

1933

30

JANUARY

Adolf Hitler appointed chancellor of Germany by president Von Hindenburg.



Adolf Hitler celebrates being appointed chancellor

22

FEBRUARY

40,000 SA and SS men are sworn in as auxiliary police.

27

FEBRUARY

Reichstag (German parliament) building burnt down, Nazis are suspected to be responsible to create a crisis atmosphere.



Fire fighters struggle to extinguish the fire at the Reichstag building

28

FEBRUARY

Emergency powers granted to Hitler due to the Reichstag fire.

22

MARCH

First concentration camp opens at Dachau near Munich.



Aerial photo of Dachau

23

MARCH

The German parliament passes the Enabling Act, which empowered Hitler to establish a dictatorship in Germany.

27

MARCH

Anti-Nazi protest takes place in New York organised by American Jewish Congress. 55,000 people attend and threaten to boycott German goods if the Germans carry out their planned boycott of Jewish-owned businesses.

1

APRIL

Nazis order that Jewish shops and businesses are boycotted nationwide. Nazi guards stand in front of Jewish-owned stores and discourage people from shopping there.



Nazi SA Storm Troopers in Berlin on April 1, 1933, with boycott signs, blocking the entrance to a Jewish-owned shop. Sign reads "Germans! Defend yourselves! Don't buy from Jews!"

7

APRIL

Jewish professionals excluded from government jobs, including teaching.

26

APRIL

Hermann Göring, minister of Prussia, creates the Gestapo (Secret State Police).



Hermann Göring

10

MAY

Public burning of books not approved by the state and authored by Jews, opponents of Nazism or of Jewish origin.



Book burning in Berlin, May 1933.

14

JULY

New laws introduced stripping East European Jewish immigrants of their German citizenship.

Laws passed permitting forced sterilization of those considered "inferior" including the mentally and physically disabled and Gypsies.

29

SEPTEMBER

Nazis prohibit Jews from owning land.

24

NOVEMBER

Laws passed which allow beggars, the homeless, alcoholics and the unemployed to be sent to concentration camps.



'Undesirables': When Hitler was appointed chancellor in 1933 he quickly incarcerated those he saw as a threat

1934

1
JANUARY

The Nazis remove Jewish holidays from the official German calendar.

24
JANUARY

Jews are banned from the German Labour Front.



Flag of The German Labour Front (Deutsche Arbeitsfront, DAF)

17
MAY

Jews are no longer entitled to national health insurance.

30
JUNE

The Night of the Long Knives occurs as Hitler, Göring and Himmler conduct a purge of the SA leadership.



The architects of the purge: Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, and Hess. Only Himmler and Heydrich are missing.

20
JULY

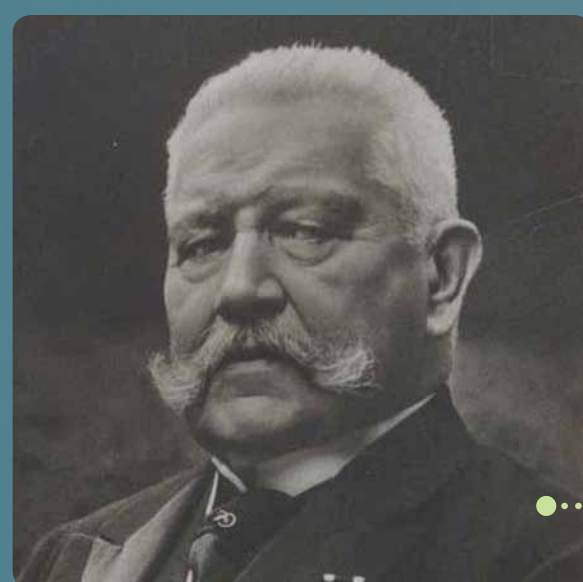
The SS are appointed an independent organisation from the SA.



