
5. Did the Jewish Councils resist or collaborate with the Nazis?
6. What problems did Jews encounter in order to maintain armed resistance?
7. What did armed resistance accomplish?
8. With which of the characters can you identify?
9. Discuss the "spiritual resistance" of Dr. Weiss, Karl Weiss and Inga Weiss. Is this kind of resistance more courageous than armed resistance?
10. What does Green's position on intermarriage seem to be?
11. Under the circumstances, was it moral for Inga to sleep with the guard at Bucherwald? Are normal standards of moral behavior applicable to the choices people had to make during the Holocaust -- Jews and Germans?
12. Is "I was only following orders", a good moral defense?
13. Are there any lessons for American Jewry which can be elicited from the story? If so, what? If not, why not?
14. How responsible is Christian teachings for the Holocaust?
15. Discuss possible sequels to the story. What happens to Rudi? to Inga? to Inga and Karl's son?

## GUIDE TO ADULT PROGRAM

### PREFACE:

Why the Holocaust remains crucially important to Jews is not hard to see. In a sense, every Jew today is a survivor of that event, even if he lived in a country where it did not reach, or was not yet born. For if he remained personally untouched, it was only through some lucky accident.

Perhaps his father or grandfather decided decades earlier to emigrate to New York or Buenos Aires instead of staying in Warsaw or Kiev. Perhaps he lived somewhere along the Mediterranean - in Egypt, say, or Palestine - and escaped extermination because Hitler, against his admirals' advice, attacked the Soviet Union instead of extending his conquests around the Mediterranean basin. But no matter how far he may have been from the death camps, the Holocaust has deeply affected every Jew's sense of his place in the world. To understand what it means to be a Jew in this century - who the Jews are, how they got to be what they are, where they are going - one must know what happened during this tragic era.

Yehuda Bauer

excerpted from They Chose Life

We cannot assume that all American Jews "know what happened during that tragic era." Indeed there is a whole new generation of adult Jews that was born after the Holocaust and for whom the Holocaust seems little more than another bit of fading history.

Although we do not pretend that the NBC TV Special "Holocaust" can in any way fill this gap we do believe that the interest and controversy it generates can become a springboard for more serious thought, learning and discussion for American Jews.

We are hopeful that this guide can be helpful to your organization in developing programs that can aid in transforming this mass media event into a meaningful educational experience for adults.

PROGRAM ALTERNATIVES

By Stephen Bayer

Lecturers or Panel Discussions: The Plot Summary and historical analysis contained in this kit's "Introductory Materials". (Booklet Number One) provide considerable information useful for selecting lecture or panel discussion topics. Also helpful will be the enclosed listing of nationally known speakers and the questions and issues for discussion found at the end of this booklet. Single lectures or lecture series can be developed prior to, during or immediately following the TV series. Both lecturers or panels could be used the evening of the program if physical facilities allow for groups to come to a common place to watch the TV program. If this is available it might be useful to provide a light dinner, panel or lecture and then the TV program.

Multi-Media: A media list is enclosed in this "program package". It will provide a variety of program ideas. Shorter films can be used to "trigger" discussion or in concert with a lecturer or panel discussion. The list contains primarily documentary films since it is intended to supplement a fictionalized account.

Courses: Informational classroom type programs can be developed before and/or after the TV program. Faculty for these courses can be drawn from colleges and universities, religious schools, the rabbinate, and other local resources. In many communities survivors of the Holocaust can be used to relate their experiences in light of the TV program's presentation. Of course, having a nationally prominent and expert person come to a program as the guest lecturer, keynote speaker, etc. may serve to stimulate even further interest and highlight the program in the community. All speakers listed in the enclosed JWB speakers list were informed about the TV program and sent considerable material about the TV show prior to its airing.



Several members of the actual TV production, who can talk about making the program and their personal experiences, are also listed.

Experiential Programs: A variety of programs can be developed that provide participants with the opportunity to share their reactions to what they saw on the TV screen, to relate these reactions to their personal experiences and to begin to explore the meaning of the Holocaust for themselves. Such programs stress small group interaction and a focus on feelings. Skilled facilitators are important in these kinds of situations. "Discussion" oriented programs frequently stand on their own but the notion of breaking into small groups to maximize interaction can also work quite well as a technique for use after a speaker or film.

These types of activities can be held in homes, JCCs, Synagogues and Temples, meeting rooms, etc. They might be held the evening following each TV program; an hour before the next show; or for a number of sessions after the complete series. Short films listed above can be used to stimulate discussion. Speakers (local or national) might address a group before the beginning of or following a discussion series. Several groups could be started simultaneously and then come together as a last meeting for a lecture or discussion with a prominent speaker.

The ideas separate from above are intended to suggest some ways to develop adult programs based on the TV program. Of course, the interest stimulated by the program may carry over into such projects as community wide Yom Hashoah projects, interreligious meetings, intensive learning experiences such as weekend retreats or scholars-in-residence programs and the development of adult education classes about the Holocaust.

PROGRAM IDEAS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS - to follow.

PROGRAM IDEAS FOR USE IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT - to follow.

PROGRAMS FOR SURVIVORS AND CHILDREN OF SURVIVORS

Over the past year there has been some public attention given to the special problems and concerns of survivors and their children. A recent book: Living After the Holocaust: Reflections by the Post-War Generation in America (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1976) by Lucy Steinitz and David M. Szony; and "Heirs of the Holocaust" by Helen Epstein, an article that appeared in the June 19, 1977 issue of The New York Times Magazine raised these issues and became a focus for discussion on the exact nature and extent of these problems.

The "Holocaust" telecast may heighten interest in these questions again; for the survivors and their children most of whom are now themselves adults or older teenagers.

Jewish institutions of all kinds should be sensitive to any special needs that may be expressed. Local "support" groups have been formed by and for the children of survivors in New York, Boston, Los Angeles and other cities. You may also want to work with your local Jewish Family Service Agency to develop appropriate formats for help or discussion. It goes without saying that not all children of survivors need help, or discussion of any kind but enough individuals have expressed these kinds of feelings to make these services worth considering.

PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

In the course of any adult discussion it is possible that parents will want to talk about how to answer their children's questions about the Holocaust. While there can be no easy solution for these parents from the Home Family Study Guide (Booklet Number Five) may be of some assistance to them. The age guidelines found in that

section will help them determine whether or not they will want to encourage their children to watch and the other materials may be of some use in helping them deal with their children's questions and anxiety.



QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

BY Professor Byron Sherwin

The TV "Special" is not a substitute for Holocaust education. All of the programming listed above assumes a comprehensive knowledge of the Holocaust on the part of the lecturers and/or group leaders involved. These ideas and the questions for discussion that follow are designed to be used as a starting point for further study of the Holocaust.

1. Discuss the illusions that German Jewry as portrayed in the story, held about their place in German society. What were the results of these illusions?
2. Were anti-semitism and racist attitudes held by all persons who joined the Nazi movement?
3. Did elements of German society resist the Nazis? Why? What happened to them?
4. What dilemmas were faced by the Jewish councils in their relationship with the Nazi authorities?
5. What factors inhibited the development of armed Jewish resistance to the Nazis?
6. How effective was the resistance - on a personal level? on a symbolic level?
7. What are the dilemmas faced by accepting a course of action such as armed resistance?
8. Were there other forms of "resistance" taken by Jews outside or inside the ghettos or camps?
9. Discuss the "spiritual resistance" of Dr. Weiss, Kurt Weiss and Inga Weiss. Is this kind of resistance more courageous than armed resistance?

10. The TV program portrays the activities of concentration camp inmates as they continue to evoke their will to live through art, literature and music. Were these efforts important? in what ways? what were the results?
11. What characters did you identify with most strongly? why?
12. What does Green's position on intermarriage seem to be?
13. Certain conditions may cause (force) people to act in certain ways they would otherwise not choose. Under the circumstances, was it moral for Inga to sleep with the guard at Buchenwald? Are normal standards of moral behavior applicable to the choices people had to make during the holocaust -- Jews and Germans?
14. Is "I was only following orders", a good moral defense? Don't we all follow orders?
15. What are some of the "lessons" for American Jewry which can be elicited from the story? If so, what? If not, why not?
16. How responsible were Christian teachings for the German anti-Semitism that produced the Holocaust?
17. What were the responses from other nations and from other Jewish communities to what was happening to European Jewry? In particular what was the American response or lack thereof?
18. Are "we" responsible for what happens to other people in other parts of the world? Do Jews have a "special" responsibility to fellow Jews? to non-Jews? Has your group been active (has your community been active) in efforts regarding Soviet Jews, Jews in Arab lands, Israel and its survival? In what ways have you been active? What more can you do?

19. Discuss possible sequels to the story. What happens to Rudi? to Inga?  
to Inga and Kurt's son?



RATIONALE FOR TEACHING ABOUT GENOCIDE AND THE  
NAZI HOLOCAUST

WHY HOLOCAUST STUDIES?

The Holocaust, which we define as the systematic persecution and destruction of eleven million people including six million Jews during the Hitler era (1933-1945) is one of the darkest chapters in human history. Until recently most social studies texts and curricula tended to avoid it or gloss over the horrors of the period as a subject too painful for young minds. However, the terrifying inhumanity of the Nazi period is a fact of history.

Those who lived through the grim Nazi attempts at genocide and were touched by them remember the Holocaust as the ultimate expression of man's inhumanity to man, but it is little known or understood by those who are distant from it in time and space. The Holocaust, the atrocities which it encompasses and the traumatic events which it precipitated are essential to a proper understanding of the contemporary history of modern Europe and the United States as well as current events in the Middle East. No study of World War II can be complete without due regard for Hitler's "Final Solution" and its government directed goal of genocide against the Jewish people.

The Jews were not alone as victims of the Nazis. And any study of the period must emphasize the suffering and attempted destruction of all who were considered enemies of the Third Reich - Freemasons, gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, Catholic and Protestant clergymen - the list is almost infinite.

Yet because of the unique fanaticism directed against the Jews by Hitler, any study of the Holocaust must focus on the fate of the Jews.

The mass murder and zealous persecution of six million Jews stands as a case study in genocide unprecedented in scope and horror in the annals of human history.

The proper inclusion of the events of the holocaust in the school curriculum is more than a substantive imperative for a fair and balanced historical perspective on WW II. The study of the period dramatizes the dangers of intolerance and its dehumanizing effect on the perpetrators as well as its mind-boggling potential for the destruction of civilization as we know it. It affords an opportunity to examine and deal with other historic harassments of national groups in this country and in other parts of the world, for example, the Nisei during World War II in the United States, the official campaign of the Turkish government to exterminate Turkey's Armenian minority in the first quarter of the twentieth century as well as the more recent tragedies in Bangladesh and Biafra. By achieving a better understanding of the nature of prejudice and its potential threat to any group designated as victim, students will be encouraged to clarify their own thinking in regard to moral issues and human values.

We regard the study of the Holocaust, this century's most graphic example of racism, as an essential aspect of contemporary history. Taught in the context of world events, past and present, it can be used by educators to draw the kinds of parallels to other examples of racism and prejudice which will help students to know and respect one another's differences.

The Holocaust is a compelling case study of human potential for extremes of both good and evil. It raises questions that encourage teachers and students to grapple with fundamental problem-solving skills to whatever analytical depth or personal involvement desired.



By inspiring students to act with greater humanity in their day to day actions and decisions, and by sensitizing them to the values of human freedom and dignity, we help to reduce the possibility of a recurrence of the horrors of the Holocaust.

The Nazi era currently holds increasing fascination for growing numbers of America's youth. Movies of the death camps play to runaway audiences. Insignia of the Third Reich are displayed and worn, sometimes unthinkingly, sometimes with bravado. New fascist groups reach out to students on high school campuses, playing on their racial fears and smoldering religious prejudices. Anti-Semitic and racist graffiti and vandalism are traced, more often than not, to teenagers; and studies reveal that negative stereotypes about Jews and other minorities are held by adolescents to a disturbing degree. Only by internalizing the lessons of the past can the youth of today help to shape a better future.

## TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST TO JEWISH TEENAGERS

ALAN D. BENNETT

INTRODUCTION.

We are approaching the second generation after the Holocaust, and that has profound importance for our pedagogic efforts. For today's young student - indeed, for many teachers and group leaders - the events of the 1930's and 1940's may as well be ancient history. For them, Haman, Hadrian, and Hitler melt into a faceless form that spells trouble for Jews but which is not clearly perceived or easily identified. While we are helped by some special courses in a few high schools across the country, for the most part the period of World War II is treated in public school texts as part of the larger topic of American History. Scant attention is paid to the special and unique impact of that event on Jews, and even less on the meaning of the Holocaust for Jews today.

The inclusion of Holocaust curricula in some Jewish schools and the attention paid to the Holocaust in a few informal Jewish settings has begun to fill this gap in the consciousness of Jewish teenagers.

It is our hope that the NBC "Holocaust" special will enhance this process by increasing the interest of Jewish youth in this part of the history of their people. This study guide was designed to help Jewish institutions of all kinds transform this "media event" into a deeply serious Jewish experience for teens.

SOME BASIC GUIDELINES FOR USING NBC'S "HOLOCAUST" AS A TEACHING TOOL.

This guide for the teacher or group leader proceeds from several assumptions. Accepting them will help to make the Holocaust unit based on Gerald Green's TV drama a positive teaching/learning experience.

1. The teacher or group leader must understand and be able to convey to teens the notion that the TV special is factually based. After Roots appeared on ABC TV last year there was a great deal of excitement in the Black community. But there was also a great deal of confusion as to whether the events described actually took place. This was particularly true of youth who generally have the most difficulty in distinguishing fact from fantasy on television.

For this reason it is most important to let youth know that the events described in "Holocaust" are based on real events. A complete historical analysis of the factual basis of the story is contained in the "Introductory Material" (Booklet Number One).

