

Glossary of Terms, Places, and Personalities

<i>AKTION</i> (Action)	A German military or police operation involving mass assembly, deportation and killing; directed by the Nazis against Jews during the Holocaust.
ALLIES	The twenty-six nations led by the United States, Britain, and the former Soviet Union who joined in fighting Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan during World War II.
ANIELEWICZ, MORDECAI (1919-1943)	Leader of the Jewish underground movement and of the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto in April 1943; killed on May 8, 1943.
<i>ANSCHLUSS</i> (Annexation)	The incorporation of Austria into Germany on March 13, 1938.
ANTISEMITISM	Prejudice and/or discrimination towards Jews, based on negative perceptions of their beliefs.
ARYAN RACE	"Aryan" was originally applied to people who spoke any Indo-European language. The Nazis, however, primarily applied the term to people with a Northern European racial background. Their aim was to avoid what they considered the "bastardization of the German race" and to preserve the purity of European blood. (See NUREMBERG LAWS.)
AUSCHWITZ	Auschwitz was the site of one of the largest extermination camps. In August 1942 the camp was expanded and eventually consisted of three sections: Auschwitz I - the main camp; Auschwitz II (Birkenau) - the extermination camp; Auschwitz III (Monowitz) - the I.G. Farben labor camp, also known as Buna. In addition, Auschwitz had 48 sub camps. It became the largest center for Jewish extermination.
AXIS	The Axis powers originally included Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan who signed a pact in Berlin on September 27, 1940, to divide the world into their spheres of respective political interest. They were later joined by Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia.
BABI YAR	A deep ravine two miles from the Ukrainian city of Kiev, where the mobile killing units (<i>Einsatzgruppen</i>) massacred and buried 34,000 Jews on September 29-30, 1941. Executions of Jews, Gypsies, Soviet POWs and handicapped brought the total dead at Babi Yar to 100,000.

**BAECK, LEO
(1873-1956)**

Rabbi, philosopher and a leader of German Jews. In 1933 he became the leader of the Reich Representation of German Jews. Despite opportunities to emigrate, Baeck refused to desert his community and, in 1943, he was deported to Theresienstadt (Terezin). There he became a member of the Jewish Council and spiritual leader of the imprisoned Jews. After his liberation, Leo Baeck immigrated to England.

BELZEC

One of the six extermination camps in Poland, originally established in 1940 as a camp for Jewish forced labor. Germans began construction of an extermination camp at Belzec on November 1, 1941, as part of *Aktion Reinhard*, code name for the operation to physically destroy the Jews in occupied central Poland. By the time the camp ceased operations in January 1943, more than 600,000 people had been murdered there.

BLITZKRIEG

Lightning attack, used to describe the speed and intensity of Germany's military action. First used by the Germans during their invasion of Poland in September 1939 and, later, made famous in their battle for Britain.

Capo (See: Kapo)**CHAMBERLAIN, NEVILLE
(1869-1940)**

British Prime Minister, 1937-1940, indentified with the Policy of "appeasement" toward Hitler's Germany in the years preceding World War II. He concluded the Munich Agreement in 1938 with Adolf Hitler, which he mistakenly believed would bring "peace in our time."

CHELMNO

Located 47 miles west of Lodz, Poland, Chelmno was built in late 1941, solely for the purpose of extermination. A total of 320,000 people were exterminated at Chelmno by firing squads and by asphyxiation in mobile gas vans.

**CHURCHILL, WINSTON
(1875-1965)**

British Prime Minister, 1940-1945, who rallied the British during World War II and fought at the side of the United States. Churchill was one of the very few Western statesmen who recognized the threat that Hitler posed to Europe and strongly opposed Chamberlain's policies of appeasement

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

(Konzentrationslager, KZ) Camps in which people were imprisoned without regard to the accepted norms of detention. An essential part of Nazi systematic oppression, they were constructed almost immediately after Hitler came to power in Germany. They were used for the imprisonment of all "enemies of the Third Reich." In the beginning (1933-1936), the camps primarily imprisoned political and ideological opponents of the regime, (e.g. Communists, Social Democrats et.al.) Later (1936-1942), Concentration Camps were expanded and non-political prisoners (e.g. Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, handicapped and other

“asocials”). The extensive camp system of over 9000 camps and sub-camps included labor camps, transit camps, prisoner of war (POW) camps and extermination camps. Death, disease, starvation, crowded and unsanitary conditions and torture were a daily part of concentration camp life.

