



The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jewish men, women and children by the Nazis and their collaborators during WWII. It was an act of genocide aimed at the total destruction of the Jews of Europe. The Holocaust (a Greek word meaning to “burn by fire”), also saw the murder of five million non-Jewish victims of Nazi brutality, including political opponents, Roma, homosexuals, communists, and others.

**As Jews**, we remember those whose lives were uprooted or destroyed simply for being Jewish.

**As Canadians**, we remember the Holocaust – and the need for vigilance in fighting hatred – because its lessons are universal and at the core of our shared humanity.

The following is a timeline of main events leading up to and immediately following the Holocaust.

1920	National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazi Party) established
January 30, 1933	Adolf Hitler, leader of the Nazi Party, is appointed Chancellor of Germany
March 23, 1933	German Parliament passes the Enabling Act, effectively establishing Hitler as the dictator of Germany
September 15, 1935	The Nazi government passes the Nuremberg racial laws, antisemitic laws that formally legalized discrimination against Jews and the removal of their legal and human rights
March 17, 1936	German forces reoccupy the Ruhr, in violation of the Treaty of Versailles
July 12, 1936	The first concentration camp, Sachsenhausen, opens near Berlin
March 12-13, 1938	Germany annexes Austria in violation of the Treaty of Versailles, with no reaction from the Allies
July 6-15, 1938	Although delegates from 32 countries meet in Evian, France to discuss immigration quotas on Jewish refugees, most countries (including Canada) do not change their policies
November 9-10, 1938	Thousands of German Jews are arrested and Jewish businesses and synagogues are destroyed across Germany in a series of coordinated attacks known as Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass)
September, 1939	Germany invades Poland, marking the beginning of WWII
October, 1939	The Nazi Euthanasia Program (known as Action T4) kills thousands of mentally and physically ill Germans, deemed “unworthy of life”
October 26, 1939	Germany sets up a government in occupied Poland known as the General Government
June, 1940	First Jewish ghetto built in Lodz
June 1941	Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Nazi execution squads (known as the Einsatzgruppen) proceed to murder more than one million Jews in Eastern Europe
September 15, 1941	All Jews living in Germany are ordered to wear a yellow star in public
September 29-30, 1941	33,000 people, mostly Jews, are shot to death at Babi Yar outside of Kiev, Ukraine by German SS, local police and military units
October-November 1941	Operation Reinhard begins with goal of murdering all Jews under the German-controlled General Government in Poland, leading to the creation of death camps
January 20, 1942	The "Final Solution" is implemented with the goal of annihilating Jews from Europe and eventually from the world
May, 1942	First gas chamber is tested in the death camp of Sobibor
May, 1942	Selections begin in Auschwitz-Birkenau determining who will be sent to immediate death and who will be worked until they are no longer “useful”
February 2, 1943	German army surrenders at Stalingrad, marking the turn of the tide of the war
April 19, 1943	In opposition to the final transport to the Treblinka death camp, the Jews remaining in the Warsaw Ghetto rise up against the Nazis in a revolt that lasts nearly a month before being crushed
January 17, 1945	Prisoners in Auschwitz are forced to undertake a death march toward Germany as the Allies advance, with thousands dying in the process
January 27, 1945	Soviet troops liberate 8,000 prisoners in the Auschwitz- Birkenau complex
April 30, 1945	Hitler commits suicide in his bunker in Berlin
November 1945-October 1946	Military tribunals are conducted at Nuremberg by the Allied Forces, bringing to justice 23 Nazi leaders
December 9, 1948	The UN General Assembly adopts “The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide”