The Holocaust

Hitler's "Final Solution"

VUS.11e
Specific groups, often the object of hatred and prejudice, face increased risk of discrimination during wartime.

What was the Holocaust and who were its victims?

Image Credit: Romaniroots.webs.com
Terms to know

- **Holocaust**: the murder of 11 million people in Europe under Hitler (6 million were Jews)
- **Genocide**: The systematic and purposeful destruction of a racial, political, religious, or cultural group
- **Final Solution**: Germany’s decision to exterminate all Jews
- **Concentration Camp**: the many locations around Europe where people were forced to work and then exterminated
Affected groups

**Jews:** Hitler blamed the Jews of Europe for the problems in Germany, they became the scapegoat.

**Poles:** Hitler believed that the people from Poland should be the slaves of Germans

"These are slave laborers in the Buchenwald concentration camp near Jena; many had died from malnutrition when US troops of the 80th Division enter the camp." Germany, April 16, 1945. Pvt. H. Miller. (National Archives)
Affected groups

- **Slavs**: Hitler believed the people of Eastern Europe were racially inferior
- **Gypsies**: another minority group which traditionally suffered from discrimination in Europe
- **“Undesirables”**: homosexuals, mentally ill, political dissidents (especially communists)

"Bones of anti-Nazi German women still are in the crematoriums in the German concentration camp at Weimar, Germany. Prisoners of all nationalities were tortured and killed." April 14, 1945. Pfc. W. Chichersky.
(National Archives)
What was the short-term and long-term significance of the Holocaust?
In the Nuremberg trials, Nazi leaders and others were convicted of war crimes.

The Nuremberg trials emphasized individual responsibility for actions during a war, regardless of orders received.

The trials led to increased demand for a Jewish homeland. (Zionism)
CREATION OF A NEW NATION: ISRAEL

Great Britain’s mandate, Palestine, from World War 1 was used to create Israel and Lebanon.

The U.S. supported the creation of a Jewish State, where Jews could be free from religious persecution of a government.

This act created animosity between the Arab nations of the Middle East and the U.S. which continues today.

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