2. This unit has been designed as a springboard for further Holocaust study. The teacher or group leader must be prepared to go beyond the level of the TV program and should therefore be familiar with the "historical analysis" described above and with at least some of the literature of the Holocaust that it refers to. Of these Lucy Dawidowicz' The War Against the Jews is widely available in paperback and Yehuda Bauer's They Chose Life (order form enclosed) is a fine pamphlet that can provide at least some kind of minimum background for those who cannot go further.
3. The teacher must be convinced that it is important and valid to teach about the Holocaust. Can you face your own feelings and agree with Elie Wiesel: "Anyone who does not engage in keeping these memories alive is an accomplice of the killers."?
4. The teacher must be able to respond sensitively to the emotions that students may display. Some may have been but recently bereft of a loved one.

Some may have heard from relatives about the deaths of family members in the Holocaust. Some may be unable to cope with the reality of the horrors. Can you be alert to such reactions and deal with them during and after the class or group discussion? Do you know what resources are available to you and the students?

5. The teacher must recognize that this guide is only that - a guide. It is not a complete lesson plan for teaching the Holocaust to teenagers. The guide will raise more questions of value than of fact; it will ask questions without necessarily answering them. Can you think through the questions that are posed and chart the possible directions for your own answers before meeting with your group?

6. The teacher must allow some time for introduction of the topic before students view the TV program. It is helpful if the viewer's attention is focused on the things that will be stressed in later discussion. The PLOT SUMMARY will be helpful here. Share it with the students and tell them which questions you're likely to use. Perhaps you can reproduce the list of DISCUSSION QUESTIONS or even the HISTORICAL ANALYSIS for distribution to students at this preliminary session.

GOALS TO CONSIDER

Holocaust teaching, aside from its intrinsic importance, is a mine of material for many aspects of Jewish teaching. Here are some suggested ways in which students might be different after the unit:

1. Evidence knowledge of the facts of the Holocaust era.
2. Ask fundamental questions about the condition of Jewish existence in the world.

- 4-
3. Explore the meaning of Jewish identity as perceived by Jews and by others.
  4. Examine questions of faith and belief, and relationship to G-d.
  5. Assert recognition of the historical dependency of Jews on one another, and display acceptance of the concept of "k'la Yisrael."
  6. Analyze the Holocaust experience from the point of view of, "What can we learn from what happened?"
  7. Show understanding of the meaning of resistance and of the various faces of heroism.
  8. Display an understanding of the relationship between the Holocaust and the rebirth of the Jewish State in Israel.
  9. Participate in efforts to keep alive the memory of the experience and the memories of the victims.
  10. Strengthen involvement in Jewish life to assure creative Jewish survival so as to heed Emil Fackenheim's "Eleventh Commandment" -- "You shall not give Hitler a posthumous victory."

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER AND OTHER INFORMAL JEWISH EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS.

It is notoriously difficult to "structure" discussion time into the life of a club, group, or informal activity. Similarly the development of discussion groups that are separate from existing activities and that are reminiscent for the teenager of more formal Jewish educational experiences can also be rather difficult to implement in the informal setting.

Nevertheless the impact of "Holocaust" may be sufficient to lessen teen resistance to these kinds of approaches. It would certainly be worthwhile for group workers to raise the issue of the Holocaust in their groups prior to the airing of the

TV special and to suggest to teens that they watch the series.

After watching the program it is likely that teens will want to talk about what they've seen and this can then be accomplished either by setting aside some time within the context of the group or by setting up a 'Holocaust Discussion Group' as a separate experience.

Whether or not it is possible to bring groups of youngsters together for the explicit purpose of discussing either the TV program or the Holocaust in general, it is extremely likely that the TV program will crop up as a topic of conversation informally in Center programs and groups of all kinds. Group Leaders may find teens coming to their clubs or skill groups or activities confused, troubled, puzzled, or simply interested in the content of this TV special. Group Leaders should be ready to address these concerns sensitively and knowledgeably within the context of the group. They will then be able to provide guidance to their group members and to place this experience into a perspective that can maximize the strengthening of their Jewish identification.

Whether these issues are dealt with formally or informally the group worker will find the questions and guidelines contained in this booklet important and applicable reading. All Center teen staff as well as teen workers in other informal settings should familiarize themselves with this material as well as with all the information found in the "Introductory Material" (booklet one). In addition it is advisable that staff (volunteer or paid) receive some kind of training and if possible read any of the good general histories of the Holocaust listed in this publication. At a minimum Yehuda Bauer's They Chose Life (order form

enclosed) should be read by all those likely to connect with teens in this context.

#### TRAINING TEACHERS AND GROUP LEADERS

An orientation to this show should be provided to all teachers and group leaders whether or not they are currently teaching the Holocaust to teens.

Prior to any training session, all participants should read this study guide and the "Introductory Material" (Booklet One). It is also advisable for all educators to read at least one other short general history of the Holocaust. The Holocaust article in the Encyclopedia Judaica is fine in this regard and Yehuda Bauer's They Chose Life (order form enclosed) is also quite comprehensive.

A 2 hour training program might consist of a basic introduction (containing information on the TV special and its relationship to your formal or informal educational goals), a good speaker to provide some kind of "point of view" on the Holocaust, and small group discussions focussing on teaching techniques and including the issues discussed in the "Basic Guidelines" and "Goals to Consider" sections above. The use of a film such as "Memorandum" or "Night and Fog" to help staff understand and discuss the impact of media on the learning process might also be advisable.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

The following are in no special sequence. The teacher/group leader should consider the entire list and add to it before establishing priorities. There is little likelihood that time will permit all topics to be covered. Selection is a personal matter and will reflect the interests, knowledge, and taste of each teacher. Do not feel yourself limited to discussion techniques. Utilize all group and teaching skills at your disposal: guest speakers who can recount their Holocaust experiences and answer questions, role simulation to explore feelings and alternate courses of action, art projects to express feelings about the Holocaust or to try to understand the protest efforts of Holocaust artists, interviews with rabbis to explore theological questions, meetings with church leaders to analyze the response of the non-Jewish world, time-line projects to help visualize the sequence of events, visits to libraries to photocopy newspaper items of the era, displays of books - especially the art and poetry of the Holocaust, debates on controversial themes. Obviously, the list is endless. Let your imagination and the response of your group members suggest other activities and discussion ideas. Do not fear to explore all issues that come to the fore, no matter how difficult or unsettling they may seem.

Most of the questions are related to episodes involving persons in the TV program. However, they need not be so to qualify as important topics to consider. Additional ideas will occur to you as you study the "PLOT ANALYSIS" and take your own notes during the TV performance.

1. The Nazis believed that they were doing the world a favor by destroying the Jews. What led them to this conclusion? What did they mean by 'moral precedent



2. For the most part, the world remained silent. Why? Why did the media take note of what was happening to Poles and Ukrainians, but not to Jews? What evidence is there that the phenomenon was not unique to the Holocaust era? (Weiss notes that news filtering into the Ghetto contains no information about their condition.)
3. The Nazis had little trouble stirring up the German populace against the Jews. Indeed Kristalnach succeeded because no Germans actively opposed it. What historical factors might explain this? Does such anti-Semitism still exist? What evidence is there? Have you ever overheard an anti-Semitic remark? What do you do?
4. Many, perhaps most, German Jews sincerely believed that they would be safe from Hitler. Why did they refuse to leave Germany even when warned to do so? (Berta Weiss, the Palitzes)
5. At the beginning, some and later many Jews chose to resist. Why did more not resist initially? With what success? Why is success not necessarily a valid measure of the efficacy of resistance? (Rudi, Helena, Sasha.)
6. Some Jews considered themselves to be Zionists, especially as Hitler's plan became widely known amongst them. What does the term mean -- then and now? (Helena, later Rudi.)
7. Many non-Jews -- we call them the "Righteous Gentiles" -- took risks to help Jews. Why? What became of them? What became of the Jews they tried to save? How does the State of Israel honor these Gentiles? If the tables had been turned, would you have taken such risks? Why? Why not? (Kurt Dorf, Father Lichtenberg.)

8. Many Jews did things we would consider reprehensible in order to survive. How do we feel about this fact? ... Can we condone "survival at any price"? Why? Why not? (The Kapos and Sonderkommandos, the Jewish police, Inga Weiss.)
9. Many German Jews were assimilated and no longer considered themselves Jews. How did they come to feel this way? ... Why would Jews want to do that? Would you? Why? Why not? (The Palitz and Weiss families.)
10. The Nazis espoused a theory of "racial purity". What does that mean? What is meant by "Aryan"? Does anyone today think in racial terms? With what consequences? (Erik Dorf, Heydrich, Himmler, and others.)
11. Many Germans after the war invoked as defense the concept, "I was only obeying orders." The concept was rejected by the Nuremberg Tribunal and at the Jerusalem trial of Eichmann. Why? What are the consequences of such a defense? Are there moral imperatives that should be obeyed regardless of personal consequences? What does the Talmud say with regard to a king's order to A to kill B or be killed himself? If you had to choose, would you act as Erik Dorf or as Father Lichtenberg?
12. The Jewish Council in the Ghetto (the Judenrat) for the most part cooperated with the Nazis by providing work crews of Jews and filling the quotas for the transport of Jews. Why? What considerations justify their actions? What considerations condemn them? Had you sat on the Council, what might you have done? (Josepf and Moses Weiss, Lowy, and others.)

13. There was a far more widespread Jewish resistance movement than was at first suspected. Why has it been hard for historians and Jews to believe that many Jews fought back? Why was the Jewish Resistance so late in organizing? What was its relationship to other resistance movements? (Some Judenrat members, Anilevitz, Rudi, Helena, Sasha and his band.)
14. "Babi Yar" is a symbol and code word for Jews. Why? What prompted the Russian poet Yevtushenko to write, "There are no monuments at Babi Yar."? What historical forces have made and make for uncertainty for Jewish life in Russia? (Rudi, Helena)
15. The artists of Theresienstadt occupy a special niche amongst the martyrs of the Holocaust. Why? What role did art play in the resistance? What other cultural forms served as protest vehicles? (Karl Weiss, Frey, Felsher, and others. Of especial use here: "The Artists of Terezin." by Gerald Green - Hawthorn, 1969; "I Never Saw Another Butterfly." - McGraw Hill; Joseph Bor's "The Terezin Requiem." - Knopf, 1963.)
16. Wherever they went -- in the ghettos, in the death camps -- Jews tried to simulate normal life even though they knew they would soon perish. What motivated them? What did they hope to achieve. How can there be survival even after death?
17. The Nazis went to a great deal of trouble to create a "show-camp" at Theresienstadt. Why? What did they hope to achieve? Did they succeed? Why? Why did the inmates cooperate in the charade? (Karl, Frey, Felsher, others.)

18. We observe 27 Nisan as "Yom Hashoah" in memory of the Warsaw Ghetto heroes. Why has this special day been added to our Jewish calendar? Why do many Jews remember the Warsaw Ghetto at the Passover Seder each year? Why was the revolt so long delayed? What finally brought it about? Would you call it a success or a failure? Why? (Moses Weiss, Anilevitz, others.)
19. Many Germans cooperated with the Nazis even though they did not personally share the Nazi philosophy. Why? In what ways have the Germans accepted responsibility for what happened? Do you think all Germans were guilty? Why or why not? (Kurt Dorf, to some extent perhaps Erik at the outset.)
20. The destruction of European Jewry had a profound effect on future Jewish events, such as the fulfillment of Zionism. What was the connection? Would you agree with those who suggest that the Holocaust was a price Jews had to pay for the renewal of the Homeland? Why? Why not? (Rudi, the Jewish Agency workers.)
21. In a twinkling of the historical eye, the Jewish communities of Europe disappeared - their culture, their artifacts, their institutions, their skills, their people. What affect has that had on the Jews of America? Of the rest of the world?
22. There are many answers to the question, "Where was G-d during the Holocaust?" What do you believe? What are the other options?
23. Nations and people have frequently sought scapegoats. Why? Why has the Jew been cast in that role so often? Do you think it could happen again, in America? Why? Why not?

24. The Nazis who designed and ran the death machines were husbands, fathers and mothers, "average family persons." How was it possible for them to do what they did and continue to go about normal pursuits? Could it happen again? Is it happening today? What are you doing about it?
25. The smuggler was a special person in the Ghetto, an important part of Ghetto life. What role did smugglers play? Why are they called the "unknown heroes"? Why were they most frequently children?



## 'HOLOCAUST' STUDY GUIDE FOR GRADE SCHOOL CHILDREN

PREFACE:

"Judaism is a religion that stresses remembrance - zakhor. We are admonished in the Bible to "remember Amalek," and along with Amalek goes Haman, Titus, and all those who persecuted and murdered Jews. If for no other reason, the Holocaust should be taught - because we are a people of memory and because the Holocaust is an event so mythic in proportion that it will be many generations before we can assimilate and merge it into our Jewish soul consciousness. The danger will be, of course, that those younger Jews who have no direct or indirect line to the event will not allow themselves to be touched by it. We must - we have the obligation to - make them understand, to make them remember. The Holocaust is something that did happen - it happened in our lifetime, so to speak, and in the lifetime of the children, because there are still parents and grandparents who can talk about it. It is a catastrophic event that has no parallel. Many writers have said: "We are all survivors." This could well be a beginning for you: "What does that mean, 'We are all survivors'? We weren't even born and yet..." - BEA STADTLER, Excerpted from the Second Jewish Catalog.

It is our hope that the NBC 'Holocaust' special will enhance the process of remembering by increasing the interest of Jewish children in this part of the

history of their people. This study guide was designed to help Jewish institutions of all kinds transform this "media event" into a deeply serious Jewish experience for children.