The SS Flag

2
AUGUST

German President Paul von Hindenburg dies and Hitler declares himself "Führer" (Leader) of the German state and commander in chief of Germany's armed forces. Members of the armed forces must take a personal oath to swear allegiance to him.



Paul von Hindenburg

19
AUGUST

Hitler receives a 90% 'Yes' vote from German voters approving his new powers



Hitler Youth on the occasion of the referendum on the merging of the offices of Reich President and Reich Chancellor

1
OCTOBER

First major arrests of homosexuals take place throughout Germany, continuing into November.

1935

1
APRIL

Jehovah's Witnesses banned from civil service jobs and many are arrested.

31
MAY

Jews barred from serving in the armed forces.



Jews are not served here

26
JUNE

Nazis pass a law for the prevention of offspring with hereditary diseases, allowing forced abortions of 'unfit' foetuses up to six months.

28
JUNE

Paragraphs 175 and 175a of the criminal code are revised to criminalise all homosexual acts between men. The provision provided the police broader means for prosecuting homosexual men.



The pink triangle was one of the Nazi concentration camp badges, used to identify male prisoners who were sent there because of their homosexuality

15
SEPTEMBER

Nuremberg Laws enacted depriving German Jews of their citizenship. Jews could not marry Aryans or fly the German flag.



1935 chart from Nazi Germany used to explain the Nuremberg Laws

14
NOVEMBER

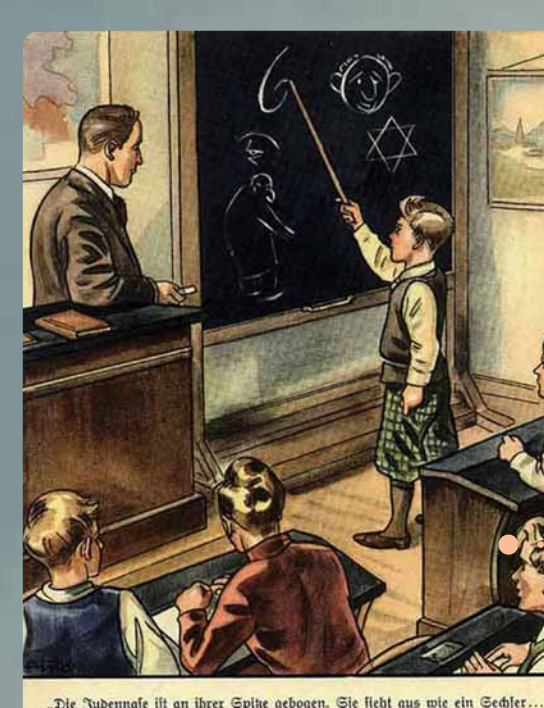
First decree pertaining to the "National Law of Citizenship": Jews denied voting rights and forbidden to hold public office. Discharge of all Jewish civil service employees, including World War I front line veterans.



Jewish man and a non-Jewish woman pilloried by Nazi officers, presumably for an alleged romantic involvement

15
NOVEMBER

Germany defines a 'Jew' as anyone with three or more Jewish grandparents or someone with two Jewish grandparents who identifies as a Jew.



Page from "The Poisonous Mushroom". The book was intended as anti-Semitic propaganda

31
DECEMBER

Anti-Jewish riots erupt in Polish universities and Jewish students are restricted to special seats.

1936

3
MARCH

Jewish doctors are prohibited from practising in German public health institutions.

7
MARCH

Nazi army marches into Rhineland.



Location of the Rhineland (as defined by the Treaty of Versailles) along the River Rhine

29
MARCH

SS 'Death's Head' units formed to guard concentration camps



Totenkopf (Death's head) collar insignia

17
JUNE

Heinrich Himmler is appointed Chief of German Police.



Heinrich Himmler, Chief of German Police in the Reich Ministry of the Interior

12
JULY

Sachsenhausen concentration camp opens.



Prisoners of Sachsenhausen

16
JULY

First Roma (Gypsies) arrested and sent to Dachau.

