

◎ The Holocaust

MAIN IDEA During the Holocaust, the Nazis systematically executed 6 million Jews and 5 million other "non-Aryans."

Part of Hitler's plan for Germany was to make the country racially pure. In 1933, he ordered all non-Aryans out of government jobs. In 1935, new laws hurt the people who were Hitler's main target: the Jews. They lost their civil rights and property. In 1938, the Nazis terrorized Jews in a night of attacks. During the Nazis' rise to power, Jews left Germany in great numbers. The United States accepted some 100,000 refugees, but refused to accept more. Many Americans feared competition for scarce Depression-era jobs.

In 1939, the Nazis adopted a horrible "final solution" to what they called "the Jewish problem." Jews who were healthy would be seized and sent to slave labor camps. The rest would be taken and systematically killed. Some Jews were crowded into ghettos, special sections of cities. Most were taken to concentration camps where they suffered hunger, illness, overwork, and death. In 1941, the Nazis built special "death camps" meant solely to kill people in mass numbers. Prisoners were gassed or shot. Some died in horrible medical "experiments." Nearly six million Jews died in the death camps. The Nazis also murdered many other peoples: Soviets, Poles, gypsies, homosexuals, and the disabled. Remarkably, some survived to tell the world of the atrocity.

◎ America Moves Toward War

MAIN IDEA In response to the fighting in Europe, the United States provided economic and military aid to help the Allies achieve victory.

According to the Neutrality Acts, the United States could not enter the war in Europe to aid Poland after Germany invaded Poland. However, President Roosevelt began preparing the nation for

war. He persuaded Congress to amend the acts, allowing the United States to sell weapons to Great Britain and France. When Japan signed an agreement with Germany and Italy, many Americans were alarmed. Roosevelt increased the aid to Great Britain. At the same time, Congress passed a military draft and began training men for the armed forces. In 1940, Roosevelt broke tradition and ran for a third term as president. He won.

Roosevelt spoke to Americans of the threat the Hitler posed. He proposed increasing American armaments to loan to Great Britain. He stopped short of entering the war. Some aid went to the Soviet Union, too. Hitler had broken his agreement with Stalin in 1941 and attacked his former ally. The Germans used submarines to attack the American ships carrying weapons and supplies to its enemies.

In August 1941, Roosevelt met with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. They issued the Atlantic Charter, a statement of goals for which the war was being fought. The United States had not yet entered that war, however. German submarines attacked American ships, but Roosevelt felt he lacked support to declare war.

In the Pacific, conflict grew between Japan and the United States. When Japan seized Indochina, the United States protested. Peace talks between the two countries began in late 1941. On December 7, 1941, however, the Japanese attacked the main U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack left many navy ships destroyed and others crippled. The next day, President Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war, which was quickly approved.

Review

1. What led to the rise of dictators?
2. How did Germany begin World War II?
3. How did Nazis treat their enemies?
4. How did America enter World War II?