

The Holocaust



8 steps to Genocide

- 1. CLASSIFICATION:** All cultures have categories to distinguish people into “us and them” by ethnicity, race, religion, or nationality: German and Jew, Hutu and Tutsi. Bipolar societies that lack mixed categories, such as Rwanda and Burundi, are the most likely to have genocide.
- 2. SYMBOLIZATION:** We give names or other symbols to the classifications. We name people “Jews” or “Gypsies”, or distinguish them by colors or dress; and apply the symbols to members of groups. Classification and symbolization are universally human and do not necessarily result in genocide unless they lead to the next stage, dehumanization. When combined with hatred, symbols may be forced upon unwilling members of pariah groups: the yellow star for Jews under Nazi rule.
- 3. DEHUMANIZATION:** One group denies the humanity of the other group. Members of it are equated with animals, vermin, insects or diseases. Dehumanization overcomes the normal human revulsion against murder. At this stage, hate propaganda in print and on hate radios is used to vilify the victim group.
- 4. ORGANIZATION:** Genocide is always organized, usually by the state, often using militias to provide deniability of state responsibility. Special army units or militias are often trained and armed. Plans are made for genocidal killings.

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5. POLARIZATION: Extremists drive the groups apart. Hate groups broadcast polarizing propaganda. Laws may forbid intermarriage or social interaction. Extremist terrorism targets moderates, intimidating and silencing the center.

6. PREPARATION: Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic or religious identity. Death lists are drawn up. Members of victim groups are forced to wear identifying symbols. Their property is expropriated. They are often segregated into ghettos, deported into concentration camps, or confined to a famine-struck region and starved.

7. EXTERMINATION begins, and quickly becomes the mass killing legally called “genocide.” It is “extermination” to the killers because they do not believe their victims to be fully human. When it is sponsored by the state, the armed forces often work with militias to do the killing. Sometimes the genocide results in revenge killings by groups against each other, creating the downward whirlpool-like cycle of bilateral genocide .

8. DENIAL is the eighth stage that always follows a genocide. It is among the surest indicators of further genocidal massacres. The perpetrators of genocide dig up the mass graves, burn the bodies, try to cover up the evidence and intimidate the witnesses. They deny that they committed any crimes, and often blame what happened on the victims. They block investigations of the crimes, and continue to govern until driven from power by force, when they flee into exile.

Kristallnacht

- Herschel Grynszpan kills German diplomat in Paris
 - Was deported from Germany with his father

Response

- Hitler orders Joseph Goebbels to stage attacks on Jews
- Kristallnacht- “night of broken glass”



Jewish Cemetery (destroyed)



Kristallnacht

- Nazis forbade police from interfering
- Over 7,500 Jewish business destroyed
- 180 synagogues wrecked
- Gestapo arrest wealthy Jews, forced to give up possessions and emigrate
- Later: Goering fines Jews and forces them to pay damages

Aryan Race- Characteristics

- Come from Aryan ancestry (group who dominated Europe)
 - Aryans were considered a very strong group – needed to dominate others
 - Descendants: Germans, Austrians, N. Europeans, Greeks, Romans
 - Nordic = ideal (blond hair, blue eyes)
- The 'ideal German' was also supposed to be tall, slender, physically fit, free of any disability, deformity, abnormality or mental illness, sexually 'straight'. Smoking, heavy drinking and taking drugs were also a complete 'no-no'. It wasn't only a matter of appearance.

Why Jews?

- Blamed with the cause of world problems – religious problems, black plague, tainting of values, destruction of social order
- Still had money after depression
- Cause of Germany's defeat in WWI
- Hitler's upbringing (environment)
- Downfall of society was due to the mixing of Aryans and non-Aryans
- Must purify the race by destroying inferiors

How did the Nazis know who was Jewish?

Step 1: Classification & Step 2: Symbolization

- Census in 1933 had “race” as a category.
- Their clothes, habits, and practices made them stand out.
- Synagogues and temples kept birth, marriage, and death records.
- Neighbors and friends turned on them after the Nazis took over, so they could claim rewards.
- I.D. cards labeled Jews with a “J” after the Nuremberg laws went into effect.
- Jews were later required to sew yellow Stars of David to all outer clothing, so they could be easily identified on sight.