AGE GUIDELINES

There is general agreement among educators who read the script that this show should not be recommended viewing for youngsters under ten years of age. Indeed some (including our consultant, Bea Stadtler) felt that eleven or twelve might be an appropriate "minimum" viewing age. There can of course be no absolute guideline since each child's maturity level differs from every other child's but in general, we should be aware that this docu-drama has some fairly explicit scenes dealing directly with the concentration camps, the mass graveside murders at Babi Yar, and the "showers" at Auschwitz. Taken separately, these kinds of incidents are not uncommon on TV, but viewed together as events that actually happened, they can create a powerful and deeply disturbing impact on a child. In spite of these problems, and regardless of whatever age child this show is recommended for, we can be sure that children of all ages will be watching this show simply because parents generally do not exercise much control over what their children watch. In view of this, it is vital that we take all this into account when making plans for utilizing the enclosed material and the

"docu-drama" itself as a teaching tool.

Because of the discrepancy between the recommended viewing age and the ages of children who will be watching anyway; we would make the following suggestions:

1. Plan on using the TV show as a focal point in your Holocaust curriculum for youngsters over 11 years of age. You should certainly plan to coincide the timing of this TV special with a unit of study on the whole subject.
2. Principals and directors will want to make sure that their teachers are thoroughly familiar with this study guide and the introductory materials contained in "Booklet One" regardless of which grade they are teaching. Those who are teaching the Holocaust to groups younger than the recommended viewing age should also be ready to respond to questions from children who may have watched the program. Even Teachers or Group Leaders who are working with youngsters who are too young to discuss the Holocaust at all should be prepared to pick up on the feelings of youngsters who may have seen parts of the show. In general this means that all members of staff should prepare themselves to be able to address a variety of issues relating to the Holocaust.



3. It is important to inform parents that any of their children who watch the series should do so together with them. Parental guidance and an informed adult perspective are vital to the child confronted with the stark reality of the Holocaust. The Family Home Viewing Guide (Booklet Number Four) provided as part of this package should be distributed to parents as part of any recommended viewing assignment.

SOME BASIC GUIDELINES FOR USING NBC'S "HOLOCAUST" AS A TEACHING TOOL.

(Prepared by Alan Bennett)

This guide for the teacher or group leader proceeds from several assumptions. Accepting them will help to make the Holocaust unit based on Gerald Green's TV drama a positive teaching/learning experience.

1. The teacher or group leader must understand and be able to convey to children the notion that the TV special is factually based. After Roots appeared on ABC TV last year there was a great deal of excitement in the Black community. But there was also a great deal of confusion as to whether the events described actually took place. This was particularly true of children who generally have the most difficulty in distinguishing fact from fantasy on television.

For this reason it is most important to let children know that the events described in "Holocaust" are based on real events. A complete historical analysis of the factual basis of the story is contained in the "Introductory Material (Booklet Number One).

2. This unit has been designed as a springboard for further Holocaust study. The teacher or group leader must be prepared to go beyond the level of the TV program and should therefore be familiar with the "historical analysis" described above and with at least some of the literature of the Holocaust that it refers to. Of these, Lucy Dawidowicz' The War Against the Jews is widely available in paperback and Yehuda Bauer's They Chose Life (order form enclosed) is a fine pamphlet that can provide at least some kind of minimum background for those who cannot go further.
3. The teacher must be convinced that it is important and valid to teach about the Holocaust. Can you face your own feelings and agree with Elie Wiesel: "Anyone who does not engage in keeping these memories alive is an accomplice of the killers."?
4. The teacher must be able to respond sensitively to the emotions that students may display. Some may have been but recently bereft of a loved one. Some may have heard from relatives about the deaths of family members in the Holocaust. Some may be unable to cope with the reality of the horrors. Can you be alert to such reactions and deal with them during and after the class or group discussion? Do you know what resources are available to you and the students?

5. The teacher must recognize that this guide is only that - a guide. It is not a complete lesson plan for teaching the Holocaust to children. The guide will raise more questions of value than of fact; it will ask questions without necessarily answering them. Can you think through the questions that are posed and chart the possible directions for your own answers before meeting with your group?
  
6. The teacher must allow some time for introduction of the topic before students view the TV program. It is helpful if the viewer's attention is focused on the things that will be stressed in later discussion. The PLOT SUMMARY will be helpful here. Share it with the students and tell them which questions you're likely to use. Perhaps you can reproduce the list of DISCUSSION QUESTIONS or even the HISTORICAL ANALYSIS for distribution to students at this preliminary session.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER AND OTHER INFORMAL JEWISH EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS.

It is unlikely that Centers will bring together groups of youngsters for the explicit purpose of discussing either the TV show or the Holocaust in general. It is, however, extremely likely that the TV program will crop up as a topic of conversation informally in Center programs and groups. Group Leaders may find children coming to their clubs or skill groups confused troubled, puzzled, or simply interested in the contents of this TV special. Group leaders should be ready to address these concerns sensitively and knowledgeably. They will be able to provide guidance to their group members, and to place this experience into a context which can maximize the strengthening of their Jewish identification.

This is not to say that a Center with a particular kind of membership might not be able to form explicitly targeted discussion groups around the Holocaust. There are settings where this might be possible for older children and staff should certainly be aware of appropriate opportunities to program in this way.

#### TRAINING TEACHERS AND GROUP LEADERS

An orientation to this show should be provided to all teachers and group leaders whether or not they are now teaching the Holocaust to children.

Prior to any training session, all participants should read this study guide and the "Introductory Material" (Booklet One). It is also desirable for all educators to read at least one other short general history of the Holocaust. The Holocaust article in the Encyclopedia Judaica is fine in this regard and Yehuda Bauer's They Chose Life (order form enclosed) is also quite comprehensive.

A 2 hour training program might consist of a basic introduction (containing information on the TV special and its relationship to your formal or informal educational goals), a good speaker to provide some kind of "point of view" on the Holocaust, and small group discussions focussing on teaching techniques and including the issues discussed in the "Basic Guidelines" section above. The use of a film such as "Memorandum" or "Night and Fog" to help staff understand and discuss the impact of media on the learning process might also be advisable.

A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF YOUTH FICTION AND PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

Arnold, Elliott, A NIGHT OF WATCHING, Crest.

A suspense-filled novel about the Danish underground's rescue of almost all of the 8,000 Jews of Denmark.

Ambrose, Kenneth THE STORY OF PETER CRONHEIM, London: Constable and Co., 1962.

Berger, Zdena TELL ME ANOTHER MORNING, N.T.: Harper, 1961.

Bishop, Claire, Hutchet. TWENTY AND TEN., Viking Press, 1952.

How French school children helped to conceal a group of Jewish refugee children from the nazis.

Flender, Harold. RESCUE IN DENMARK, N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1963.

Flinker, Moshe, YOUNG MOSHE'S DIARY. Jerusalem: Yad VaShem, 1965

A personal account of the life of Moshe Flinker in Belgium under the nazis.

Forman, James, CEREMONY OF INNOCENCE, N.Y.: Hawthorn, 1970.

A German brother and sister bravely resist the nazis. A novel based on a true event.

\_\_\_\_\_. HORSES OF ANGER, Farrar Straus, Giroux, 1967.

A powerful novel about the effect of the holocaust on a 15-year-old Christian boy in Germany and non-nazi members of his family.

\_\_\_\_\_. MY ENEMY, MY BROTHER, Hawthorne, 1969.

Award winning novel about the drive of holocaust survivors to reach Palestine in spite of the British blockade. Of six-teen-agers who start to walk from Poland to Italy, and then ship to Palestine, only three survive the journey

Frank, Anne. ANNE FRANK: THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL. Doubleday, 1967.

The famous diary, later made into a play and film, kept by the teenage daughter of a Dutch family which survived for a time in hiding, but was eventually captured and taken to a concentration camp where all but the father died. A personal account.

Gershon, Keren, WE CAME AS CHILDREN. N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966.

Grossman, Ladislav, SHOP ON MAIN STREET, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970.

Hyams, Joseph A FIELD OF BUTTERCUPS, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1968.

I NEVER SAW ANOTHER BUTTERFLY. Children's drawings and poems from Theresienstadt Concentration Camp, 1942-44. N.Y.: McGraw Hill, 1964.

Kuchler - Silberman, Lena ONE HUNDRED CHILDREN. N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961.

Moskin, Marietta. I AM ROSEMARIE, N.Y.: John Day, 1972.

A Dutch girl survives and grows to womanhood in a series of concentration camps. Fiction with the factual background of the author's own life.

Meltzer, Milton, NEVER TO FORGET: THE JEWS OF THE HOLOCAUST, N.Y., Harper & Row, 1976.

An answer to social studies texts in high schools and college which treats nazism "brief, bland, superficial and misleading" and that "racism, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust were imposed or dismissed in a few lines."

Neshamit, Sarah. THE CHILDREN OF MAPU STREET. Jewish Publication Society, 1970.

A family is trapped in the terror that engulfs the Jews of Kovno, Lithuania, when the Germans invade.

Perlov, Yitchak. THE PARTIZANER, Award Books.

Jewish men, women and children, whose only weapons were those they could capture from the enemy, fought daringly in the anti-nazi underground.

Reiss, Johanna. THE UPSTAIRS ROOM, N.Y.: Thomas Crowell, 1972.

The story of two Dutch Jewish girls who are hidden by Dutch peasants

Richter, Hans Peter, FRIEDRICK, N.Y., 1970, Holt, Rinehart and Winston

A young German boy recounts the fate of his best friend, a Jew, under the nazis. Includes a useful chronology of German law, decrees and regulations from 1933-1945.

Sachs, Marilyn, A POCKET FULL OF SEEDS, Doubleday, 1973.

Nicole, A french girl, slowly realizes that, as a Jew, she is set apart from the rest of the community. While she is away visiting a friend, the nazis arrest her whole family and put Nicole's name on their wanted list. Good characterization and picture of French life.

Stadtler, Bea, THE HOLOCAUST: A HISTORY OF COURAGE AND RESISTANCE, Behrman House, 1974. A text for young people with searching questions which make the children understand this is a relevant topic, not ancient history. A workbook accompanies this text.

Suhl, Yuri, THEY FOUGHT BACK: THE STORY OF JEWISH RESISTANCE. N.Y., Block, 1966.

\_\_\_\_\_. UNCLE MISHA'S PARTISANS, Four Winds Press, 1973.

A twelve-year old uses his musical talent to aid the anti-nazi underground. An exciting adventure based on a true incident.

Werstein, Irving, THE UPRISING OF THE WARSAW GHETTO, N.Y., Norton, 1968.

Ziemian, J. THE CIGARETTE SELLERS OF THE THREE CROSSES SQUARE, London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1970.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN By Bea Stadtler

Before the series begins, you might want to spend some time with your students to key them to issues they might want to watch for in the series. Accordingly, we have separated these guidelines into "before" and "after" programmatic suggestions for each night:

Keep in mind that students will not always respond as you do to the issues raised. Try to separate out which issues reflect a simple difference of opinion and which issues reflect the lack of a full and mature assimilation of the situation. It is not necessary to convince your students that you are right. It is necessary to convince them that it is possible for there to be two equally legitimate diametrically opposed positions on an issue.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN BEFORE PART I - TO BE TELECAST APRIL 16, 1978

1. Many of the German Jews that appear on the TV program do not feel very Jewish. Indeed, Mrs. Weiss' father was so very proud that he had served with distinction in the German army that he wore his decoration even though the war had been over for many years. When the Nazi actions began to affect German Jews they continued to maintain that a cultured society could not allow such things to happen.
2. Try to imagine what it would feel like to be excluded from something because you were Jewish. How would it feel for you to be thrown off a baseball, soccer, football, or tennis team, or excluded from Girl or Boy Scouts, dance class, or debating society because you were a Jew?



3. Rights and civil liberties were taken away from the German Jews.

What are civil liberties? A new set of laws, called the Nuremberg Laws were set set down by the Nazis. Note how the law was twisted and how the Jews were deprived of their rights.

4. Words can become so very important. In Nazi terms, "resettlement" and "relocation" took on new meanings. Jews were thrown out of the country and their belongings and valuables were confiscated. "De-population of large areas now occupied by slavs, and elimination of Jewish influence," only meant death for Jews and the enslavement of Slavs.

5. Most German civilians knew and yet did nothing.

6. The German officials lied to their own people, to leaders in other countries, and to the victims. This was one reason there was so little resistance at the beginning; everyone beleived the Germans. Some German Jews did leave for the United States and other countries, but many were too poor, too old or too ill to go. Consider how you would cope with a situation where you had no place to go, no one to take you in and no money.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN AFTER PART I - TO BE TELECAST APRIL 16, 1978

1. Now that you have seen the film you can understand that Dr. and Mrs. Weiss and their family were assimilated Jews "absorbed" in and part of the general German population. A good indication of this assimilation lies in the fact that Karl married a German non-Jew and this did not bother his parents at all. What can we learn from the movie about those who either wanted to forget or else who hid the fact they they were Jews?

2. When issues arise which affect Jews or other minorities in a negative way should they be fought, or should we take an "it will pass" attitude? What did they do in Germany?
3. Have you ever heard of Mein Kampf (My Struggle)? Mein Kampf is the book Hitler wrote when he was in prison. It later became the guidebook for Nazi actions. When it was written, almost everyone laughed at it and said it was the work of a madman or crackpot. Later, however, it became a kind of "Bible" for the German nation. (It would be excellent to read a few pertinent passages to children).
4. The Nuremberg Laws were instituted September 15, 1935. Among other things, they took away German citizenship from German Jews; forbade marriage between Jews and Aryans; forbade Jews from hiring non-Jewish servants under 35 years of age; excluded Jews from public office, civil service, journalism, radio, farming, and theater. Later the Jews were thrown out of the stock exchange and were not permitted to practice law or medicine or engage in business and Jewish documents were stamped with a "J". Later Jews had to wear special yellow stars and this was only the beginning; after the "legal terror" came the physical terror.
5. Kristallnacht was supposed to have been a "spontaneous" reaction to the death of vom Rath. In actuality, it was a well planned, well carried out destruction, indeed, so well thought out that plans had been made months before. After Kristallnacht many Jews did leave Germany. But in spite of the Nazi claim that all Jews were rich, there were many, many poor Jews in Germany (and certainly in other European countries) who could not

afford to leave Germany. There were others who could afford to but who had no place to go. Can you put yourself in the place of these Jews, whose non-Jewish neighbors turned on them, who had no place to turn to, no friends in the world, whose stores and places of business were looted and then burned, who had no way to make a living, whose bank accounts were closed and whose few assets were stolen from them. Where to go, where to run, who would help?