DACHAU

Located 10 miles northwest of Munich, Germany, Dachau was one of the first concentration camps. It was established in March 1933 for the internment of political prisoners. The number of Jews rose steadily to about a third of the total inmate population. Although no mass murder program existed there, tens of thousands died from starvation, disease, torture, medical experiments or they were transported to extermination camps.

DEATH CAMPS

See **EXTERMINATION CAMPS**.

DEATH MARCH

When the German army was trapped between the Soviet Army to the east and the advancing Allied troops from the west, the Germans evacuated the camps in 1944 and forced the prisoners to march westward to Germany. During these marches the Jews were starved, brutalized, and killed. Few survived the experience; the paths traveled were littered with bodies. Although death marches occurred throughout the war, the largest and deadliest occurred during the last phase. It is estimated that 250,000 died in death marches between the summer of 1944 and the end of the war, in May 1945.

DEPORTATION

The deportation was the forced relocation of Jews, in Nazi occupied countries, from their homes to “resettle” elsewhere. It meant removal either to a ghetto or a concentration camp and later to extermination camps.

EICHMANN, ADOLF (1906-1962)

SS officer, head of the “Jewish section” of the *Gestapo*. He participated in the Wannsee Conference (January 20, 1942) and was instrumental in implementing the “Final Solution” by organizing the transportation of Jews to death camps from all over Europe. At the end of World War II he was arrested in the American zone of Berlin. However, he escaped, went underground, and disappeared. On May 11, 1960, members of the Israeli Secret Service uncovered his whereabouts and smuggled him to Israel from Argentina. Eichmann was tried in Jerusalem (April-December 1961), convicted and sentenced to death. He was executed on May 31, 1962.

EINSATZGRUPPEN

Mobile killing squads of the Security Police and SS Security Service. They consisted of four units (A,B,C, D), and followed the German armies into the Soviet Union in June 1941. Their task was to kill all Jews, mental and defectives and Soviets. They were supported by units of the uniformed German Order Police and auxiliaries of volunteers from (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Ukraine). Their victims were executed by shooting and were buried

in mass graves from which they were later exhumed and burned. At least 1.3 million Jews were killed in this manner.

EUTHANASIA

“Mercy killing” – the quick and painless death for the terminally ill. However, the Nazi euthanasia program that began in 1939 meant the deliberate killings of institutionalized physically, mentally, and emotionally handicapped people in order to improve the German race. It started with German non-Jews and later extended to Jews. Three major classifications were developed: 1) euthanasia for the incurable; 2) direct extermination by “Special Treatment” (gassing); and 3) experiments in mass sterilization.

EVIAN CONFERENCE

Conference convened by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. On July 6, 1938 to discuss the problem of emigration and resettlement of Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria. Thirty two countries met at Evian-les-Bains, France. Not much was accomplished since most western countries and the United States refused to accept Jewish refugees.

EXTERMINATION CAMPS

Nazi camps, known as “death camps”, established for the mass killing of Jews and others (e.g. Gypsies, Russian prisoners-of-war, et.al.). Located in occupied Poland, the camps were: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibor, Treblinka.

FINAL SOLUTION

Nazi code name for the “Final solution of the Jewish question” – the physical destruction of European Jewry. Beginning in December 1941, Jews were rounded up and sent to extermination camps in the East. The program was deceptively disguised as “resettlement in the East.”

FRANK, HANS

personal
(1900-1946)

Member of the Nazi Party from its earliest days and Hitler’s

lawyer. From 1939 to 1945, Frank served as the Governor-General of occupied Poland and controlled Europe’s largest Jewish population. He also supervised the major Nazi killing centers. He ordered the execution of thousands of Poles and Jews and announced that “Poland will be treated like a colony; The Poles will become slaves of the greater German Reich.” Frank was tried at Nuremberg, convicted, and executed in 1946.