1
AUGUST

The Olympic games begin in Berlin; signs barring Jews are removed until the event is over. Moratoriums on anti-Jewish measures are put into place to create a more favourable impression to visitors.



Adolf Hitler and Hermann Göring watching events in the Berlin Olympic Stadium

28
AUGUST

Mass arrest of Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany.

1937

16
JANUARY

Jewish youth organisations are closed down by the Gestapo.

22
JANUARY

Germans are asked not to see Jewish doctors.

15
MARCH

Anti-Nazi rally held in Madison Square Garden, New York.



A rally to boycott Nazi-Germany, held at the third Madison Square Garden on March 15, 1937

2
JULY

Further restrictions are imposed on the number of Jewish students attending German schools.

16
JULY

Buchenwald concentration camp opens and the first 300 prisoners arrive.



Buchenwald's main gate, with the slogan 'Jedem das Seine' (literally, 'to each his own', but figuratively 'everyone gets what he deserves')

8
NOVEMBER

'Der Ewige Jude' (The Eternal Jew), a travelling Nazi propaganda exhibition, opens in Munich.



The Eternal Jew displayed at the Library of the German Museum in Munich from 8 November 1937 to 31 January 1938. Attendance of over two million visitors was recorded

16
NOVEMBER

Jews can only obtain passports to travel outside of Germany in special cases

14
DECEMBER

All persons identified as 'Asocial' are interned into concentration camps.



Disabled Jews with a black triangle in a yellow - 'Asocial' camp.

1938

13
MARCH

All German anti-Semitic laws immediately applied In Austria.

26
APRIL

Jews in Reich must register all wealth and property with the Authorities.

13-18
JUNE

9,000 Asocial and convicted criminals are rounded up and sent to concentration camps.

6
JULY

Evian Conference – 32 countries attend to discuss refugee policies in relation to Jews fleeing Germany. Inaction sees no country willing to relax their immigration restrictions.

23
JULY

Jews over the age of 15 ordered to apply for identity cards by the Nazis to be shown on demand to any police officer.



Jewish identity card

8
AUGUST

The notorious Nazi concentration camp at Mauthausen near Linz is established.



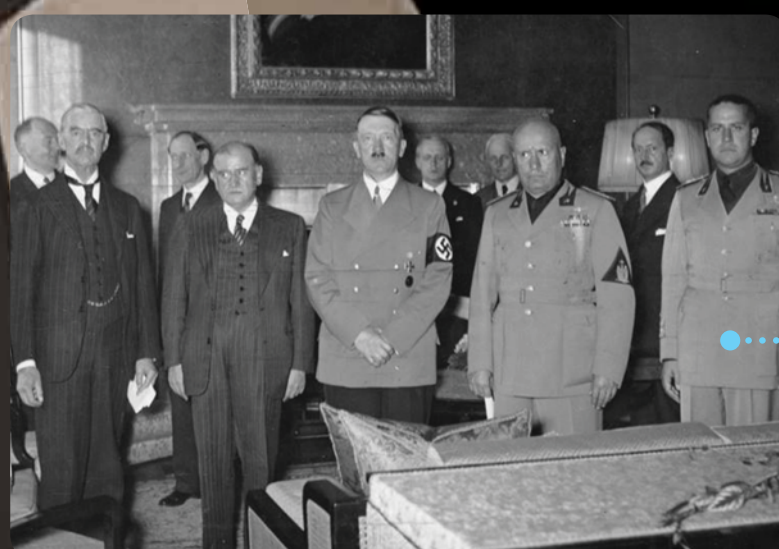
Gate to the garage yard in the Mauthausen concentration camp

17
AUGUST

All Jewish men required to add "Israel" to their name and Jewish women "Sarah".

30
SEPTEMBER

Munich Agreement signed. Britain and France agree to turn over Sudetenland.



From left to right: Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler, Mussolini, and Ciano pictured before signing the Munich Agreement, which gave the Sudetenland to Germany

5
OCTOBER

Germans ordered all Jewish passports to be stamped with a large red 'J'.