6. During this past year a neo-Nazi group applied for permission to march through a Jewish section of a city near Chicago where many Holocaust survivors live. Many residents of the city protested against the issuance of a parade permit to this group. Many issues were raised on both side: the constitutional right of people to congregate in this country, the fact that the Nazi party in Germany gathered support through street demonstrations, the fact that the Nazi group chose this suburb specifically with the aim of inciting the residents. What do you think about this?

7. German lies: The whole government and policy was built on lies. They lied to other governments; they lied to the people of the other countries; they lied to their own people; they lied to the Jews; they lied to the Red Cross. When government policy is based on lies, who should challenge the government? What happened to those who tried to challenge the government? Clergy--press--students?

8. Germans standing by and watching -- not interfering in the beating, murder and pillage. Jews surrounded by those who were vicious and brutal surrounded by those who did not care. How does one respond to this? No weapons and no knowledge of how to use them if you did have them. Everything was like a nightmare. What you always considered right is wrong and what you always thought was wrong is right. Justice

as had always been taught to us-- is no longer. How could you function if this happened to you?

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN BEFORE PART II - TO BE TELECAST APRIL 17, 1978

1. What would it feel like if ghetto walls were erected around a small portion of your neighborhood and you had to live within those walls?
2. Notice the different kinds of people in the ghetto, the leaders, the common people and the fighters.
3. Decide as you watch the film who is a hero. Think about the different ways a person can resist the course of events in such a terrible situation.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN AFTER PART II - APRIL 17, 1978

1. Remember Heydrich saying that Christian anti-Semitism had for centuries laid the groundwork for Nazi acts. What did he mean?
2. There were a few good churchmen like Lichtenberg who tried to speak out. Generally, though, church officials went along with Nazi policies or tried to keep out of the politics altogether. To what extent do religious leaders have a responsibility to speak out?
3. Germans started out going along with Hitler because he revived their economy. Many people who had been jobless for a long time began to work again. Economy is an important element in the attitude of a country toward its minorities. Think about why.

4. Nazis keep using terms like "spies and criminals". Their list of opponents include "criminal elements, gypsies, soviet officials, communists and all Jews." A rather strange list.
5. There were few Zionists in Germany, but all over Europe there were many Zionist youth groups. Why do you think there were so few in Germany?
6. Do you know what a ghetto is? Do you think that the ghettos the Germans set up for the Jews were anything like the ghettos in which the blacks in this country lived? Were people murdered and deliberately starved in ghettos in this country? Under what circumstances in which ghettos were most inhumane?
7. What have you heard about Babi Yar? Now you have seen what actually happened there. The Russians have never allowed a monument for the murdered Jews to be set up at Babi Yar. A Russian poet by the name of Yevgeny Yevtushenko, however, wrote a famous poem about Babi Yar. It begins "No gravestone stands at Babi Yar"... Over 100,000 people were killed at Babi Yar, the majority of them were Jewish men, women and children.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN BEFORE PART III - APRIL 18, 1978

1. Notice how the Germans acquired property belonging to the Jews without questioning the wrong or right of it and certainly without paying for it -- how do Dorf and Marta rationalize their "appropriation" of the pain?

2. Heydrich says: "The Fuehrer (Adolf Hitler) says: 'Here I stand with my bayonets and there you stand with your law. We shall see which wins (prevails).'" Think about that.
3. Notice the Red Cross and their actions. Why do they accept the German's obvious lies?
4. Some of the Nazis (Heydrich, for example) knew that their co-workers were behaving immorally, yet they went along with these policies and people. As you watch the series, think about it. What made them do it?
5. Many Ukrainians were, if possible, even more anti-Semitic than the Nazis.
6. What do you think about Rudi's reluctance to kill, even though he himself has almost been killed dozens of times by just such young men?
7. The homeland of the Jews is mentioned often. What does it mean? What difference would it have made?
8. Think about how each Nazi is depicted as a good and kind man to his own family -- Dorf, Hoess, etc.
9. The persecution of the artists at Theresienstadt is based on real events.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN AFTER PART III - APRIL 18, 1978

1. What is a conscience? How do you learn right from wrong? Can you suddenly hide what you learned all your life and make right wrong and wrong right? How do you feel when Marta talks about the goodness of all living things while she knows what is being done to the Jews by her husband and others? How about Dorf's statement that "Hoess is a kind man. He adores his wife, children, animals and nature and yet..."

2. What about the Jewish leaders? Dr. Kohn, a Jew himself, speaks of the other Jews who will be killed as "they". What about Moses and Dr. Weiss? What about Anilewitz and Uncle Sasha, Zalman and Aaron? Think of how hard it must be to resist if you know that your family and many other Jews will be killed, if you even harm one German soldier. When Heydrich was killed, the town of Lidice in Czechoslovakia was leveled to the ground and everyone in it murdered by the Nazis. There were many other such examples. What decision do you think you would have made? There were many Jewish leaders who did everything within their power to help. Most of them were caught and killed, some committed suicide, one tried to keep the Jews in his ghetto working so that they would be indispensable to the Nazis and would not be killed (he almost succeeded). Another tried to make decisions carefully as to whom would go and who would remain. Some said they were not God and refused to make the choices. They were killed. The leader of the Warsaw Ghetto, Adam Czerniakow, actually committed suicide when he learned where the transports were going. He refused to make the decisions for the Nazis. There were also people just like Uncle Sasha: there was an Uncle Misha Gildenman, who was a partisan, a Dr. Yeheskiel Atlas who fought bravely with the partisans, boys like Aaron who lived at the Three Crosses Square in Warsaw; Vitka Kemper and Abba Kovner from Vilna who became partisans. And later there was Alexander Pechersky, a Russian Jew who organized the revolt at Sobibor. In the death camp of Treblinka there was an uprising that caused so much damage that the death factory there was never rebuilt. In an uprising at Aushchwitz, the most dreaded of all camps, one of the crematoria was destroyed. Rabbi Isaac

Nissenbaum

in the Warsaw Ghetto, a courageous and holy man, encouraged the resistance fighters and urged that Jews do everything within their power to stay alive. In Kovno, the council chairman, Dr. Elkhanan Elkes and Moshe Levin, the chief of police, pretended to follow Nazi orders, while working with the resistance to hide children and smuggle out young men and women to join the partisans. This was true of many of the leaders. In Lvov the first two council chairmen were killed for refusal to cooperate with the nazis. In 45 out of 73 towns, the Jewish councils resisted in some way.

4. Think about the leaders and the choices they had to make. Try to find out more about the people mentioned above. The Red Cross never asked to look at any other camps except Theresienstadt. Do you think that they really did not know that Theresienstadt was just a front? The Red Cross is supposed to help people in trouble. They did not really live up to their task during this time. Maria in Theresienstadt says, "No one ever asks what right did the nazis have to imprison us at all. They seem to think it is all right for Jews to be jailed providing they are not murdered." Think about the Red Cross. Ask your fathers or grandfathers what the Red Cross did for them if they were soldiers during the Second World War. You may be surprised at some of the answers.
5. What about heroes? What makes a hero? Was Moses a hero? Dr. Weiss? Mrs. Weiss? Aaron? Zalman? Uncle Sasha? Rudi? Think about them. The Jewish partisans in the forest were killed as often by the Poles and



Ukrainians as by the Germans. When they did fight with the Polish resistance they did not say they were Jews.

6. Do you think, as Helena did, that the Jews need their homeland; that in Israel no one can beat, kill or jail a Jew who has done nothing wrong? Would Entebbe have ever happened if the Jews did not have a homeland of their own?
7. What about Inga's statement to Muller: "We've let you take over. We are as evil as you are." What about those people who stood and watched and did nothing. Were they also guilty? What about we in America who stood by? Were we also guilty?
8. The artists described in Theresienstadt were real people. There really was a man named Otto Ungar whose hands were broken in the Fortress, and Bedrich Fritta really drew the hand of the drowning man, Lev Hass and Karel Fleischman were also real artists at Theresienstadt. How can art be a protest? Do you know of any American artists who made drawings protesting something? Many of the Theresienstadt drawings are found in a book called The Artists of Theresienstadt, by Gerald Green, the author of this script about the holocaust.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN BEFORE PART IV - APRIL 19, 1978

1. Notice the cold, impersonal manner in which the Nazi officials examine the gassing and burning installations in Auschwitz.
2. Think about the title of the section: "The Saving Remnant."

3. Notice how Dorf tries to destroy all the evidence.
4. Dorf quotes the Feurer Adolf Hitler, as saying "We were completing the work of Christianity, defending Western culture." Think about that as you watch the film.
5. Palestine -- what is it's real meaning to these hopeless, helpless Jews?

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN AFTER PART IV - APRIL 19, 1978

1. Did you notice the development of Dorf's character? Was he good or bad? Why? This was probably true of many Germans. First they became involved for personal <sup>gain</sup> / and then they were caught up in the lies and the terror. It is always easier to be the persecutor than the persecuted. Hitler said, "I stand here with my bayonets and you stand there with your law. We will see which prevails (wins)." But often law can also be turned to evil purposes. How?
2. When Dorf returned from the Eastern front why do you think he could not sleep? (Was he worried about the war and his job, or was he troubled by the killing of the Jews?)
3. Did you notice how Dorf tried to destroy the evidence?

The Germans kept track of everything. There were thousands of pieces of papers, pictures and orders that the Allies found when the war ended. Those pictures on the screen in nazi headquarters came from actual nazi files. They were among the thousands of feet of film which were saved by the nazis. Is it good that the nazis did not destroy most of the evidence? Did you know that there are people today who deny that the Holocaust took place, despite the evidence?

Did you notice that throughout the film everything was to be kept secret and quiet. If a person thinks he is doing the right thing he is not afraid to speak up and to let people know what he is doing. Yet the nazis, for all their announcements that what they were doing was right kept the gassings and the murders more or less quiet. What does that say to us?

4. At the end Uncle Kurt spoke about facing up to what the Germans had done -- insisting that the younger generation should know. What is the object in insisting that they know? What can be accomplished by this?
5. Not all Nazi war criminals were captured and punished after World War II. Some still live in Germany. Some even escaped to America where many have not been identified or prosecuted. It is now more than 30 year after the Holocaust. Should they still be punished? Can we "forgive and forget"?
6. Why is there so much protest about the fact that the Jews did not resist, that they went so quietly? Why do we defend ourselves, that we did fight back. Perhaps the question should really be how, under the circumstances, so very many did find the strength and courage to fight back. As one author put is, "the shame is not that of the victims, but that of the persecutors."
7. Was there something strange in the German insistence on using the trains to transport Jews rather than help the war effort?
8. Rudi was the fighter and he survived. But there were many who survived who were not fighters in the physical sense of the word. Does Rudi really change, as, for example Dorf changes?
9. And in the end, it is Palestine, Israel which provides some hope. A place we can call our own, where our people who are in trouble can come and where Jews can live full Jewish lives, without anguish or harrassment. Israel -- what is its real meaning to these hopeless, helpless Jews?

## Media Materials

A selective list of quality media materials chosen to be used in teen programming dealing with the "Holocaust" TV-Special.

(film reviews excerpted from MEDIUM, Amy W. Kronish, editor, published by the Jewish Media Service)

### Topic: The Jewish Community of Eastern Europe

The television special does not concern itself with an analysis of the Jewish community destroyed by the Holocaust -- its culture, its religion, its history. Choose one of the following media pieces to effectively supplement the television program in this area.

#### THE LAST CHAPTER

(90 min., b&w, 1965, rental \$100, Ben-Lar Productions, 311 W. 24th St., New York, NY 10011, age 16 up) is a thorough and artistic documentary of 1,000 years of Jewish life in Poland. Its lyrical music and narrative (read by Theodore Bikel) combine with fascinating, rare footage of Jewish life in twentieth-century Poland and the relics of its earlier history to give us a deeply moving portrait of a world that is no longer.

The film concerns itself, not only with folk culture, but also with the great achievements of Jewish scholars, artists and leaders; not only with the beauty of Polish-Jewish life, but also with harsh economic and political circumstances. Its documentation of the destruction of Polish Jewry (the final portion of the film) is one of the most sensitive and dramatic compilations of Holocaust footage available.

#### THE LIFE THAT DISAPPEARED

(80 slides with accompanying cassette and teacher's guide, 16 min., b&w, 1971, rental \$15, Jewish Media Service, Lown Bldg., Brandeis Univ., Waltham, MA 02154, age 14 up) provides an intimate glimpse of everyday Jewish life in Poland's cities and villages in the years immediately preceding the Holocaust. Photographed and narrated (in heavily-accented English) by Roman Wishniac, himself a survivor of this world, the slide-tape program depicts the hardships of life in Poland -- the discrimination, the fear of anti-semitism, the difficulties of daily life, and the valiant efforts made at keeping alive a unique culture and religion. The effectiveness of the program lies in its authenticity -- Wishniac's photographs taken at a time when Polish Jewry was already in the Nazi shadow, and his quiet, wistful description of a life which has literally disappeared.

TOPIC: RESISTANCE

The television docu-drama deals with a variety of ways in which the Jews attempted resistance during the Holocaust: Dr. WEISS tries to stop medical experiments on Jews in a Lublin hospital, Kařl Weiss participates in the production of secret concentration camp art that can be a record of Nazi brutality for future generations, Moses Weiss attempts escape with a group of children, and Rudi Weiss joins the underground.