**FRICK, WILHELM
(1877-1946)**

A dedicated Nazi bureaucrat and one of Hitler’s earliest followers.

In 1933 Frick was appointed Minister of the Interior, where he was responsible for enacting Nazi racial laws. As of 1943, he served as governor of Bohemia and Moravia. In 1946, he was tried at Nuremberg, convicted and executed.

GENOCIDE

The deliberate and systematic destruction of a religious, racial, national, or cultural group.

GERSTEIN, KURT

SS Officer and head of the *Waffen SS* Office of Hygiene in Berlin.

(1905-1945)

Gerstein purchased the Zyklon B gas officially needed in Auschwitz for fumigation purposes, but actually used for exterminating Jews. He wrote a widely-quoted description of the gassing procedures in Belzec and forwarded information about the killings to the Dutch underground and Swedish and Vatican representatives. His efforts met with little success. After the war, Gerstein was captured by the French and he committed suicide in a French jail.

GESTAPO

German acronym for *Geheime Staatspolizei* - Secret State Police. Established in April 1933 by Herman Goering the *Gestapo* monitored and suppressed all opposition to the Hitler regime. The *Gestapo* had total freedom to spy, arrest, interrogate and deport Jews, intellectuals, Gypsies, homosexuals, and anyone deemed an enemy of the Third Reich.

GHETTO

An Italian word, it refers to a quarter or street separated from the other parts of the city, in which Jews lived in the Middle Ages. The Nazis revived the Italian medieval ghetto and created their compulsory "Jewish Quarter" (*Wohnbezirk*), where all Jews from the surrounding areas were forced to reside. The ghettos, surrounded by barbed wire or walls, were overcrowded, unsanitary and sealed from the world without food, medicine and heat. Daily, people died in the streets from starvation and disease. The Germans constantly harassed the Jewish residents of the ghetto, randomly seizing people on the streets, raiding their apartments, and subjecting them to beatings and humiliation, leaving them to die in the streets. The ghettos were established mainly in Eastern Europe (e.g. Lodz, Warsaw, Vilna, Riga, Minsk). All ghettos were eventually liquidated and the Jews, Gypsies and others were deported to extermination camps.

**GOEBBELS, JOSEPH
(1897-1945)**

Joined the Nazi party in 1924, and in 1933, became Hitler's Minister of Propaganda and Public Information. He decided that "all un-German" books would be burned on May 10, 1933. He controlled the media and was also one of the creators of the "Führer" (the leader) myth, an important element in the Nazis' successful plan for support by the masses. He supervised the publication of *Der Stürmer* and conducted the propaganda campaign against the Jews. On the day following Hitler's death, Goebbels and his wife committed suicide in Hitler's bunker, after first ordering the murder of their six children, all under the age of thirteen.

**GÖRING, HERMANN
(1893-1946)**

A member of the Nazi Party from its earliest days who participated in Hitler's "Beer Hall *Putsch*" (The failed attempt by Hitler and his associates to overthrow the German Weimar Republic on November 9, 1923.) Served as president of the *Reichstag* (German parliament) in 1932 and, when Hitler came to power in 1933, he made Goring Air Minister of Germany and Prime Minister of Prussia. Goring organized Hitler's wartime economic system and was responsible for the rearmament program. In 1939, Hitler designated him his successor. Convicted at Nuremberg in 1946, Goring committed suicide by taking poison two hours before his scheduled execution.

GREATER GERMAN REICH

See **THIRD REICH**

**GRYNSZPAN, HERSCHEL
(1921-1943?)**

A Polish Jewish youth who emigrated to Paris. He agonized over the fate of his parents who, were trapped between Germany and Poland in "no man's land". On November 7, 1938, Grynszpan went to the German Embassy where he assassinated Third Secretary Ernst von Rath. The Nazis used this incident as an excuse for the *KRISTALLNACHT* (Night of Broken Glass) pogrom.