28
OCTOBER

The first Polish Jews are deported from Germany.

9/10
NOVEMBER

"The Night of broken Glass" (Kristallnacht) a night of attacks on Jews homes, buildings and religious centres follows the assassination of Ernst vom Rath, German diplomat in Paris.



A ruined synagogue in Munich after Kristallnacht

12
NOVEMBER

Decree of elimination of Jews from economic life bans Jews selling goods or services at an establishment of any kind. Nazis fine Jews one billion marks for damage related to Kristallnacht

15
NOVEMBER

All Jewish pupils expelled from German Schools.

3
DECEMBER

Jews forced to sell their immovable property at prices far below their market value.

8
DECEMBER

Roma (Gypsies) in Germany are required to register with the Police.



Roma woman with German police officer and Nazi psychologist Dr. Robert Ritter

1939

24
JANUARY

SS leader Reinhard Heydrich is ordered to speed up the emigration of Jews.



Reinhard Heydrich

30
JANUARY

Hitler states that if war erupts it will mean the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.

21
FEBRUARY

Jews are forced to hand over all silver and gold items.

15
MARCH

Germany invades Czechoslovakia.

15
MAY

Ravensbrück concentration camp for women is established.



View of the barracks at Ravensbrück

JUNE

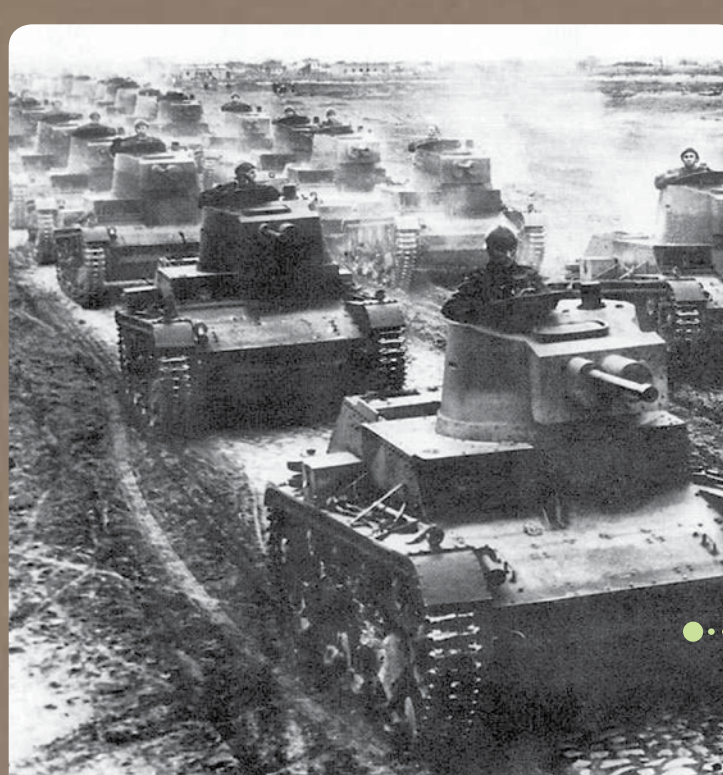
Jewish refugees aboard SS St. Louis denied entry to Cuba and US.



Jewish refugees aboard the SS St. Louis attempt to communicate with friends and relatives in Cuba, who were permitted to approach the docked vessel in small boats.

1
SEPTEMBER

The beginning of World War II. Germany invades Poland and Jews in Germany are forbidden to be outdoors after 8pm in the winter and 9pm in the summer.



Polish 7TP light tanks in formation during the first days of the 1939 Defensive War

3
SEPTEMBER

France and Britain declare war on Germany.

17
SEPTEMBER

Russia invades Eastern Poland; two weeks later the division of Poland is agreed between the USSR and Germany.

21
SEPTEMBER

Heydrich orders the ghettoization of Polish Jews near railroads for the 'final goal'.



Makeshift dwelling: Jewish inhabitants of the Kutno Ghetto

20
OCTOBER

The deportation of Jews begins from Vienna, Morasiská Ostrava and Katowice to a camp near Lublin, Poland.

23
NOVEMBER

Jews over 10 in occupied Poland forced to wear yellow stars on their clothing.



An elderly man with a yellow Star of David fixed to his chest, speaks with German officers as he and other Jews are rounded up in Kutno, German-occupied Poland in 1939

1940

25
JANUARY

Auschwitz is chosen as the new site for a concentration camp.



Auschwitz I entrance

8
FEBRUARY

Lodz Ghetto is established, the second-largest ghetto (after the Warsaw Ghetto) established for Jews and Roma in German-occupied Poland.



Jewish children inside the ghetto

12
FEBRUARY

First deportation of German and Austrian Jews to ghettos in the East.

9
APRIL

Operation Weserübung - Germany invades Denmark and Norway.



The heavy cruiser Admiral Hipper landing troops in Norway in 1940.

30
APRIL

Lodz Ghetto was ordered closed; on 1 May it was officially sealed with 230,000 people inside

10
MAY

Nazis attack Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and France.

3
JULY

Adolf Eichmann, a Nazi colonel, presents plans to deport all European Jews to Madagascar.



Adolf Eichmann

10
JULY

The Battle of Britain begins (German: Luftschlacht um England, literally "Air battle for England"). This was the name given to the Second World War air campaign waged by the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) against the United Kingdom.



A Royal Observer Corps spotter scans the skies of London

16
NOVEMBER

Warsaw Ghetto is sealed in with 400,000 people inside, about 30% of the population of Warsaw. However, the size of the Ghetto was around 2.4% of the size of Warsaw.

20
NOVEMBER

Hungary, Romania and Slovakia join Axis, also known as the Axis alliance, Axis nations or Axis countries. This was the alignment of nations that fought in the Second World War against the Allied forces.

1941

21-26
JANUARY

Anti-Jewish riots break out in Romania, thousands of Jews are beaten and over 120 killed.

1

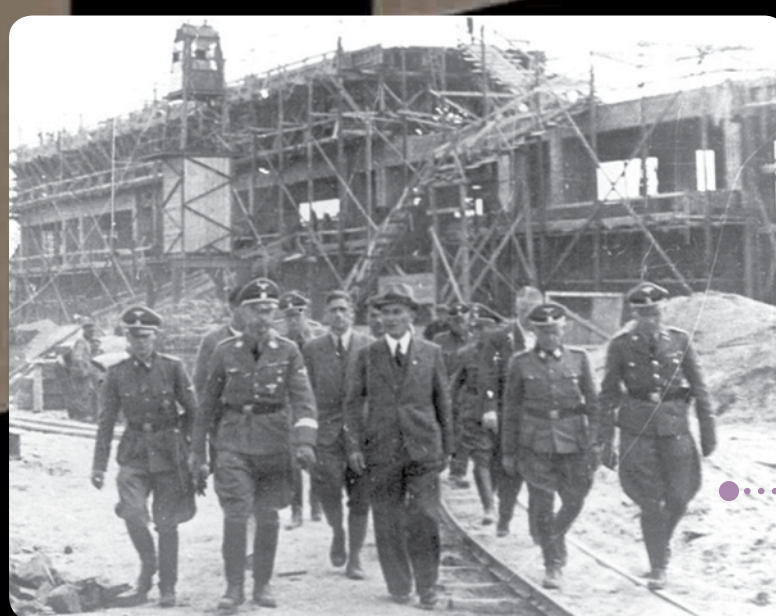
FEBRUARY

German authorities begin rounding up Polish Jews for transfer to Warsaw Ghetto.

1

MARCH

Heinrich Himmler visits Auschwitz and orders the expansion of the camp, including a new compound to be built at nearby Birkenau that can hold 100,000 prisoners.