WARSAW GHETTO: HOLOCAUST AND RESISTANCE

(filmstrip with cassette, 19 min., b&w, 1974, purchase \$12, age 12 up, Jewish Labor Committee, 25 E. 78 St., New York, NY 10021)

is a moving, authentic story of Jewish struggle, dignity and resistance. Narrated by Theodore Bikel with the voice and testimony of Vlādka Meed, a survivor of the Jewish underground, the filmstrip documents the story of the Warsaw ghetto: the Nazi occupation of Poland, the formation of the ghetto in 1940, the starvation, the mass burials, the deportations and the total destruction. However the true emphasis of the story is on resistance: illegal publications, theater, lectures, the ghetto clown, prayer, reading, and an effort at recording the story of the events for later generations (organized by Ringlebaum, these materials were placed in milk cans and buried under the rubble). Also described were those who ran away after deportation to warn others of the death camps, those who joined the Jewish fight organization and smuggled arms into the ghetto or manufactured home-made molotov cocktails, and those who, after the Jewish uprising was crushed, escaped to join the partisans.

TOPIC: HOLOCAUST: A DOCUMENTARY OVERVIEW

The story of the 600,000 Jews of Warsaw can be seen as a microcosm of the Holocaust as a whole: from persecution and ultimatums to starvation and death.

THE WARSAW GHETTO

(51 min., b&w, 1966, rental \$35, age 16 up, Time-Life Multimedia, 100 Eisenhower Dr., Paramus, N.J. 07652)

is a powerful, yet low-keyed, documentation of one chapter in the story of German barbarity against the Jews. Produced by BBC-TV, the film (compiled from Nazi photographic records, including propaganda films) tells the story of the ghetto from its creation in 1940 to its destruction in 1943. Narrated by a survivor (in heavily-accented English), the film details daily life, the struggle to survive, the bad sanitation, the smuggling, the special persecution of religious Jews, the

page 3

deportations, the collaboration by some and the resistance by others.

This sensitive film documents (in tightly edited detail) atrocity and barbarity on the one hand (including some explicit scenes of death and mass burial as starvation and suffering in the ghetto increase) and an attempt at maintaining human dignity on the other.

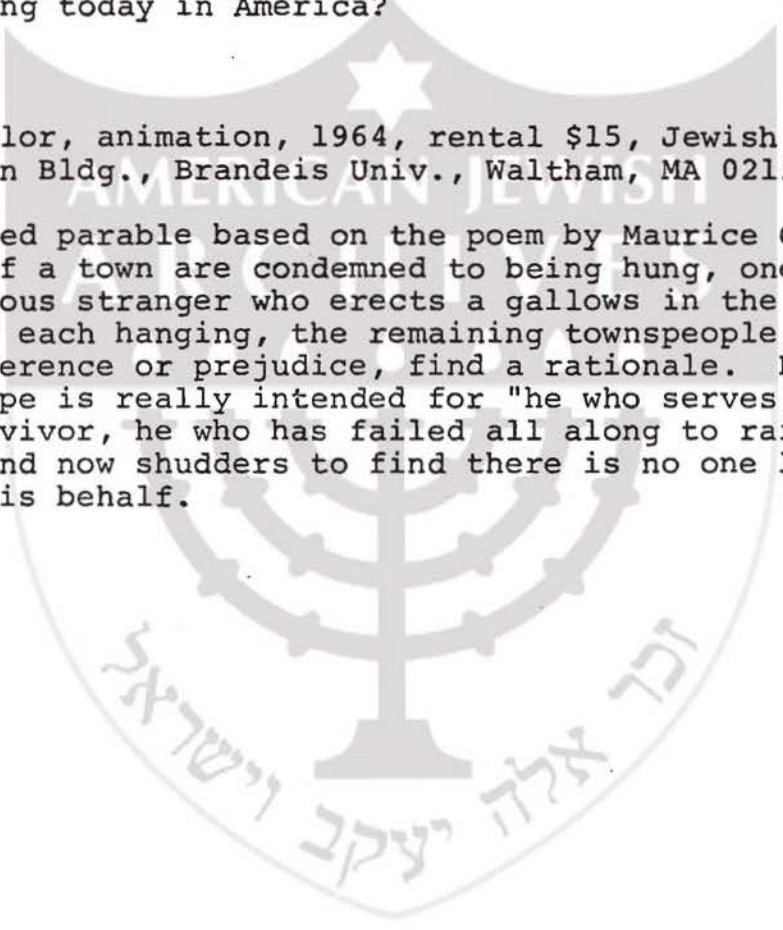
TOPIC: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

How do we establish a personal perspective on the Holocaust as Jews living today in America?

THE HANGMAN

(12 min., color, animation, 1964, rental \$15, Jewish Media Service, Lown Bldg., Brandeis Univ., Waltham, MA 02154, age 12 up)

is an animated parable based on the poem by Maurice Ogden- The people of a town are condemned to being hung, one by one, by a mysterious stranger who erects a gallows in the town square. For each hanging, the remaining townspeople, in their fear, indifference or prejudice, find a rationale. But the hangman's rope is really intended for "he who serves me best:" the last survivor, he who has failed all along to raise his voice in protest and now shudders to find there is no one left to protest on his behalf.



**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** February 2, 1978  
**to** See Below  
**from** Judith Banki  
**subject**

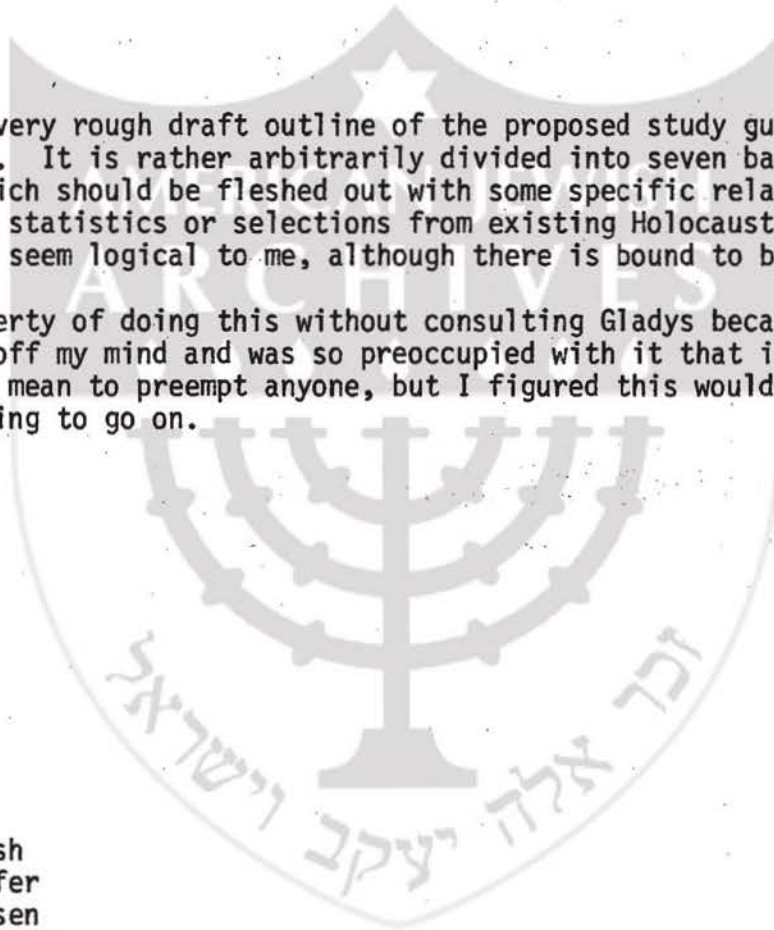
Attached is a very rough draft outline of the proposed study guide for the Holocaust film. It is rather arbitrarily divided into seven basic categories, each one of which should be fleshed out with some specific relation to the film, and with statistics or selections from existing Holocaust literature. The categories seem logical to me, although there is bound to be some overlap.

I took the liberty of doing this without consulting Gladys because I couldn't get the thing off my mind and was so preoccupied with it that it wouldn't go away. I don't mean to preempt anyone, but I figured this would at least give us something to go on.

JB/es

Enclosure

TO: Selma Hirsh  
 Sonya Kaufer  
 Gladys Rosen  
 Morton Yarmon



OUTLINE OF STUDY GUIDE

- I. Aims: (1) understand Holocaust in its concreteness and uniqueness;  
 (2) explore ideologies and prejudices which paved the way;  
 (3) draw possible lessons which may help prevent repetition.  
 (Relate to current problems)

JB

- II. Note to Teacher (or - putting in framework): Difficulty of confronting.  
 Temptations to evade its significance.  
 Difference between genocide and other instances of violence and  
 cruelty.

JB

- III. <sup>Authenticity</sup> Historicity of event as dramatized. Reflects real facts! Provide some  
 statistics (numbers killed in various death camps, by Einsatzgruppen, etc.)

JB or GR?

## IV. How could it happen?

- A) Historical overview of anti-Semitism and religious, economic and  
 political roots. Crusades, Inquisition, etc. Isolating Jews and  
 preparing for their destruction.
- B) Nazi racist theories: how adumbrated, instituted, propagandized.  
 (Gypsies, Slavs, mentally retarded.)
- C) From Nuremberg laws through "final solution."

JB

} GR

## V. Exploding some mythologies:

- A) (educated, professional, clerics, etc.) Solid, middle class people  
 did this, and scientists and intellectuals planned it.
- B) public protest meant nothing (e.g., it stopped euthenasia killings in  
 1941. Church protests)

} JB



VI. Responsibility and complicity of others.

This must be acknowledged. (France's racial laws, Ukrainian pogroms, lack of Christian protest, response to Eichmann's truck offer, denial of visas by U.S., refusal to bomb death camps, closing of Palestine, etc.)

CR

⑦ Resistance - JB [Bauer]

VII. Lessons to be learned

1) Although unique, Holocaust can teach us something about the ways in which specific groups may be targeted as victims, separated out from the rest of humanity (so human bonds are dissolved), subjected to verbal abuse and escalating violence, leading to mass murder.

both

2) Protest and refusal do make a difference.

⑧ The Surviving Remnant

VII. The Question of Resistance

Viewing it from the outside, and in retrospect, with the destruction of European Jewry its know end, young people frequently ask: Why didn't the Jews fight back? Why wasn't there more resistance? This may be particularly true of American students, raised on a media diet of films in which the heroes invariably strap on their guns, take on the villains, and triumph.

It is very difficult to convey the situation that confronted the various Jewish communities of Europe at the start of the Nazi regime. In every country, the Jews were a minority. In most, they were surrounded by a hostile or indifferent populace. They were unarmed civilians. Throughout their history, they had suffered persecution and pogroms, but had always managed to survive as a people. Most important, they could not conceive at the outset what we now know: that the leaders of the most civilized nation in Europe could devise a plan to annihilate an entire people. And yet they did resist, at first non-violently, by trying to preserve individual and communal life, education and culture in the ghettos, in the face of starvation, disease and continuing murder, and when the truth about the death camps began to leak out, by force of arms wherever possible.

①

②

film.  
The death struggle of the Warsaw Ghetto is portrayed in the film. There were many other occasions of armed resistance. At least 40-odd ghettos in Eastern Europe had armed underground units, some organized for fighting near home, some for escape and partisan fighting in the woods. Suicidal though it was, militant resistance inside the ghettos was attempted again and again. The Warsaw ghetto outbreak was the first full-scale rebellion; but well before that event, there had been numerous smaller-scale actions. For those who chose to take their stand outside the ghetto, escaping from behind the wall (which was in itself punishable by death) was only the first hurdle. Effective resistance was possible only in the deep Polish or Russian woods, where the Nazis could not maintain full control; and when the Jewish fighters first began to arrive there, they found few allies, bases or places of refuge.

The people of Poland, Lithuania and the western Soviet Union had been deeply anti-Semitic for centuries; few were willing to help the Jews, and many were not averse to seeing them killed. When some 3,000 of Tuczyn's 6,000 Jews fled to the forests nearby, their Ukrainian neighbors turned in between one-third and one-half of them within a few days. Most of the rest were killed by the Ukrainians themselves and some were caught by the Germans; exactly 15 survived. Besides everything else, the Jewish resistance, both in and outside

the ghettos, was chronically short of arms and ammunition. The Warsaw ghetto fighters, as far as anyone knows, had only 10 machine guns, a few submachine guns and a few hundred revolvers, and the fighters in the woods were no better off. Yet, with all these strikes against them, Jews managed to set up forces that fought bravely and with fair success until they were finally annihilated.

In Western Europe, too, Jews set up their own resistance units or joined mixed groups, particularly in France, Belgium and The Netherlands. Even within the electrified barbed wire of the concentration and annihilation camp, Jews fought back. There were uprisings at Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz and two concentration camps in Southern Poland.

"Crucial in this appraisal is the fact, emerging more and more clearly from historical study, that large parts of European Jewry, though divided, powerless and politically helpless, nevertheless seem to have had enough strength and resourcefulness to fight for life in their own ways....Slaughtered they were, but not like sheep." (*They Chose Life, Jewish Resistance in the Holocaust*, by Yehuda Bauer, The American Jewish Committee, New York, The Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1973 )

## IV Historical Background

### How Could it Happen?

~~For sheer size and deliberate intent the Nazi fanatical pursuit of the destruction of the Jewish people is an unprecedented episode of man's inhumanity to man. Its development was a product of Germany's past and involved the cooperation and support of enormous numbers of military personnel, the entire S.S., civil servants, lawyers, police, truck drivers, trainmen and average citizens. Education, wealth, class made little difference in the enthusiastic cooperation with Hitler's Third Reich.~~

L.D. quote

What made it possible for Germany, a country with a long tradition of culture to espouse Hitler and Nazism with *relatively little resistance,* almost total unanimity? The roots of Nazism lie in the

nationalism and bitter anti-liberalism which burgeoned in Germany in the wake of Napoleonic victories and the policy of "blood and iron" war and conquest espoused by Bismarck which united German nationalism and Prussian militarism after the Franco-Prussian War. ~~This~~ pattern reached its apogee with Hitler who, according to William L. Shirer "succeeded in inculcating in Germany a lust for power and domination, a passion for unbridled militarism, a contempt for democracy and individual freedom and a longing for authority."

