

Hitler's Anti-Semitism

"Once I really am in power, my first and foremost task will be the annihilation of the Jews. As soon as I have the power to do so, I will have gallows built in rows - at the center of the city in Munich, for example - as many as traffic allows."

"Then the Jews will be hanged indiscriminately, and they will remain hanging until they stink; they will hang there as long as the principles of hygiene permit. As soon as they have been untied, the next batch will be strung up, and so on down the line, until the last Jew in Munich has been exterminated. Other cities will follow suit, precisely in this fashion, until all Germany has been completely cleansed of Jews."

–Adolf Hitler

Hitler was an anti-Semite. Anti-Semitism is the hatred for the Jews. For Hitler life was a constant struggle, a struggle between individuals, people, and races. In the eyes of Hitler the Jews were responsible for all social vices including prostitution and white-slave traffic. Hitler adopted the crude simplistic outlook on life: the Jews are the source of all evil in this world. Hitler found a purpose in life, cleansing Germany of the Jews. Hatred of the Jews became his obsession, his creed, faith and religion.

In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler argued that the German (he described them as the Aryan race) was superior to all others. *"Every manifestation of human culture, every product of art, science and technical skill, which we see before our eyes today, is almost exclusively the product of Aryan creative power."*

Hitler warned that the Aryan's superiority was being threatened by intermarriage. If this happened world civilization would decline: *"On this planet of ours human culture and civilization are bound up with the presence of the Aryan. If he should be exterminated or subjugated, then the dark shroud of a new barbarian era would enfold the earth."*

According to Adolf Hitler, Jews were responsible for modern art, pornography and prostitution. Hitler also alleged that the Jews had been responsible for losing WWI. He claimed that Jews, who were only about 1% of the population, were slowly taking over the country.

Once Hitler was in power he began to make the Jews his permanent target and planned to make life so unpleasant for Jews in Germany that they would leave. The first major instance of this was the Nuremberg Laws. This was a set of laws to single out the Jew:

1. A citizen of the Reich may be only one who is of German or kindred blood, and who, through his behavior, shows that he is fit to serve the German people and the Reich.
2. Marriages between Jews and subjects of German or kindred blood are forbidden.
3. Extramarital intercourse between Jews and subjects of German or kindred blood is forbidden.
4. Jews are forbidden to fly the Reich and national flag and to display the Reich colors.
5. They are, on the other hand, allowed to display the Jewish colors. The exercise of this right enjoys the protection of the state.

Germans were also encouraged not to use Jewish doctors and lawyers. Members of the SA put pressure on people not to buy goods produced by Jewish companies. Many Jewish people who could no longer earn a living left. The number of Jews emigrating increased after the passing of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935. Under this new law Jews could no longer be citizens of Germany.

1. Define anti-Semitism.

2. What are the Nuremberg Laws?
3. How did they affect the German Jews?

Kristallnacht

"Once the hatred and the battle against the Jews have been really stirred up, their resistance will necessarily crumble in the shortest possible time. They are totally defenseless, and no one will stand up to protect them."

-Adolf Hitler

The pressure on Jews to leave Germany intensified. Hitler, Goebbels and Heydrich organized a new program designed to encourage Jews to emigrate. Kristallnacht took place on 9th-10th November, 1938. This was presented as a spontaneous reaction of the German people to the news that the German diplomat had been murdered by a young Jewish refugee in Paris.

During Kristallnacht or the Night of Broken Glass, over 7,500 Jewish shops were destroyed and 400 synagogues were burnt down. Ninety-one Jews were killed and an estimated 20,000 were sent to concentration camps. The only people punished for the crimes of Kristallnacht were members of the SA who had raped Jewish women because they had broken the Nuremberg Laws on sexual intercourse between Aryans and Jews.

After Kristallnacht the numbers of Jews wishing to leave Germany increased. It has been calculated that between 1933 and 1939, approximately half the Jewish population of Germany left the country. A higher number of Jews would have left but anti-Semitism was not restricted to Germany and many countries were reluctant to take them. These two incidents were not the only anti-Semitic reactions. The worst one was yet to come, the Holocaust and the murder of 6 million Jews.

1. What happened during Kristallnacht?
2. What happened after?