**GYPSIES
(Roma and Sinti)**

Ancient nomadic people who originated in India and wandered into Europe during the 14th and 15th centuries. By the 16th century, they had spread throughout Europe, where they were persecuted for their life style. The gypsies occupied a special place in nazi racist theories. It is believed the approximately 500,000 perished during the Holocaust.

**HESS, RUDOLF
(1894-1987)**

Deputy and close aide of Hitler from the earliest days of the Nazi movement, who participated in Hitler's "Beer Hall *Putsch*" (the failed attempt by Hitler and his associates to overthrow the German Weimar Republic on November 9, 1923). Hess believed he could persuade the British to make peace with Hitler. To further his idea Hess flew to Scotland prior to Hitler's invasion of the former Soviet Union. Arrested by the British, Hitler promptly declared Hess insane. Hess was tried at Nuremberg, found guilty, and sentenced to life in prison. He was the only prisoner in the Spandau prison in Berlin, Germany, until he committed suicide in 1987.

**HEYDRICH, REINHARD
(1904-1942)**

Former naval officer who joined the *SS* in 1932, after his dismissal from the German Navy. He headed the *Reich Security*, which included the *Gestapo*, and organized the *Einsatzgruppen*, which systematically murdered Jews in occupied Russia during 1941-1942. Heydrich was appointed Governor of Bohemia and Moravia and was asked by Goring to implement the "Final Solution" to the "Jewish Question." In January 1942 Heydrich presided over the Wannsee Conference, where the implementation of the "Final Solution" was discussed. On May 29, 1942 Heydrich was assassinated near Prague, by a member of the Czech resistance. In retaliation the Nazis destroyed the Czech town of Lidice and murdered all its men. To

honor Reinhard Heydrich, the Nazis gave the code name “Operation Reinhard” to the destruction of Polish Jewry.

HIMMLER, HEINRICH

Reich leader of the *SS*, *Gestapo*, and the *Waffen-SS*; minister of the interior, and next to Hitler, the most powerful man in Nazi Germany. His obsession with “racial purity” led to the establishing of the concentration camp system and to the implementation of the “Final Solution.” Himmler committed suicide on May 23, 1945, before he could be brought to trial.

HITLER, ADOLF (1889-1945)

Fuhrer und reichskanzler (Leader and Reich Chancellor). Although born in Austria, he settled in Germany in 1913. At the outbreak of World War I, Hitler enlisted in the Bavarian Army, became a corporal and received the Iron Cross First Class for bravery. Returning to Munich after the war, he joined the newly formed German Workers Party, which was soon reorganized, under his leadership, as the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP). In November 1923, he unsuccessfully attempted to forcibly bring Germany under nationalist control. When his coup, known as the “Beer-Hall *Putsch*,” failed, Hitler was arrested and sentenced to 5 years in prison. It was during this time that he wrote *Mein Kampf*. Serving only 9 months of his sentence, Hitler quickly reentered German politics and soon outpolled his political rivals in national elections. In January 1933, Paul vom Hindenburg (*Reich* President) appointed Hitler chancellor of a coalition cabinet. Hitler, who took office on January 30, 1933, immediately set up a dictatorship. In 1934, the chancellorship and presidency were united in the person of the *Fuhrer*. Soon, all other parties were outlawed and opposition was brutally suppressed. In addition, he initiated antisemitic policies and programs. By 1938, Hitler implemented his dream of a “Greater Germany,” by the annexation of Austria, the Sudetenland and, finally, Czechoslovakia itself. On September 1, 1939, Hitler’s armies invaded Poland. By this time western democracies realized that no agreement with Hitler could be honored and World War II had begun. Although initially victorious on all fronts, Hitler’s armies suffered setbacks after the United States joined the war in December 1941. The war was obviously lost by early 1945, but Hitler insisted that Germany fight to the death. On April 30, 1945, Hitler committed suicide rather than be captured alive.