The Weimar Republic, which was proclaimed in 1918 after Germany's ignominious defeat in World War I was established half-heartedly out of default, not out of the

triumph of democratic sentiment. Despite its model constitution, the Weimar Republic failed to defuse the hostility of the upper castes, the military, the industrial magnates and the heads of Prussian bureaucracy. The humiliating terms of the Versailles Treaty, inflation, poverty and depression bred the kind of fear, despair and violent hatreds which helped pave the way for Hitler's successful drive for personal power and national conquest. *add # under C*

~~Hitler, a frustrated artist and a pathological anti-Semite, was one of the early members of the insignificant National Socialist German Workers' Party. Capitalizing on mass discontent, he built the party up into a political base whose cornerstones were glorification of war and conquest, exaltation of the Germans as Master Race, hatred of Jews and contempt for democracy.~~

Between 1929 and 1933 the Nazi movement became Germany's dominant political party and early in 1933 Hitler was appointed Chancellor and took over the government and proceeded to use the law to dismantle German democracy and replace it with a dictatorship dedicated to relentless war against democracy, freedom, parliamentarianism, political pluralism and above all, the Jews, the embodiment of everything he hated. *II'*

~~"Germans had entered upon a macabre era in which evil and irrationality would reign for twelve endless years in~~

which the whole nation would be suborned." (L.D. p. 49)

[The pervasive influence of the Nazi philosophy and the authoritarian legal system which was evolving on average Germans comes out in the ambivalence of the Helms family to the marriage of their daughter with the Jew, Karl Weiss. The impact of the opportunities for upward mobility offered by the New Nazi institutions in a Germany beset by inflation and unemployment is clearly demonstrated by Erik Dorf's espousal of the Nazi cause.] III

[The horror of Kristallnacht and the continuing tightening of the noose of legal disability and individual helplessness of Jews and all those who try to oppose the Nazi regime, offer a case history of the average human being's potential for evil. The demeaning of the human being is dramatized by the rape of Anna and her commitment to an extermination center for defectives.] III

B. "From 1933 on, Germany was, in fact, a concentration camp. Its deadliness was still in potentia at that time. The jailers were careless, could be bribed to let the inmates escape, permitted themselves the luxuries of feelings on occasion, and concealed some of the evils of their establishment even from themselves. But the outer ring grew ever tigher and, inside, the places of death came into being. III

German Jewry did not know this... From their knowledge of Jewish history through the centuries, they saw another

period of Markness approaching them, similar to times of persecution experienced throughout the centuries" (Leo Beck, Saint of Theresienstadt).

[ The incredibility of the fate of German Jewry under the Nazis is reflected in the early ambivalences of the Weiss family of "The Holocaust" drama indeciding whether to leave Germany or "wait it out." They regarded themselves as Germans who had achieved a respectable position and who had a stake and a future in their country. How had they reached this position in view of Germany's long tradition of anti-semitism and what made it so precarious at this time? ]

Jews first came to Germany, which was part of the Holy Roman Empire, with the Roman armies some 2000 years ago. Until the Crusades, they seem to have enjoyed reasonable security and public acceptance, but beginning in 1096 conditions deteriorated because of the mounting religious fanaticism of the Christians and the economic and social disabilities to which Jews were subjected. Popular hostility found expression in the creation of Jewish ghettos, forced conversion, pillage, expulsion, and even massacre. Eventually a large part of German Jewry fled to Eastern Europe where they established new communities. Under the influence of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic victories, the spirit of Enlightenment affected Germany's body politic and Jews were gradually emancipated and admitted to most spheres of the larger society and by the 1870's were full and equal.



## Racist Ideology

C. In addition, this hatred of Jews was given a new pseudo-scientific rationale in the 19th century in many parts of Europe by the concept of race and racial purity as the overweening issue in human history. The specifically Teutonic form of racialism, based on theories about Semitic and Aryan races, was formulated by Arthur de Gobineau in France, and served as a framework for those who saw the future of civilization as dependent on the preservation of the social purity of the Aryan or Germanic race. For this, according to Richard Wagner, ferocious anti-semitic and musical genius, "emancipation from the yoke of Judaism appears to us the foremost necessity." The Jews and the liberals with whom they were politically identified or the capitalists with whom they were economically coupled, became convenient whipping boys for financial and political disasters in modern Germany as they had been in Medieval times.

During World War I, when things began to go badly for Germany, the Jews became the explanation for whatever was going wrong. Indeed, the new democratic regime of the Weimaric Republic established in 1918, gave the Jews complete equality at the very time that anti-semitism was bursting forth in its most extravagant form. For Adolf Hitler and the National Social Party persecuting Jews was an obsession which became the basis of official government policy when they assumed power.

citizens under law.

The Jews of Germany on the eve of Hitler's rise to power constituted a remarkably homogeneous community of 500,000. Well over 80% were native born and affiliated with the Liberal wing of Judaism. About one-third lived in Berlin and nearly 40% in other large cities. Over 60% were engaged in trade and commerce and nearly half of the gainfully employed were self-employed. The Jews of each city were organized as a Gemeinde, a group based on religious association in which each Jew was registered at birth. 60% belonged also to the CV, the Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish faith, a secular organization which stood for Jewish belongingness to German polity, culture and society. In contrast, only some 10,000 Jews belonged to the Zionist Federation which was Palestine oriented and a smaller segment of Ostjuden, both of which challenged the sense of Jewish-German belongingness. The German Orthodox wing shared with <sup>almost all</sup> ~~most other~~ German Jews a sincere and meaningful German patriotism.

But medieval superstitions and the feudal Christian views combined with the concept of German nationalism and folk patriotism to keep the Jew an outsider despite patriotism and economic and educational progress. Jews were convenient scapegoats for whatever ailed society in Germany as elsewhere in Europe, giving renewed expression to old hostilities deeply rooted in Christian religious and cultural traditions.

How did the Nazis use the theories of racial inequality against undesirable minorities like Jews, gypsies?

Having come to power legally in 1933, Hitler used the law in its most perverse forms to carry out the anti-Jewish ideology which was fundamental to the Nazi blueprint of conquest described in "Mein Kampf." To make Germany and areas under its control "judenrein", free of Jews, the Nazis began by instituting legal disabilities aimed at making life so intolerable for Jews that they would emigrate. Jews were proscribed by law from citizenship, public office, the professions, intellectual and artistic life, and public school attendance. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 officially established second-class citizenship by extending the racial principle in personal life which effectively prohibited any close personal and business relationships between Jews and Aryans. Second class citizens, the Jews moved to establish a government of their own. To that end, all German Jewish organizations still permitted to function came together as the Reichsvertretung - The Representative Body of Jews of Germany. They chose as their head, Leo Baeck, the most prestigious Jew in Germany, probably the only Jewish leader who could reconcile internal differences within the community. He remained with his people, preferring to stay at Theresienstadt to comfort and lead them throughout the war years, despite offers from abroad to rescue him.

Open violence and acts of degradation against Jews became commonplace throughout Germany and in each country which

came under its domination. In 1938, the year of the Austrian Anschluss, the "civilian" uprising proposed by Erik Dorf in The Holocaust, took place in the shape of a *well-organized* spontaneous terror action, <sup>made to look</sup> called Kristallnacht, because of the shattered glass from the windows of the many Jewish establishments attacked. It served to set off a series of synagogue burnings, personal attacks and the expropriation of businesses and property under a variety of pretexts. Thousands of Jews were thrown into concentration camps along with religious dissenters and persons regarded as hostile to the regime. Although many German and Austrian Jews could not bring themselves to abandon their "fatherland" even under these circumstances, about half of the total of 800,000 did manage to ~~fall~~ escape before 1941, when all escape routes were blocked. With the occupation of Poland, almost 2 million Jews came under Nazi sway and Jews out of the country could no longer work. The SS Poland's Jews into ghettos to be run by elected or appointed Jewish councils (Judenrate) representable to the Nazis. The ghettoization was completed by 1941, As the previously embarked on eliminating process of the Jews through emigration, starvation, and disease, and through their use as ~~slave~~ labor continued.

*The Final Solution*

It was not until March 1941, when Germany decided to attack Russia, that a coordinated plan for the mass murder of Jews in all areas under German domination, the Final Solution, was more clearly formulated. The unwritten order for the Final Solution was conveyed from Hitler to Reinhard

Heydrich by both Mimmeler and Goering. The secrecy of the overall operation, to be accomplished by the Einsatzgruppen (mobile S.S. units assigned to combat the civilian enemy by various methods including mass murder) and later by mass destruction by gas in death camps) was carefully guarded, although by 1942, the Free World was aware of the monstrous German plan for the extermination of the Jews of Europe.

East European Jewry, unlike their largely assimilated brethren in Germany, had maintained a separate communal existence within Russia and Poland with a distinctive life style, a religious tradition and their own spoken language, Yiddish. Their second class citizenry and forced isolation made them value and develop their own culture, even more. Before Hitler, East European Jewry was the source of intellectual and religious revival and leadership for the rest of Jewry. When 4½ million of their number perished at the hands of the Nazis, a world was lost.

The efforts of the Nazis to systematically destroy the ghetto dwellers by cutting them off from normal community functions - by not providing social or medical service, by forbidding religious services and study and closing down political activities did not succeed. In nearly all ghettos, study groups, Zionist clubs and religious gatherings operated secretly and underground newspapers and other communal activities were sponsored by the Jewish Councils who were

*This could go under "resistance"*

also responsible for determining who would stay and who would be forced to leave. In Warsaw, the joint Distribution Committee, an international Jewish aid group, organized a whole network of social services, while multi-level education was maintained against unbelievable odds, always in the expectation of ultimately being free. So carefully concealed was the Nazi mass murder program, that it was not until 1942 that the residents of the Warsaw ghetto became aware that these who were being resettled in Auschwitz, Sobibor and other camps, in Poland, were going not to places of honest labor but to their death. Little wonder that it took even longer for the outside world to understand and accept the enormity of what was happening.

These events are given individual human proportions in "Holocaust" as we experience Buchenwald with Karl Weiss and the heroic efforts to maintain normalcy in the Warsaw ghetto and the desperation of the deportations and the decisions involved through the experience of Dr. Weiss and the Lowy's.

Questions IV How could it happen?

1. Why did German Jewry find it so hard to accept the full meaning of Nazi excesses against the Jews and believe with Leo Baeck that "the 1000 years history of German Jewry is at end?"
2. What new elements did Hitler and the Nazis add to anti-semitism as expressed and acted upon in other periods of history?
3. How did Germany's past attitudes and experience prepare the way for Hitler's successful perversion of the German experiment in democracy and freedom epitomized by the Weimar Republic?
4. In what ways did the theory of Aryan racial superiority enable Hitler to go beyond all previous historic persecutions of minority groups?
5. How was the German leadership able to make their bestial ~~atrocities~~ human life and dignity acceptable to the German people?

### VIII. The Saving Remnant

Rejected by mankind, the condemned do not go so far as to reject it in turn. Their faith in history remains unshaken, and one may well wonder why. They do not despair. The proof: they persist in surviving--not only to survive but to testify.

The victims elect to become witnesses.

Elie Wiesel  
One Generation After

Within the lifetime of most of us now living, the Jewish people has gone through a shattering tragedy and a great rebirth--the near destruction of European Jewry by Adolf Hitler and the founding of the modern State of Israel. In a way, the second of these key events is an outcome of the first, for it demonstrates the uncanny Jewish ability to discover hope and build on it, to defy the Holocaust. The Jewish State, for whose restoration Jews have prayed since their exile, came into existence when it did in response to the challenge of the Holocaust survivors to the conscience and self-interest of the post war world and the creative genius of the Jewish people, schooled in adversity.

For the survivors, unwanted in their former homes and weary of tribulation and adversity, Israel held out hope for a new way of life. After their liberation from the Nazis, they formed the vanguard of the largest spontaneous and illegal migration in recent times. The people in the movement went not only as individuals but as whole families, the young and the old, all searching for a plausible way to survive. Because many of



these uprooted Jews did finally reach Palestine, their odyssey became one of the most significant factors leading to the establishment of the State of Israel.



#### IV How Did It Happen?

The art of propaganda lies in understanding the emotional ideas of the great masses and finding, through a psychologically correct form, the way to the attention and thence to the heart of the broad masses. (Hitler, Mein Kampf)

Having come to power legally in 1933, Hitler used the law in its most perverse forms to carry out the anti-Jewish ideology which was fundamental to the Nazi blueprint of conquest described in "Mein Kampf." To make Germany and areas under its control "judenrein," free of Jews, the Nazis began by instituting legal disabilities aimed at making life so intolerable for Jews that they would emigrate. Jews were proscribed by law from citizenship, public office, the professions, intellectual and artistic life, and public school attendance. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 officially established second-class citizenship by extending the racial principle to personal life which effectively prohibited any close personal and business relationships between Jews and Aryans. In order to deal with the situation, the Jews moved to establish a government of their own, the Reichsvertretung, a union of all German Jewish organizations still permitted to function.

Open violence and acts of degradation against Jews became commonplace throughout Germany and in each country which came under its domination. In 1938, the year of the Austrian Anschluss, the "civilian" purising proposed by Erik Dorf in The Holocaust, took place in the shape of

a spontaneous terror action, called Kristallnacht, the night of shattered glass from the windows of the many Jewish establishments attacked. It served to set off a series of synagogue burnings, personal attacks and the expropriation of businesses and property under a variety of pretexts. Thousands of Jews were thrown into concentration camps along with religious dissenters and persons regarded as hostile to the regime. Although many German and Austrian Jews could not bring themselves to abandon their "fatherland" even under these circumstances, about half of the total of 800,000 did manage to flee before 1941, when all escape routes were blocked. With the occupation of Poland, almost 2 million Jews came under Nazi sway and sending Jews out of the country could no longer work. The SS forced Poland's Jews into ghettos to be run by elected or appointed Jewish councils (Judenrate) responsible to the Nazis. The ghettoization was completed by 1941, as the previously embarked on process of eliminating the Jews through emigration, starvation, and disease, and through their use as slave labor continued.

The activities of all agencies concerned with the Final Solution and methods to be used were formulated in January 1942. Despite the carefully guarded secrecy of the overall operation, to be accomplished by the Einsatzgruppen (mobile S.S. units assigned to combat the civilian

enemy) by various methods including mass murder and later by mass destruction by gas in death camps, the Free World was soon aware of the monstrous German plan for the extermination of the Jews of Europe as its armies moved Eastward.

East European Jewry, unlike their largely assimilated brethren in Germany, had maintained a separate communal existence within Russia and Poland with a distinctive life style, a religious tradition and their own spoken language, Yiddish. Before Hitler, East European Jewry was the source of Jewish scholarship and religious revival and leadership.

Even the efforts of the Nazis to systematically destroy the ghetto dwellers and dehumanize them did not wholly succeed, as long as they could maintain their communal life through makeshift institutional forms. Internal ghetto affairs were in the hands of the Jewish Councils who were also responsible for carrying out Nazi orders to decide who would stay and who would be forced to leave. So carefully concealed was the Nazi mass murder program, that it was not until 1942 that the residents of the Warsaw ghetto became aware that those who were being resettled in Auschwitz, Sobibor, Maidanek, and other camps in Poland, were going not to places of honest labor but to their death. Little wonder that the outside world found it so hard to understand and accept the enormity of what was happening.

These events are given individual human proportions in Holocaust as we experience the horrors of Buchenwald with Karl Weiss and the heroic efforts to maintain normalcy in the Warsaw ghetto and the desperation of the deportations and the decisions involved through the experience of Dr. Weiss and the Lowys.



The film "Holocaust" faces up to this painful reality. <sup>K</sup> Erich Dorf ~~one~~  
~~of the protagonists~~ is a lawyer, ~~He is~~ a family man who loves his wife and  
children. He joins the SS to advance his career, and at first is embarrassed  
to wear a uniform. Yet he uses his intelligence and training in law to  
"legalize" policies and programs leading to mass murder. While Dorf is a  
fictional character, other Nazis portrayed in the film were historical figures.  
Ernst Biberstein, who headed Division "6" of Einsatzgruppe "C", was a Pro-  
testant minister. His unit murdered two or three thousand people. Paul  
Blohel, also head of a sub-unit of Einsatzgruppe "C", who directed the murders  
of over 5,000 Jews in the area of Kiev, was an architect.

*How it  
happened.*

The Einsatzgruppen, or "special duty groups" were mobile killing units con-  
ceived of by Heydrich to provide a striking force for the political police  
and security intelligence. They were first used during the invasion of  
Austria, hunting down persons suspected of opposition to National Socialism.  
Six Einsatzgruppen were attached to the army during the military campaign in  
Poland. Their wholesale murder of Poles and their sadistic atrocities  
against Jews shocked even some German army generals -- not on moral grounds,  
but because of deviations from army regulations and discipline. When Germany  
invaded Russia, four Einsatzgruppen, following directly behind the armed  
forces with verbal orders to kill the Jews, performed their special tasks  
with staggering competence. *Gypsies + political "enemies" were also  
among their victims.*

"At Nuremberg the International Military Tribunal concluded that of the  
approximately six million Jews murdered, two million were killed by the Ein-  
satzgruppen and other units of the security police." (Dawidowicz, The War  
Against the Jews, p. 128) These special action groups were largely commanded  
by Nazi intellectuals with professional backgrounds.

### III. Exploding Some Mythologies

Faced with the evidence of the unparalleled dehumanization that was systematized during the Holocaust, many people question whether these actions could have been carried out by "normal" people. Hitler is frequently viewed as self-evidently insane, and the assumption is made that only criminal elements, sadists or uneducated people could have carried out these acts. Confronting the Holocaust means understanding and accepting that it was planned by professionals and intellectuals, and was carried out by educated men and women. It involved the cooperation and support of enormous numbers of military personnel, the entire S.S., civil servants, lawyers, police, truck drivers, trainmen and average citizens. Education, wealth, class made little difference.



II. How Could It Happen?

When the smoke of World War II began to clear, <sup>and</sup> the concentration camps opened to reveal the gas chambers, the crematoria, the tons of ashes of the slaughtered and the emaciated bodies of the survivors, the magnitude of the Holocaust began to penetrate the awareness of the Western World. Perhaps the most common question, then and now, is "How could it happen?" As Dr. Franklin Littell as written, the Holocaust involved "the debasement of education, the corruption of science, the criminalization of government, the dehumanization of man."<sup>①</sup> It is difficult to sort out the many factors -- political, economic and ideological -- which converged during the Hitler era to allow genocide to be undertaken and carried out with relatively widespread acquiescence among the German people ←

Surely, one explanation for the <sup>popular</sup> acceptance of the anti-Jewish measures which culminated in <sup>the</sup> deportations and mass murders was a long-standing tradition of antisemitism which <sup>had</sup> permeated Christian Europe <sup>for centuries.</sup>

① Holocaust Studies Newsletter #1, National Institute on the Holocaust,  
POB 2147, Phila Pa 19103





On the one hand, Jews were subjected to humiliating, restrictive legislation: forbidden to appear on the streets during Easter (councils of Orleans, 538 and 545); forbidden to officiate as judges (council of Macon, 581). These enactments were made by regional church councils and not universally enforced; but the Fourth Lateran Council, beginning in 1215, gave church-wide endorsement to these and other degrading measures, including the order that Jews must wear a distinctive badge on their clothing. Later rulings outlawed the Talmud, authorized the ghetto, affirmed the validity of forced sermons intended to lead to baptism, and denied Jews admission to the universities. Thus, almost every measure adopted by the Nazi regime to segregate and humiliate Jews -- except for the "final decision" to kill them all -- had a precedent in ~~Christian~~ church legislation.

On the other hand, the medieval popes also protected the Jews and condemned violence against them. But the church was not always able to prevent the violent slaughter it deplored. The first organized ~~murders~~ murders of Jews took place during <sup>in the Rhineland</sup> the Crusades, when tens of thousands were slaughtered by Crusaders on their way to redeem the Holy Land. The "Black Death" or bubonic plague which swept Europe in the mid-fourteenth century was also blamed on the Jews, who were accused of poisoning the wells; thousands were massacred or burnt at the stake.

"Thus, from the Crusades to the twentieth century, from accusations of ritual murder and well-poisoning to charges of international conspiracy, from the auto-da-fé to Auschwitz, the Jewish people remained the outcasts and the primary scapegoat of Christendom. Certainly the institutions of Christianity cannot be held accountable for the entire record of persecution, expulsion and slaughter, particularly for the racist ideology of the Nazis. But whatever the multiple and complex causes of antisemitism, it was fed by a tradition of religious teaching which cut the Jews off from the rest of mankind, depicted them as inherently base and evil -- the "synagogue of Satan" -- and viewed their ~~misfortunes~~ sufferings as punishment visited upon

them by a just God." (3) *Jonathan Hereskov* "The Church & the Jews: The Struggle at Vatican Council II," AJVB, 1965

"Holocaust" takes note of the link between ~~Christianity~~ this tradition and the Nazi policies toward the Jews in several instances. When the Dorf children ask why everyone hates the Jews, the answer is: "Cause they killed Christ. Didn't you learn that in Sunday school?" In the film, Heydrich remarks to Dorf: "Christians may disagree on a lot of things, but as men of conscience, they can unite on hatred of Jews." In a conversation with Himmler, Dorf comments: "The Fuhrer himself said we were completing the work of Christianity, defending Western culture." Were all Christians antisemitic? Were there no church leaders who spoke out?

In every period, there were noble-hearted Christians who spoke out for the Jews, defended them and tried to protect them. This was true during the Nazi era, too. There were even some martyrs. Father Bernard Lichtenberg, portrayed in the film, was one of a handful of courageous churchmen to condemn the Nazi government for its persecution of the Jews, and to pray openly for them. He was denounced, ~~and~~ arrested, and sentenced to two years in prison. Upon his release, he was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Dachau. He died on the way. ~~Other~~

~~The following~~ Referring to him and other Christian martyrs, Franklin Littell remarks that their witness is "as glorious as any in the annals of the church" and that students should know of this record, "along with the general record of mass betrayal and apostasy."

### III EXPLODING SOME MYTHOLOGIES

Faced with the evidence of the unparalleled ~~ad~~humanization that was systemitized during the Holocaust, many people question whether these actions could have been carried out by "normal" people. Hitler is frequently viewed as self-evidently insane, and the assumption is made that only criminal elements, sadists or uneducated people could have carried out these acts. ~~These individuals were~~ Confronting the Holocaust means ~~planned by professionals and intellectuals, and~~ understanding and accepting that it was carried out by educated men and women.

The film, "Holocaust" faces up to this painful reality. Erich Dorf, one of the protagonists, is a lawyer. He is a family man who loves his wife and children. He joins the SS to advance his career, and at first is embarrassed to wear a uniform. Yet he uses his intelligence and ~~xxxx~~ training in law to "legalize" policies and programs leading to mass murder. While Dorf is a fictional character, other Nazis portrayed in the film were historical ~~characters~~ <sup>figures</sup>. Ernst Biberstein, who headed division "6" of Einsatzgruppe "C", was a Protestant minister. ~~The Einsatzgruppe, or special duty groups were~~ ~~xxxx~~ His unit murdered two or three thousand people. Paul Blobel, also head of a sub-unit of Einsatzgruppe "C", who directed the murders of over 5,000 Jews in the area of Kiev, was an architect. The Einsatzgruppen, or "specil <sup>d</sup>uty groups" were mobile killing units ~~were~~ conceived of by Heyrich to provide a striking force for the political police and security intelligence. They were first used during the invasion of Austria, hunting down persons suspected of opposition to National Socialism. Six Einsatzgruppen were attached to the army during the military campaign in Poland. Their wholesale murder of Poles and their sadistic atrocities against Jews shocked even some German army generals -- not on moral grounds, but because of deviations from army regulations and discipline. When Germany invaded Russia, four Einsatzgruppen, following directly behind the armed forces with verbal orders to kill the Jews, performed their special tasks with staggering competence.

"At Nuremberg the International Military Tribunal concluded that of the approximately six million Jews murdered, two million were killed by the Einsatzgruppen and other units of the security police." (Dawidowicz, The War Against the Jews, p. 128)

~~Yehuda Bauer points out that~~ These special action groups were largely commanded by Nazi intellectuals. with professional backgrounds.

Was there <sup>any</sup> protest? Did it accomplish anything?

American students, particularly those who may recall the great outpouring of citizens to support the cause of civil rights during the March on Washington, or the widespread opposition to the U.S. Government's policies during the Vietnamese War, may find it hard to believe that ~~the~~ <sup>in</sup> mass murder could be implemented with so little protest within Germany and the lands occupied by Germany. For those raised within a democratic tradition which allows considerable dissent, it is extremely difficult to convey the atmosphere of a totalitarian regime. Political dissent was ruthlessly suppressed in Nazi Germany, as was organized resistance in the Nazi-occupied countries. Yet, <sup>certain</sup> /protests ~~against the mass murder~~ when supported by the entire populace and enforced by civic and religious leadership, were successful. It is instructive to see in what areas, and on what issues, this protest achieved some success.

Weiss  
In the film, "Holocaust", young Anna, ~~xxx~~ who is suffering a psychological and emotional trauma after being raped, is sent to a "sanitorium" where, along with mentally retarded and physically <sup>deformed children</sup> crippled people, she is gassed to death. This program of involuntary euthanasia actually occurred, and was a "trail run" for the massive murder of Jews and others in extermination camps later in the war. (Fritz Stangl, commandant of Treblinka, received his "training" in the Euthanasia Program.)

Despite the secrecy surrounding this program -- which began the first day of World War II and resulted in the murder of more than a quarter of a million people classified as "racially valueless". <sup>it was discovered, and</sup> -- overt protest against it came from

~~Germany~~

German civilians including Nazi party members, and from Church leaders. Both the Vatican and the German Catholic Church strongly protested the Euthanasia Program. *Insert A* ~~With few exceptions, neither they nor the German people protested the "Final Solution" - the annihilation of the Jews.~~ *Insert A*

In the Nazi-occupied countries, public resistance ~~XXXXXX~~ *to the deportation of Jews* played some role in determining their ~~fate~~ *fate* of the Jews, although ~~XXXXXX~~ this fate derived also from the degree of autonomy permitted by the Germans. In Denmark, for example, despite efforts by Nazi spokesmen to convince the Danes that the Jews were an alien element, Jews remained under the protection of the Danish government. No anti-Jewish legislation was enacted and no Jewish property was expropriated. After Denmark came under martial law, German plans to deport the Danish Jews -- leaked by a ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ German to Danish Social Democratic leaders -- were frustrated through an extraordinary operation involving all the Danish people, who hid <sup>early all</sup> the Jews and ferried them across to neutral Sweden in fishing boats. The Germans managed to round up some four hundred Jews, whom they sent to Theresienstadt (Terezin). Their internment deeply concerned the Danish government, which repeatedly requested permission to inspect the camp. As a result of this persistent interest, no Danish Jews were sent to Auschwitz.

~~X~~ Bulgaria provides another example of the efficacy of public ~~XXXXXXXX~~ resistance. A member of the Axis, Bulgaria retained autonomy in internal administration. While the government did adopt a number of anti-Jewish measures, it refused to accede to German pressure to deport Bulgarian Jews because of the counterpressure of public opinion, especially of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

What would have happened if a great outpouring of public protest, both inside and outside of Germany, had greeted the initial anti-Jewish measures? What would have happened if everyone had insisted on wearing the yellow star which Jews were commanded to wear on their clothing?

Questions ~~II~~ ~~II~~ How could it happen?

