

LESSON: History of Antisemitism and the Holocaust

PART 2 FILM TRANSCRIPT: *The Path to Nazi Genocide: From Citizens to Outcasts, 1933-1938*

Directions:

Annotate this transcript as you watch the film. Underline or highlight:

- Examples of the legal measures the Nazi-led German government used to gradually excluded Jews from public life, professions, and public education.
- Ways that Nazis demonized Jews and created a climate of hostility and indifference toward their plight.

Audio Transcript:

[Text on screen]

From Citizens to Outcasts, 1933-1938

[Narrator]

Before the Nazis assumed power, Jews enjoyed all rights of citizenship in Germany. After 1933, the German government gradually excluded Jews from public life and public education. Newly established Jewish private schools provided a safe learning environment for some. By 1938, German authorities had isolated and segregated Germany's Jews, expelling them from the professions and eliminating most opportunities to earn a living.

[Carola Steinhardt]

We felt so... why can't we be part of it? Why can't we? Everybody said, "Heil Hitler," like this. I did, too. What did I know? I was eight years old. So my mother said to me, "You're not supposed to do that." I said, "Why not?" She said, "Haven't you been told that you are Jewish?" I said, "Oh, I forgot."

[Narrator]

Germany's Jews would get plenty of reminders.

[Voice from loudspeaker (speaking German)]

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a boycott of Jewish shops. Please keep moving.

[Guy Stern]

This sense of isolation that came upon us after 1933, gradual and increasing, it also affected us psychologically. We knew we were in a hostile world.

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[Narrator]

Between 1933 and 1939, the German government enacted hundreds of laws to define, segregate and impoverish German Jews.

[Gerda Haas]

My sister and I used to slink by those huge banners that were all over the city. And we used to just try not to see them, thinking if we didn't see them, they weren't there. But they were there. That just, little by little, that really took over.

[Julius Streicher, *Der Stürmer* Editor (speaking German)]

...without a solution to the Jewish question, there will be no solution for humanity.

[Narrator]

The goal of Nazi propaganda was to demonize Jews and encourage Germans to see Jews as dangerous outsiders in their midst. After 1935, everyday antisemitism was a regular part of carnival parades and floats. Public displays of antisemitism reinforced a climate of hostility toward Jews in Germany, or at the least, indifference to their treatment.

In March 1938, German troops moved into neighboring Austria. Germany shredded another provision of the Versailles Treaty, as Hitler's homeland was incorporated into Germany. It was a disaster for Austrian Jews. Within a year, the Nazis achieved in Austria what had taken five years to carry out in Germany.

On November 9th, the Nazi Party orchestrated an outbreak of anti-Jewish violence throughout Greater Germany. It was a lawless onslaught that outraged the world and provoked criticism of the regime by many Germans. Jewish businesses that had already suffered antisemitic attacks were targeted for deliberate vandalism disguised as spontaneous public action. Party officials directed the SA, SS and Hitler Youth to destroy Jewish shops and torch synagogues.

Over 7,000 Jewish-owned businesses were vandalized. Germans named the violent attacks Kristallnacht—Night of Broken Glass—for the shattered windows of Jewish-owned stores that littered the streets. The nationwide violence damaged or destroyed more than 250 synagogues.

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[Gerda Haas]

After Kristallnacht, I remember driving through Berlin and seeing the synagogues in flames and all the glass on the streets, and the people huddled and depressed. They walked around like the victims, like the hunted.

[Narrator]

German police filled the concentration camps with thousands of Jewish inmates. The SS released them only if they agreed to emigrate. But Jews faced increasingly restrictive immigration quotas in most countries and bureaucratic hurdles in Germany.

A new law issued in October 1938 required Jews to surrender their old passports, which would be valid only after the letter “J” was stamped on them.

Two months later, another law prevented the flight of capital owned by Jews, when the Economics Ministry froze all Jewish property and assets.

Many who had the means and somewhere to go tried to leave Germany. Some families sent their children alone to other, safer countries. They could not know how soon the world would be at war.