Heinrich Himmler (second from the left) during his visit to Auschwitz, Poland

7

MARCH

German Jews ordered into forced labour.

6

APRIL

Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.

21

APRIL

Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp opens in France. It was one of the smaller concentration camps built by the Germans. Until construction was completed, prisoners slept in the nearby former Hotel Struthof, hence the name Natzweiler-Struthof.



Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp entrance

22

JUNE

The German army invades the Soviet Union. The Einsatzgruppen, mobile killing squads, begin the mass murder of Jews, Gypsies and communist leaders.

6

JULY

Jews in Lvov, Ukraine are ordered to wear the yellow star identifying them as Jews.

31

JULY

Authority given to prepare a "Final Solution", a euphemism for the mass murder of the Jewish population of Europe.

SUMMER

Himmler summons Auschwitz Kommandant Rudolf Höss to Berlin telling him "The Führer has ordered the Final Solution of the Jewish question. We, the SS, have to carry out this order...I have therefore chosen Auschwitz for this purpose."



Rudolf Höss

3

AUGUST

Bishop Clemens August Graf von Galen of Münster, denounces the "euthanasia" killing programme in a public sermon.

1

SEPTEMBER

German Jews over the age of 6 are forced to wear a yellow star of David on their clothes with the word 'Jude' printed in black.



German woman wearing the star of David

3

SEPTEMBER

First gassing tests take place in Auschwitz using Zyklon-B.

29-30
SEPTEMBER

Nearly 34,000 Jews are massacred by mobile killing squads at Babi Yar, near Kiev.

7

OCTOBER

Construction begins on an addition to the Auschwitz camp, known as Birkenau.



Birkenau

23
OCTOBER

Germany forbids the emigration of Jews from the Reich.

7
NOVEMBER

Einsatzgruppen round up 13,000 Jews from the Minsk Ghetto and kill them in nearby Tuchinki.

30

NOVEMBER

Einsatzgruppen shoot 10,000 Jews from the Riga Ghetto in the Rumbula forest.



Einsatzgruppe A; members execute Jews

8

DECEMBER

Gassing operations begin at Chelmno; the first victims are 5,000 Gypsies.

1942

JANUARY

Mass killing of Jews using Zyklon-B at Auschwitz-Birkenau begins. The bodies are buried in mass graves in a nearby meadow.

16
JANUARY

Mass deportations of more than 65,000 Jews from Lodz Ghetto, Poland to the Chelmno killing centre.



Chelmno extermination camp did not have direct rail connections. Jews were delivered by train to Kolo, then to nearby Powiercie, and in overcrowded lorries to camp while abandoning their bundles along the way

20
JANUARY

15 Nazi and government officials meet at the Wannsee Conference held near Berlin to discuss the logistics of the "Final Solution" to kill all Jews in Europe.

27
MARCH

Deportation of more than 65,000 Jews from Drancy, outside Paris to the east (primarily Auschwitz) begins.



The internment camp at Drancy, outside Paris, where Jews were confined until they were deported to the death camps

3
MAY

Sobibor extermination camp becomes operational.

18
MAY

The New York Times reports the mass murder of Jews.

5
JUNE

SS report over 97,000 persons have been 'processed' using mobile gas vans.



Nazi gas van used to murder people at Chelmno extermination camp

30
JUNE

A second gas chamber is completed to cope with the number of deportees to Auschwitz. London Daily Telegraph reports over 1,000,000 Jews killed by the Nazis

15
JULY

Deportation of more than 100,000 Jews from the Netherlands to the east (primarily Auschwitz) begins.

17/18
JULY

Himmler visits Auschwitz-Birkenau for two days, inspecting all ongoing construction and expansion, then observes the extermination process from start to finish as two train loads of Jews arrive from Holland.

18
SEPTEMBER

Food rations are dramatically reduced for Jews in Germany.