- 7 2. Why did German Jewry find it so hard to accept the ~~full~~ <sup>implications</sup> ~~meaning~~ of Nazi excesses against the Jews, <sup>why did people</sup> ~~and believe~~ ~~believe with Leo Baeck that "the 1000 years history of German Jewry is at end."~~ <sup>like Bertha Weiss and the Palitzes refuse to leave Germany even warned to do so?</sup>
- 3. What new elements did Hitler and the Nazis add to anti-Semitism as expressed and acted upon in other periods of history?
- 3. How did Germany's past attitudes and experience prepare the way for Hitler's successful perversion of the German experiment in democracy and freedom epitomized by the Weimar Republic?
- 4. In what ways did the theory of Aryan racial superiority enable Hitler to go beyond all previous historic persecutions of minority groups? <sup>Does anyone think in these terms today?</sup>
- 5. How was the German leadership able to make their bestial attacks on human life and dignity acceptable to the German people? <sup>What would have happened if they had openly expressed opposition to threats like Kuntalbracket?</sup>



(2) V RESISTANCE AND ARMED STRUGGLE

Jewish resistance was the resistance of a fish caught in a net, a mouse in a trap, an animal at bay. It is pure myth that the Jews were merely "passive," that they did not resist the Nazis who had decided on their destruction. The Jews fought back against their enemies to a degree no other community anywhere in the world would have been capable of doing were it to find itself similarly beleaguered. They fought against hunger and starvation, against epidemic disease, against the deadly Nazi economic blockade. They fought against the German murderers and against the traitors within their own ranks, *and they were utterly alone in their fight*. They were forsaken by God and man, surrounded by the hatred or indifference of the Gentile population.

Ours was not a romantic war. Although there was much heroism, there was little beauty; much toil and suffering, but no glamor. We fought back on every front where the enemy attacked—the biological front, the economic front, the propaganda front, the cultural front—with every weapon we possessed.

In the end it was ruse, deception and cunning beyond anything the

world has ever seen, which accomplished what hunger and disease could not achieve. What defeated us, ultimately, was Jewry's indestructible optimism, our eternal faith in the goodness of man—or rather, in the limits of his degradation. For generations, the Jews of Eastern Europe had looked to Berlin as to the very symbol of lawfulness, enlightenment and culture. We just could not believe that a German, even disguised as a Nazi, would so far renounce his own humanity as to murder women and children—coldly and systematically. We paid a terrible price for our hope, which turned out to be a delusion: the delusion that the nation of Kant, Goethe, Mozart and Beethoven cannot be a nation of murderers. And when, finally, we saw how we had been deceived, and we resorted to the weapons for which we were least well prepared—historically, philosophically, psychologically—when we finally took up arms, we inscribed in the annals of history the unforgettable epic of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

Alexander Donat, "The Holocaust Kingdom," in Friedlander, ed., *Out of the Whirlwind*, pp. 57-58. From *Jewish Resistance* (Flint, Mich.: Walden Press, 1964).

Viewing the Holocaust as a past event, with the destruction of European Jewry its known end, young people frequently ask: Why didn't the Jews fight back? Why wasn't there more resistance?

In every country in Europe the Jews were a small minority, unarmed civilians, usually surrounded by a hostile or indifferent populace. Despite periodic persecution and pogroms, they had always managed to survive as a people. They resisted at first by trying to preserve individual and communal life, religious celebrations, education and



culture in the ghettos, though medical and social service were denied, religious and cultural activities forbidden, and starvation and disease rampant. *Commercial life was* ~~these~~ activities were supervised by the Jewish Councils (Judenrate) on whom the Nazis forced the agonizing decision of who would stay and who would be transported. (Some of these councils, believing the Nazi lies that remaining Jews would be spared, were compliant. Others were defiant and centers of resistance.)

When the truth about the death camps began to leak out, Jews took up arms wherever possible.

In addition to the hectic, hopeless Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, portrayed in the film, there were many other occasions of armed resistance. At least 40-odd ghettos in Eastern Europe had armed underground units, some organized for fighting near home, some for escape and partisan fighting in the woods. Effective resistance was possible only in the deep Polish or Russian woods, where the Nazis could not maintain full control; but when the Jewish fighters first began to arrive there, they found few allies, bases or places of refuge.

The people of Poland, Lithuania and western Soviet Union had been deeply anti-Semitic for centuries; few were willing to help the Jews, and many were not averse to seeing them killed. Besides everything else, there was a chronic shortage of arms and ammunition. The Warsaw ghetto fighters, as far as anyone knows, had only 10 machine guns, a few submachine guns and a few hundred revolvers, and the fighters in the woods were no better off. But all these strikes against them did not prevent the Jews from fighting bravely and with

fair success until the end.

In Western Europe, too, Jews set up their own resistance units or joined mixed groups, particularly in France, Belgium and The Netherlands. Even within the electrified barbed wire of the concentration and annihilation camps, Jews fought back. There were uprisings at Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz and two concentration camps in Southern Poland.



## VI. Responsibility and Complicity

"In all our countries, when perhaps in the heat of passion or for other motives which impair restraint some individual is killed, the murder becomes sensation, our compassion is aroused, nor do we rest until the criminal is punished and the rule of law vindicated. Shall we do less when not one but on the lowest computation 12,000,000 men, women and children are done to death? Not in battle, not in passion but in the cold, calculated, deliberate attempt to destroy nations and races, to disintegrate the traditions, the institutions and the very existence of free and ancient states. Twelve million murders! Two-thirds of the Jews of Europe exterminated, more than six million of them on the killer's own figures. Murder conducted like some mass production industry...."

Sir Harley Showcross  
Closing speech to the Inter-  
national Military Tribunal  
at Nuremberg

In 1933 the world was shocked by Hitler's brutality and voices were raised in protest at the ~~League of Nations~~. ~~Yet~~ no effective international measures were ever taken to limit the Nazi program of creating refugees. Those who escaped did so with the help of private organizations, mostly Jewish. The conscience of the world was not moved to do more than editorially endorse the call to action against Hitler's policies issued by James G. MacDonald, the League of Nations' High Commissioner for German Refugees. The world's major democracies continued to regard the

much publicized Nazi persecutions as the internal affairs of a sovereign state. Even when the horrifying reports and grievance operations of the final solution had been verified, the major countries of anti-nazi alliance reacted with indignation but refused to implement any effective proposals.

The Evian Conference, convened in 1938 at the initiative of President Roosevelt to find ways of saving and helping refugees, brought together representatives of 32 countries. But when even the powers proved reluctant to take any significant steps to help by opening their doors or offering funds, the International Committee which was formed could not accomplish its goals and the conference was a failure. The continued unwillingness on the part of the international community to consider plans suggested by Jews for combatting Nazi persecution or even to make dollars available for rescue culminated in 1943 in the Bermuda Conference called by Allies. Like its predecessor at Evian, the Bermuda Conference took no practical action. Their stand was that rescue and relief would be achieved only by victory over the Nazis and nothing should deflect them from a purely military-strategic plan. There was a pervasive lack of human concern and responsibility for those whose lives hung in the balance. The United States admitted very few refugees, not even filling the German quota during the war years and the British continued to restrict immigration to Palestine, with more concern for politics than people. Illegal efforts were made to enter Palestine by ship, with sometime tragic results. The story

of the Struma which sank with all the men, women and children on board after being turned away from the shore. Palestine demonstrates an almost inhuman callousness on the part of the British. The journey of the St. Louis in 1938 with its cargo of refugees on their way to Cuba whose entry permits were not honored, reflects no less badly on the United States which would take in none of those who were fleeing and were subsequently returned to more hospitable European countries which later came under Nazi domination. Indeed, the rescue story on the part of the United States and others who had the power to help but did not use it, is indeed a tragic one replete with ineptness, indifference and political maneuvering. From the early efforts at Evian until 1944, the Roosevelt administration focused however ineffectively on political refugees, those who in effect were already rescued while it closed its eyes to genocide. The failure of the Roosevelt administration under the influence of the State Department, to exert pressure against Nazi Final Solution was aggravated by the internal organizational strife within the Jewish community. It was impossible to effect a unified approach to the American government. At last in 1944 action was taken with the establishment of the War Refugee Board under the auspices of the Treasury Department. Unfortunately "the four years which it had taken to remove the operation from the State Department were crucial. The time lost could not be regained,

nor could the dead be brought back to life." (Henry L. Feingold, Roosevelt and The Holocaust, A Leo Baeck Institute Lecture).

In western Europe, however, the Nazi efforts to carry out the Final Solution met the opposition of people with a conscience - the Danes who saved their Jews by ferrying them to Sweden, which did not allow its neutrality to conquer its humanity; the Italians refused to help the Nazis in deportation efforts, the Bulgarians people and government which resisted handing over Bulgarian Jews to the Nazi. In France, over half of the Jews were saved, because of the sympathy of the Nazi-hating general population, which provided hiding place; the Poles who jeopardized their own safety to save Jews; the Lithuanian women who concealed Jewish children; the Yugoslavs and Hungarians who had helped the Jews; the few humane Germans, like Dean Grueber; the Germans and Dutch who risked their lives to hide Jews.

Individuals, too, came forward to help in rescue operations--men like the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Lyon, the Greek Catholic Bishop of Lvov, Pastor Marc Boegner, head of the Protestant community in Southern France and Monsignor Angelo Roncalli, later Pope John XXIII. However, most supported the Nazis when they conquered their lands, sometime out of sympathy for the Nazi cause, sometime fearing for their own safety. Many could no doubt echo the words of Pastor Niemoller who was ultimately imprisoned for opposing Nazi attacks upon the

Christian religion:

"In Germany, the Nazis first came for the Communists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews and I did not speak up because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics and I was a Protestant so I didn't speak up. Then they came for me... by that time there was no one to speak for anyone."

But men of conscience like Pastor Niemoller who regretted that they had not done more were a tiny minority. Our concern lies with the degree of guilt accruing to those war criminals like Adolf Eichmann who were "following orders," to the German citizens but a stone's throw from the death camps who were unaware of what was happening to former friends and neighbors who not only did not help but profited from the misfortunes of Jews and dissenters.

"In all modern societies there are men and women who, released from restraints, will behave like beasts toward their fellows. But in the twentieth century it has been only in Germany and in Russia that such men have been able to achieve absolute power, and it is only in Germany that they have deliberately delegated their power without reserve to psychopaths and the riff-raff of their country, absolving them from all restraint."

Edward Crankshaw

Father Lichtenberg in "Holocaust" was a historical character, one of very few voices raised in defense of the Jews as he continued to pray for them despite Erik Dorf's warnings. But the events of the dramatization to emphasize the complicity of Germans of every rank and status and every level of education in accepting the evil of Nazism as a concomittant of the power and prosperity which seemed to accompany it.





(Judith's Version)

DRAFT

## II. HOW COULD IT HAPPEN?

"In the spring of 1945, three trucks loaded with eight to nine tons of human ashes, from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, were dumped into a canal in order to conceal the high rate of Jewish executions. When a German general was asked at Nuremberg how such things could happen, he replied: 'I am of the opinion that when for years, for decades, the doctrine is preached that Jews are not even human, such an outcome is inevitable'...The doctrine which made such deeds inevitable had been preached, not merely for years or for decades, but for many centuries...The German crime of genocide has its logical roots in the mediaeval theory that the Jews were outcasts, condemned by God to a life of perpetual servitude." (Malcolm Hay, Thy Brother's Blood)

### Questions

~~Why did so many Germans go along with the growing restrictions on the Jews?~~

### Religious Roots of Antisemitism

Antisemitism, meaning hatred of Jews, is an ancient evil, the most pervasive and persistent group antagonism in human history. While there are political and economic aspects of this hatred, its primary root was religious; the charge that all Jews were deicides -- God-killers -- living under a curse and doomed to punishment in each succeeding generation had been used to justify discrimination and persecution against them. In recent years, Christian church groups have repudiated that charge and condemned antisemitism, but for many centuries, it was a staple of church teaching and policy.

Official church policy regarding the Jews, as it developed over the years, was that they should not be destroyed, because they provided a living witness to the truth of Christian history, but that they were to live in degradation.

Thus, many of the measures adopted by the Nazi regime to segregate and degrade Jews -- including the wearing of a distinctive badge on their clothing, book burnings, confinement in ghettos, and denial of admissions to universities or the right to practice in various professions -- had a precedent in church legislation. The first organized murder of Jews took place during the Crusades when tens of thousands were slaughtered in the Rhineland by Crusaders on their way to redeem the Holy Land. Luther, at first sympathetic to Jews, turned vehemently antisemitic in his later writings, which enjoyed a revival of popularity in Germany when the Nazis came to power.

"Holocaust" notes the link between Christian hostility and the Nazi policies toward the Jews in several instances. When the Dorf children ask why everyone hates the Jews, the answer is: "Cause they killed Christ. Didn't you learn that in Sunday school?" Heydrich remarks to Dorf: "Christians may disagree on a lot of things but as men of conscience they can unite on hatred of Jews." In a conversation with Himmler, Dorf comments: "The Fuhrer himself said we were completing the work of Christianity, defending Western culture."

Were all Christians antisemitic? Were there no church leaders who spoke out?

In every period, there were noble-hearted Christians who spoke out for the Jews, defended them and tried to protect them. This was true during the Nazi era, too. (Father Bernard Lichtenberg, portrayed in the film, was one of a handful of courageous churchmen to condemn the Nazi government for its persecution of the Jews, and to pray openly for them.)

Referring to him and other Christian martyrs, Franklin Littell remarks that their witness is "as glorious as any in the annals of the church" and that students should know of this record, "along with the general record of mass betrayal and apostasy."

The State of Israel has acknowledged the contributions of non-Jews who saved, or tried to save, Jewish lives. At Yad Vashem, the international memorial and research center to the Holocaust in Jerusalem, there is an avenue called "The Street of the Righteous." Trees are planted there, each dedicated to the memory of a non-Jew proven to have saved the life of at least one Jew.