HOLOCAUST

Holocaust derived from the Greek word, *holokauston*, “an offering consumed by fire,” and has a sacrificial connotation to what occurred. As of the 1950’s the term refers to the destruction of some 6 million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators in Europe between the years 1933-1945. Other individuals and groups were persecuted and suffered grievously during this period, but only Jews were marked for complete and utter annihilation.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES	A religious sect, originating in the United States, and organized by Charles Taze Russell. The Witnesses base their beliefs on the Bible and have no official ministers. Recognizing only the kingdom of God, they refuse to swear allegiance to any worldly power; to salute the flag; to bear arms in war; and to participate in the affairs of government. Therefore, the Witnesses were persecuted as “enemies of the state.” About 10,000 Witnesses from Germany and other countries were imprisoned in concentration camps during World War II. Of these, about 2,500 died.
JEWISH BADGE	See YELLOW STAR
JUDENRAT (PLURAL: JUDENRATE)	Council of Jewish representatives appointed by the Nazis for administration within the communities and ghettos in German-occupied countries.
JUDENREIN	"Cleansed of Jews," denoting areas where all Jews had been either murdered or deported.
KAPO	From Italian <i>Capo</i> , meaning: head, chief. An inmate (male or female) in a position of authority in Nazi concentration camps. The <i>Kapo</i> was in charge of a group of inmates and carried out the instructions of <i>SS</i> supervisors. They made sure that prisoners performed their tasks and met the quotas. The <i>Kapo</i> was the Nazis' instrument to humiliate and brutalize the prisoners.
KINDERTRANSPORT	German for “children’s transport.” Immediately after <i>Kristallnacht</i> (November 9-10, 1938), the British government, with the aid of Jewish, British and Quaker relief organizations, set up the <i>Kindertransport</i> to evacuate children from Nazi oppression to Great Britain. Nearly 10,000 children were rescued from Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Most of these children never saw their parents again. It is believed that 20-25% eventually made their way to the United States and Canada.
KONZENTRATIONSLAGER	See CONCENTRATION CAMP
KRISTALLNACHT	(Night of Broken Glass): On November 9-10, 1938, a centrally planned countrywide pogrom and riot, known as <i>Kristallnacht</i> was carried out against the Jews. Arson and destruction of Jewish-owned property and synagogues took place in every town throughout Germany and Austria. It came in retaliation for the assassination of Ernst vom Rath in Paris by a 17 year-old Jewish youth named Herschel Grynzspan. 7,500 businesses and 101 synagogues were destroyed, almost 100 Jews were killed and several thousand were arrested and sent to concentration camps.
LIDICE	A Czech mining village (pop. 700); scene of a violent reprisal for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, on May 27, 1942. On June

10, 1942, the village was razed to the ground and all its men, 192 in all, were murdered. After World War II, a new village was built near the site of the old Lidice, which is now a national park and memorial.

LODZ

Poland's second largest city. The Lodz economy was based on the textile industry, much of which was established by the local Jewish population. Home to a large Jewish working class, Lodz was a center for Jewish culture and social political activities. On September 8, 1939, the Germans occupied Lodz, and on April 11, 1940 renamed the city Litzmannstadt, after the German general Karl Litzmann who had conquered it in World War I. In April 1940, Lodz became the site of the first major ghetto established by the Nazis, who forced all Jews from Lodz and the surrounding areas into the ghetto. The Lodz Ghetto was severely overcrowded and lacked food, medicine and heat. Daily people died of starvation and disease. In January 1942, the Germans began raiding the ghetto and rounding up Jews for deportation to the Chelmno Extremation Camp. By September 1942, the ghetto was almost empty. Only able bodied men and women were kept alive for forced labor. In the spring of 1944 the Germans liquidated the ghetto, clearing street by street and transporting the remaining Jews to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp and to the Chelmno Extremation Camp. The ghetto was liquidated by the fall of 1944.

MAJDANEK

Located in the Lublin district of Poland, Majdanek was opened in October 1941 and was one of the largest extermination camps in Europe with seven gas chambers. Majdanek inmates included prisoners of war from the former Soviet Union, Belorussian and Poles as well as Jews. Killing methods were by gassing with carbon monoxide and zyklon B and by mass shootings. Nearly 500,000 people, mainly Jews, passed through Majdanek and its sub-camps. Of these some 360,000 perished. The Soviet Army liberated the camp in July 1944.

MAUTHAUSEN

A concentration camp primarily for men, located near Linz, Austria. Mauthausen, opened in August 1938 to mine the nearby quarries, and was classified by the SS as a camp of utmost severity. The inmates included German political prisoners, Spanish republicans, Soviet soldiers and prisoners of war from various European countries. In 1944 Jews were transported to Mauthausen from other concentration camps which were evacuated. Conditions in Mauthausen were brutal, even by concentration camp standards. Nearly 125,000 prisoners of various nationalities were either worked or tortured to death. On May 5, 1945, the camp was liberated by American troops.

MEIN KAMPF (My Struggle)

Adolf Hitler's autobiography, written in 1924 during his imprisonment in the Landsberg prison for his role in the "Beer Hall *Putsch*" (the

failed attempt by Hitler and his associates to overthrow the German Weimar Republic on November 9, 1923). In his book, Hitler details his plan for the future of Germany, including his foreign policy and his racial ideology to make Europe *judenrein* (“Jew-free.”) The Germans, belonging to the “superior” Aryan race, have a right to living space (*Lebensraum*) in the East, which is inhabited by “inferior” Slavs. Throughout the book, Hitler accuses the Jews of being the source of all evil. Unfortunately, most of the people who read *Mein Kampf* (except for Hitler’s admirers) did not take him seriously and believed the book to be the ravings of a maniac.

**MENGELE, JOSEF
(1911-1979)**

SS physician at Auschwitz from 1943-1944 who conducted inhuman medical experiments, especially on twins and Gypsies. Mengele used human beings as “guinea pigs” and subjected them to x-rays, mutilations, diseases and toxic injections. Inmates called him the “Angel of Death” because he, by a simple gesture of his hand pointing to the left or right, would seal a new arrival’s fate. Those considered too weak or too old were sent to the gas chambers; those whom he considered able to work were sent to concentration or labor camps. After the war, Mengele spent time in a British internment hospital but disappeared, went underground, escaped to Argentina and later to Paraguay, where he became a citizen in 1959. He was hunted by Interpol, Israeli agents, and Simon Wiesenthal. In July 1985, forensic experts in Brazil exhumed the body of a man who died in 1979 in a drowning accident and they identified him as Mengele.

MUSSELMANN (German)

Nazi concentration camp slang word for a prisoner who is on the brink of death.

NAZI PARTY

Short term for National Socialist German Workers’ Party (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei* NSDAP). A right-wing, nationalistic and antisemitic political party formed in 1919 and headed by Adolf Hitler from 1921 to 1945.

**NIEMOELLER, MARTIN
(1892-1984)**

German Protestant Pastor who headed the Confessing Church during the Nazi regime. During World War I Niemoeller distinguished himself in the German Navy. He was ordained as a minister in 1924, and in 1931, became pastor of Dahlem parish in Berlin, where his naval fame and his preaching drew large crowds. In 1937, he assumed leadership of the Confessing Church. Subsequently, he was arrested for “malicious attacks on the state,” given a token sentence and made to pay a small fine. After he was released, he was re-arrested on direct orders from Adolf Hitler. He spent the next seven years in Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps, usually in solitary confinement. Despite this, at the beginning of World War II, the patriotic Niemoeller offered his services to the German Navy, but was refused. In 1945, he was released by the Allies, and became an avowed pacifist who

supported a neutral, disarmed and unified Germany. The following statement is attributed (but never recorded officially) to Martin Niemoeller and authenticated by Niemoeller's second wife and widow, Sibylle Niemoeller. Taken from the The Christian Century, Dec. 14, 1994, v. 111, n. 36, p. 1207(1):

"First they came for the communists, but I was not a communist--so I said nothing. Then they came for the social democrats, but I was not a social democrat--so I did nothing. Then came the trade unionists, but I was not a trade unionist. And then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew-- I did little. Then when they came for me, there was no one left who could stand up for me."

NIGHT AND FOG DECREE

Secret order, issued by Adolf Hitler on December 7, 1941, to seize "persons endangering German security" who were to vanish without a trace into "night and fog."