26
SEPTEMBER

SS begin cashing in the possessions and valuables of Jews at Auschwitz and Majdanek and send clothes, watches etc. to front line soldiers.



Birkenau, Poland. Prisoners unloading personal belongings from trucks

23
NOVEMBER

Soviet troops counter attack Stalingrad trapping the German 6th Army.

15
DECEMBER

Fake and upbeat postcard messages arrive at Jewish homes in Holland from friends and relatives interned in Auschwitz and the Theresienstadt camp/ghetto.



14 year old inmate at Auschwitz concentration camp in late 1942

31
DECEMBER

Exterminations at Belzec cease after an estimated 600,000 murders, the camp is dismantled and the land is ploughed over and planted.

1943

18
JANUARY

Warsaw Ghetto uprising begins.

29
JANUARY

Nazis order all Gypsies to be arrested and sent to concentration camps.

1
MARCH

American Jews hold a mass rally at Madison Square Garden in New York to pressure the United States to aid European Jewry.

19
APRIL

Warsaw Ghetto revolt begins as Nazis attempt to liquidate 70,000 inhabitants.



"Smoking out the Jews and bandits." Picture taken between Smocza and Karmelicka streets in Warsaw Ghetto

13
MAY

German and Italian troops surrender to Allies in North Africa.

19
MAY

Nazis declare Berlin to be Judenfrei (cleansed of Jews).



Synagogue. The inscription reads: "This city is free of Jews"

25
JUNE

A newly built gas chamber/crematory III opens at Auschwitz; with its completion, the four crematories at Auschwitz have a daily capacity of 4,756 bodies.

9/10
JULY

Operation Husky: Allied troops land in Sicily, becoming the first part of Europe to be reclaimed.



American and British troops landing near Gela, Sicily, July 10, 1943

16
AUGUST

The Bialystok Ghetto is liquidated.

4
OCTOBER

Himmler talks openly about the Final Solution at Posen.

14
OCTOBER

An escape takes place from Sobibor extermination camp as Jews and Soviet POWs break out: 300 people escape to nearby woods, of these 50 survive. Exterminations then cease, after over 250,000 deaths. All traces of the death camp are then removed and trees planted over the land.

3
NOVEMBER

Nazis carry out Aktion "Erntefest" ("Operation Harvest Festival") in occupied Poland, killing over 42,000 Jews.



One of many mass graves of the Nazi German Operation Harvest Festival

6
NOVEMBER

Soviet troops liberate Kiev.

16
DECEMBER

The chief surgeon at Auschwitz reports that 106 castration operations have been performed.



Block 10 - Medical experimentation block in Auschwitz

1944

24

JANUARY

In response to political pressure to help Jews under Nazi control, President Roosevelt creates the War Refugee Board.

19

MARCH

Nazis occupy Hungary.

6

APRIL

Nazis raid a French home for Jewish children.

14

APRIL

First transports of Jews from Athens to Auschwitz, totalling 5,200 persons.

15

MAY

Deportation of Hungarian Jews begins. An estimated 440,000 persons were sent to Auschwitz in total.



The arrival process of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp

6

JUNE

D-Day: some 156,000 American, British and Canadian forces land on five beaches along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of France's Normandy region. The invasion was one of the largest amphibious military assaults in history.

22

JUNE

Soviets launch an offensive in Belarus.

24

JULY

Soviets liberate Majdanek extermination camp where over 360,000 had been murdered.



Red Army soldiers examining the ovens at Majdanek, following the camp's liberation, summer 1944

SUMMER

Auschwitz-Birkenau records its highest ever daily total: over 9,000 persons gassed and burnt.



Birkenau, Poland. A group of Jews walking towards the gas chambers and crematoria 2 and 3

2

AUGUST

The Gypsy Camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau is destroyed and its 3,000 inhabitants are gassed.



Children and an elderly woman on the way to the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau

4

AUGUST

Anne Frank and her family are arrested by the Gestapo in Amsterdam and sent to Auschwitz. Anne and her sister are later sent to Bergen-Belsen.

