

The Holocaust

Big Idea

As you read through this document, complete the time line below by **listing some examples of Nazi persecution of European Jews.**

Examples of Persecution	1.
	2.
	3.
	4.
	5.

Nazi Persecution of the Jews

Problems and Solutions

Identify two problems faced by Jewish immigrants who wanted to enter the United States.

European Jews had experienced anti-Semitism before World War II. They had sometimes been set apart in ghettos and prohibited from owning land. Persecution of Jews during World War II reached alarming heights. In September of 1935, the Nuremberg Laws took citizenship away from Jewish Germans. It also banned marriage between Jews and other Germans. Soon after, Jewish people were barred from voting. Their passports were marked with a red "J." By 1938, they could not practice law or medicine or operate businesses.

On *Kristallnacht*, "the night of broken glass," anti-Jewish violence erupted in Germany and Austria. The result was 90 Jewish deaths and hundreds of serious injuries. The Gestapo arrested thousands of wealthy Jews. German and Austrian Jews now lived in terror.

The United States had huge backlogs of visa applications from Jews in Germany. U.S. immigration laws barred officials from granting visas to anyone "likely to become a public charge," a description custom officials felt fit Jewish immigrants who had to leave any wealth behind. As a result, millions of Jews remained trapped in Europe.

The Final Solution

Making Inferences & Determining Cause and Effect

Making Inferences

What was meant by the term “final solution” to the Jewish question?

Determining Cause and Effect

List three causes that help explain why the Holocaust occurred.

1.

2.

3.

In 1942, Nazi leaders met at the Wannsee Conference to determine the “final solution of the Jewish question.” Previous “solutions” included rounding up Jews and other “undesirables,” such as the disabled, Gypsies, and Slavs from conquered territories, and shooting them. They were then piled into mass graves. Nazis also forced Jewish people into trucks and piped in exhaust fumes to kill them. But the Nazis considered these methods slow and inefficient.

The Nazis made plans to round up Jews from areas of Nazi-controlled Europe. They built concentration camps, or detention centers throughout Europe. Healthy individuals from these camps worked 12-hour shifts as slave laborers in nearby factories until they dropped dead from the living conditions. The elderly, disabled, and young children, who could not work, were sent directly to extermination camps. Here, they were executed in huge gas chambers, where the whole process could be done more efficiently. The bodies of these victims were burned.

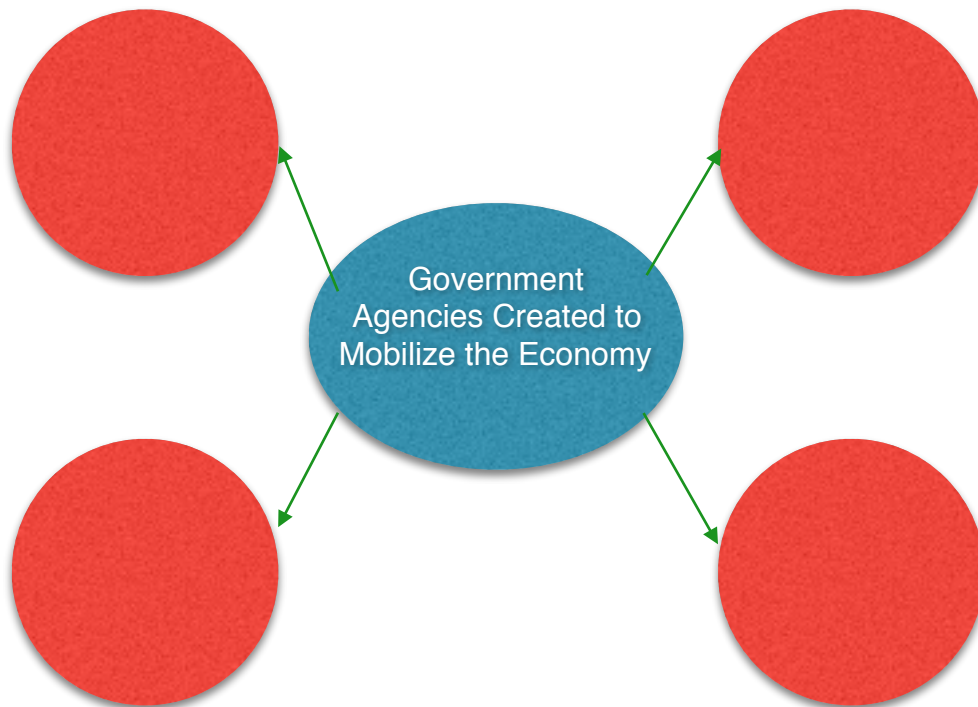
The first concentration camps, which the Nazis built in 1933, were used to jail their political opponents. Buchenwald was built in 1937 near the town of Weimar, Germany. It was one of the largest concentration camps of the World War II era. Even without gas chambers, hundreds of prisoners died there every month from exhaustion and harsh conditions. Extermination camps did even more damage. Most were located in Poland. At these camps, including the infamous Treblinka and Auschwitz, Jews were the main victims. More than 1,300,000 Jews died at Auschwitz. In only a few years, Jewish culture was virtually wiped out in Nazi-controlled regions of Europe.