NUREMBERG LAWS

Two anti-Jewish statutes enacted in September 1935 during the Nazi party's national convention in Nuremberg. The first, the *Reich* Citizenship Law, deprived German Jews of their citizenship and all pertinent, related rights. The second, the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor, outlawed marriages of Jews and non-Jews, forbade Jews from employing German females of childbearing age, and prohibited Jews from displaying the German flag. Many additional regulations were attached to the two main statutes, which provided the basis for removing Jews from all spheres of German political, social, and economic life. The Nuremberg Laws carefully established definitions of Jewishness based on bloodlines. Thus, many Germans of mixed ancestry, called "*Mischlinge*," faced antisemitic discrimination if they had a Jewish grandparent.

PARTISANS

Member of a resistance group operating within and behind enemy lines, using guerrilla tactics. During World War II, this term was applied to resistance fighters in Nazi occupied countries. There was a general partisan movement that included Jews. Jewish partisan groups operated in White Russia, Poland, and Lithuania.

PROTOCOLS OF THE ELDERS OF ZION

A fictitious, infamous publication written in Paris, in 1894, by members of the Russian Secret Police who claimed to offer conclusive evidence of the existence of a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world by creating feuds among Christians, corrupting and undermining established systems. The Protocols were adapted from a nineteenth century French satire by a French lawyer Maurice Joly against Napoleon III (*Dialogue aux enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel* – Dialogue in Hell between Montesquieu and Machiavelli. Brussels: 1864). Although it has long been repudiated as an absurd and hateful lie, the protocols are still being published and distributed around the world by white supremacists and others who are committed to intolerance and the hatred of Jews.

**RATH, ERNST VOM
(1909-1938)**

Third secretary at the German Embassy in Paris who was on November 7, 1938 by Herschel Grynszpan His murder was the excuse for *Kristallnacht*.

**RIGHTEOUS AMONG
THE NATIONS**

A term designated by Yad Vashem, the remembrance authority in Jerusalem, Israel, as the tribute to non-Jews who, at the risk of their own lives, saved Jews from Nazi persecution during the Holocaust. These people are often referred to as “Righteous Gentiles.”

SA (German)

An acronym for *Sturmabteilung* (“Storm Troopers”) Members of the special uniformed “Brownshirts” and the armed section of the *Nazi* party, organized in 1923. They were responsible for street fighting and attacks on the opposition and they participated in *Kristallnacht*.

SELECTION

A process of separating prisoners upon their arrival at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Most people were directed to the gas chambers and were killed immediately. The rest, if they were considered fit to work, were sent to forced labor in Auschwitz and other camps.

SHOAH (Hebrew)

Destruction and/or catastrophe. The terms *Shoah* and Holocaust are linked to the destruction of European Jewry during World War II.

SHTETL

Yiddish term for a small Eastern European Jewish town or village.

SOBIBOR

Extermination camp in the Lublin district in Eastern Poland. Sobibór opened in April 1942 and closed on October 14, 1943, one day after a rebellion of the Jewish prisoners. During this period at least 200,000 Jews were gassed there.

SS (German)

An acronym for *Schutzstaffel* (“Protective Squad”) Originally formed in 1925 as Hitler’s personal bodyguard, Heinrich Himmler, between 1929 and 1939, transformed it into a giant organization. Although various SS units were assigned to the battlefield, the organization is best known for carrying out the destruction of European Jewry.

ST. LOUIS

A steamship, carrying 1128 Jewish refugees, it left Hamburg, Germany in the spring of 1939, bound for Cuba. When the ship arrived, only 22 Jews were allowed to disembark. Initially, no country, including the United States, was willing to accept the other passengers. The St. Louis finally returned to Europe where most of the refugees were finally granted entry into England, The Netherlands, France and Belgium. Nonetheless, most of these Jewish refugees became victims of the “final solution.”

STREICHER, JULIUS

Nazi politician and the most fanatical antisemite in the Nazi party,

(1885-1946)

founded the antisemitic newspaper *Der Stürmer* in 1923. As Hitler's friend he became the head of the region of Franconia, in southern Germany between 1928 and 1940. After World War II, he was convicted at Nuremberg and executed in October 1946.