25

AUGUST

Paris is liberated.



Parisians line the Champs Elysées as French 2e DB tanks and half tracks pass before the Arc de Triomphe on 26 August

7

OCTOBER

A revolt by Sonderkommando (Jewish slave labourers) at Auschwitz-Birkenau results in the destruction of one of the crematoriums.



Ruins of Crematorium IV, blown up in the revolt

30

OCTOBER

Last use of the gas chambers at Auschwitz.

25

NOVEMBER

Himmler orders the destruction of the crematoriums at Auschwitz. During this, the SS attempt to destroy the evidence of mass killings.

1945

17
JANUARY

Soviet troops liberate Warsaw, Nazis evacuate Auschwitz, and the "death marches" of nearly 66,000 inmates begin.



A death march in the final days of the war

25
JANUARY

A death march of nearly 50,000 prisoners from the Stutthof camp system in northern Poland begins.

27
JANUARY

Russian troops liberate Auschwitz-Birkenau. By this time, an estimated 2,000,000 persons, including 1,500,000 Jews, have been murdered there.



Survivors at the camp liberated by the Red Army in January 1945

15
APRIL

The British liberate Bergen-Belsen and report "both inside and outside of the huts was a carpet of dead bodies, human excreta, rags and filth."



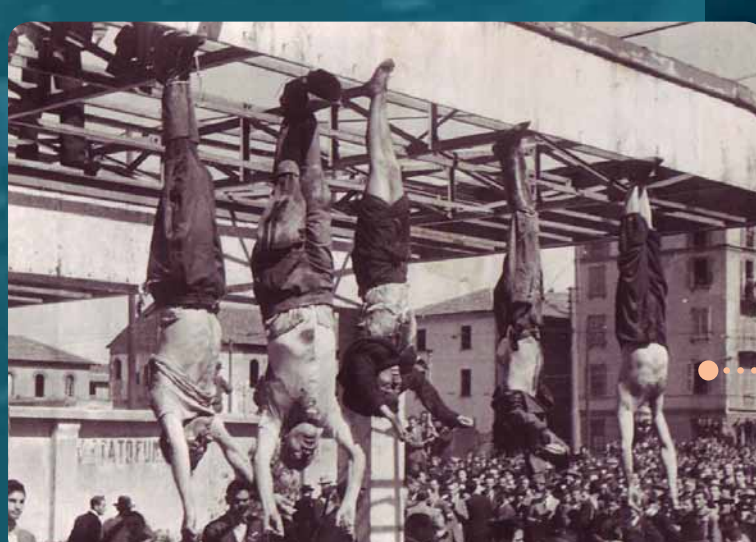
A British Army bulldozer pushes bodies into a mass grave at Belsen

23
APRIL

Berlin is reached by Russian troops.

28
APRIL

Benito Mussolini is executed by Italian partisans along with his mistress and their bodies displayed for public viewing in Milan.



The body of Mussolini (second from left) next to Petacci (middle) and other executed fascists in Piazzale Loreto, Milan

29
APRIL

U.S. Army troops liberate Dachau. Poles constituted the largest ethnic group in the camp during the war, followed by Russians, French, Yugoslavs, Jews, and Czechs.



Polish prisoners in Dachau toast their liberation from the camp

30
APRIL

Ravensbruck is liberated and Hitler commits suicide by gunshot in a Berlin bunker; his wife committed suicide with him by ingesting cyanide. After their deaths SS men carried their bodies from the bunker, covered them in petrol and lit them on fire.



Front page of the U.S. Armed Forces newspaper Stars and Stripes, 2 May 1945

7/9
MAY

Germany surrenders and marks the end of WWII in Europe.

20
NOVEMBER

The Nuremberg Trials begin. 24 ranking Nazis go on trial in Nuremberg, Germany, for atrocities committed during World War II.



Nuremberg Trial, Defendants in the dock