People continue to debate why and how the Holocaust happened. Most historians believe several factors contributed to it. The German people felt they had been unjustly treated by the harsh treaty terms of World War I. Germany faced severe economic problems. Hitler had a strong hold over Germany and people feared his secret police. Resistance was difficult and dangerous. Germany did not have a strong tradition of representative government before the Nazi era. Europe had a long history of anti-Jewish prejudice and discrimination, which fed into the Nazi propaganda and racial program.

Mobilizing the War

Big Idea

As you read through this document, complete the time line below by **filling in the agencies the U.S. government created to mobilize the nation's economy for war.**



Converting the Economy

Identifying the Main Idea

What is the main idea of this passage?

Even before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States had begun to mobilize the economy. When the German blitzkrieg hit France in May 1940, President Roosevelt declared a national emergency. He announced a plan to build 50,000 war-planes a year.

Roosevelt and his advisors believed that giving industry an incentive to move quickly was the best way to convert the economy to war production. Normally, companies would bid for a contract to make military equipment. That system was now too slow. Instead, the government signed cost-plus contracts, agreeing to pay a company whatever it cost to make a product, plus a guaranteed percentage of the cost as profit. Under this system, the more a company produced and the faster it did the work, the more money it would make.

Congress gave the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) new authority. Congress did this to help convince companies to switch their factories to make military goods. The government gave the agency permission to make loans to companies to help them cover the cost of converting to war production.

American Industry Gets the Job

Determining Cause and Effect

Fill in the effect.

Cause: Clashes occurred between the WPB and the military.

Effect:

By the summer of 1942, most major industries had changed to war production. Automobile companies began to make trucks, jeeps, and tanks. They also made rifles, mines, helmets, and other military equipment. The Ford Company created an assembly line to build the B-24 bomber. By the end of the war, the company had built more than 8,600 aircraft.

Henry Kaiser's shipyards built ships. They were best known for making Liberty ships. These were the basic cargo ships used during the war. They were welded instead of riveted, making them cheap, easy to build, and difficult to sink.

To make mobilization more efficient, President Roosevelt set up the War Production Board (WPB). This agency had the authority to set priorities and production goals. It also controlled the distribution of raw materials and supplies. Almost immediately, the WPB clashed with the military. Military agents continued to sign contracts without consulting the WPB. In 1943, Roosevelt set up the Office of War Mobilization (OWM) to settle arguments among the different agencies.

Building an Army

Drawing Conclusions

How did the participation of women and minorities affect the U.S. war effort?

Before the defeat of France, Congress had opposed a peacetime draft. Congress approved the Selective Service and Training Act in September 1940. This peacetime draft prepared people to fight the war.

The military was segregated. Minorities served in noncombat roles. Because they were disenfranchised, or could not vote, some African Americans did not want to support the war. African American leaders launched the "Double V Campaign." This campaign urged African Americans to support the war effort in order to fight racism abroad and at home. Roosevelt had to order the military to recruit women and minorities.

The 99th Pursuit Squadron was the army's first African American unit. The pilots trained in Tuskegee, Alabama. They became known as the Tuskegee Airmen and helped win the Battle of Anzio in Italy. Later, three new African American squadrons, the 332nd Fighter Group, protected American bombers without losing a single aircraft to enemy forces.

The Women's Army Corps (WAC) brought women into the army, although women were barred from combat. Oveta Culp Hobby was assigned the rank of colonel. The Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) formed in 1943 and made more than 12,000 deliveries of planes over the next year.

Section Wrap-Up

Answer these questions to check your understanding of the entire section.

1. Describe the early persecutions of Germany's Jewish population.

2. What methods did the Nazis use to try to exterminate Europe's Jewish population?

3. How did the United States change to a wartime economy?

4. What were the issues involved in raising an army for the United States?