STRUMA

A cattle boat carrying 769 Jewish refugees, which left Constanta, Romania in December 1941, bound for Palestine (pre 1948 Israel), which was governed by the British mandate. Having been promised entry visas for Palestine, the *Struma* docked in Istanbul, Turkey. Upon arrival, there were no visas for them. The British did not grant the refugees visas and the Turkish authorities refused to transfer them to a transit camp until other arrangements would be made. On February 23, 1942 the *Struma* was tugged by the Turkish police, with no food, water or fuel on board, out to the Black Sea, where it was struck erroneously by a torpedo from a Soviet submarine. Only one passenger survived.

DER STÜRMER (German)

("The Attacker") An antisemitic German weekly newspaper, founded and edited by Julius Streicher, and published in Nuremberg from 1923 and 1945. The phrase "Die Juden sind unser Unglück" ("The Jews are our misfortune!") appeared on each issue at the bottom of the front page.

TEREZIN (Czech)
THERESIENSTADT (German)

Established in early 1942 outside Prague as a "model" ghetto, Terezin was not a sealed section of town, but rather an eighteenth-century Austrian garrison. It became a Jewish town, governed and guarded by the SS. When the deportations from central Europe to the extermination camps began in the spring of 1942, certain groups were initially excluded: invalids; partners in a mixed marriage, and their children; and prominent Jews with special connections. These were sent to the ghetto in Terezin. They were joined by old and young Jews from the Protectorate, and, later, by small numbers of prominent Jews from Denmark and Holland. Its large barracks served as dormitories for communal living; they also contained offices, workshops, infirmaries, and communal kitchens. The Nazis used Terezin to deceive public opinion. They tolerated a lively cultural life of theatre, music, library, lectures, art and sports. Thus, it could be shown to officials of the International Red Cross. In reality, however, Terezin was only a station on the road to the extermination camps; about 88,000 were deported to their deaths in the East. In April 1945, only 17,000 Jews remained in Terezin, where they were joined by 14,000 Jewish concentration camp prisoners, evacuated from camps threatened by the Allied armies. On May 8, 1945, Terezin was liberated by the Red Army. (see BAECK, LEO).

TREBLINKA

Extermination camp in northeast Poland (see EXTERMINATION CAMP). Established in May 1942 along the Warsaw-Bialystok railway line, 870,000 people were murdered there. The camp

operated until the fall of 1943 when the Nazis destroyed the entire camp in an attempt to conceal all traces of their crimes.

UMSCHLAGPLATZ (German)

Collection point. It was a square in the Warsaw Ghetto where Jews were rounded up for deportation to Treblinka.

WANNSEE CONFERENCE
(January 20, 1942)

Lake near Berlin where the Wannsee Conference was held to discuss and coordinate the "Final Solution." It was attended by many high-ranking Nazis, including Reinhard Heydrich and Adolf Eichmann.

WALLENBERG, RAOUL
(1912-19??)

Swedish diplomat who, in 1944, went to Hungary on a mission to save as many Jews as possible by handing out Swedish papers, passports and visas. He is credited with saving the lives of at least 30,000 people. After the liberation of Budapest, he was mysteriously taken into custody by the Russians and his fate remains unknown.

WARSAW GHETTO

Established in November 1940, the ghetto, surrounded by a wall, confined nearly 500,000 Jews. Almost 45,000 Jews died there in 1941 alone, due to overcrowding, forced labor, lack of sanitation, starvation, and disease. From April 19 to May 16, 1943, a revolt took place in the ghetto when the Germans, commanded by General Jürgen Stroop, attempted to raze the ghetto and deport the remaining inhabitants to Treblinka. The uprising, led by Mordecai Anielewicz, was the first instance in occupied Europe of an uprising by an urban population. (See ANIELEWICZ, MORDECAI).

WIESENTHAL, SIMON
(1908-2005)

Famed Holocaust survivor who has dedicated his life since the war to gathering evidence for the prosecution of Nazi war criminals.