Isolating the Jews

Step 3: Dehumanization, Step 4: Organization, Step 5: Polarization

- Jews fled to other countries – others forced to leave Germany
 - Countries becoming overcrowded
- Next step – ghettos (segregated Jewish areas)
 - Sealed off, hoped they would starve or die of disease
 - Unsanitary, overcrowded

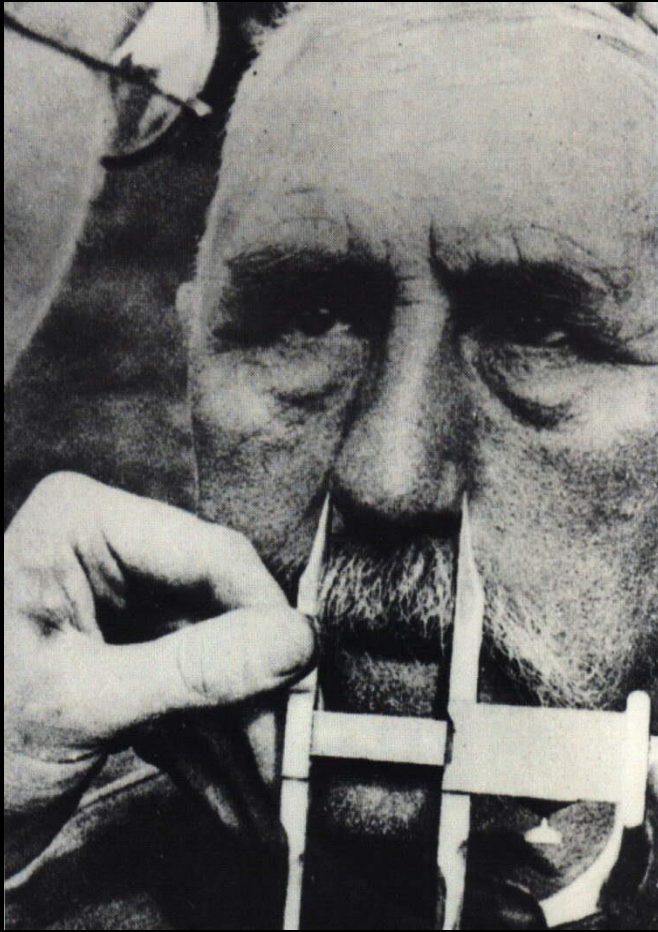


The 'Final Solution'



- In January 1942, Himmler decided to change tactics and called a special conference at Wannsee.
- At this conference it was decided that the existing methods were too inefficient and slow and that a new 'Final Solution' was necessary.

How did the Nazi decide who was Jewish?



- At the Wannsee conference it was decided that if one of person's parents was Jewish, then they were Jewish.
- However, if only one of their grandparents had been Jewish then they could be classified as being German.
- In 1940, all Jews had to have their passports stamped with the letter 'J' and had to wear the yellow Star of David on their jacket or coat.



Heinrich Himmler –
head of the SS, leader
of Gestapo, overseer
of concentration and
extermination camps



Joseph Goebbels –
German propaganda
minister, responsible
for Kristallnacht,
brainwashed many

Adolf Eichmann – referred to as “architect of Holocaust” and deported Jews to ghettos and extermination camps



Rudolf Hess – Hitler’s deputy and private secretary



Herman Goring – commander of air force, 2nd man to Hitler



Hitler's Final Solution to the "Jewish Question"

Step 6: Preparation

- **Tired of waiting for Jews to die in ghettos**
- **Final Solution – Genocide – the systematic (deliberate and planned) killing of an entire people**
 - Wanted to create a New Order – Nazis rule Europe and exploit resources
 - Those conquered put to work, those undesirable killed
- **SS – Special units of Nazi soldiers, hunted and killed Jews,**
- **Put them into mass graves**
(Schutzstaffel – protection squad)



SS Tactics: Dehumanization

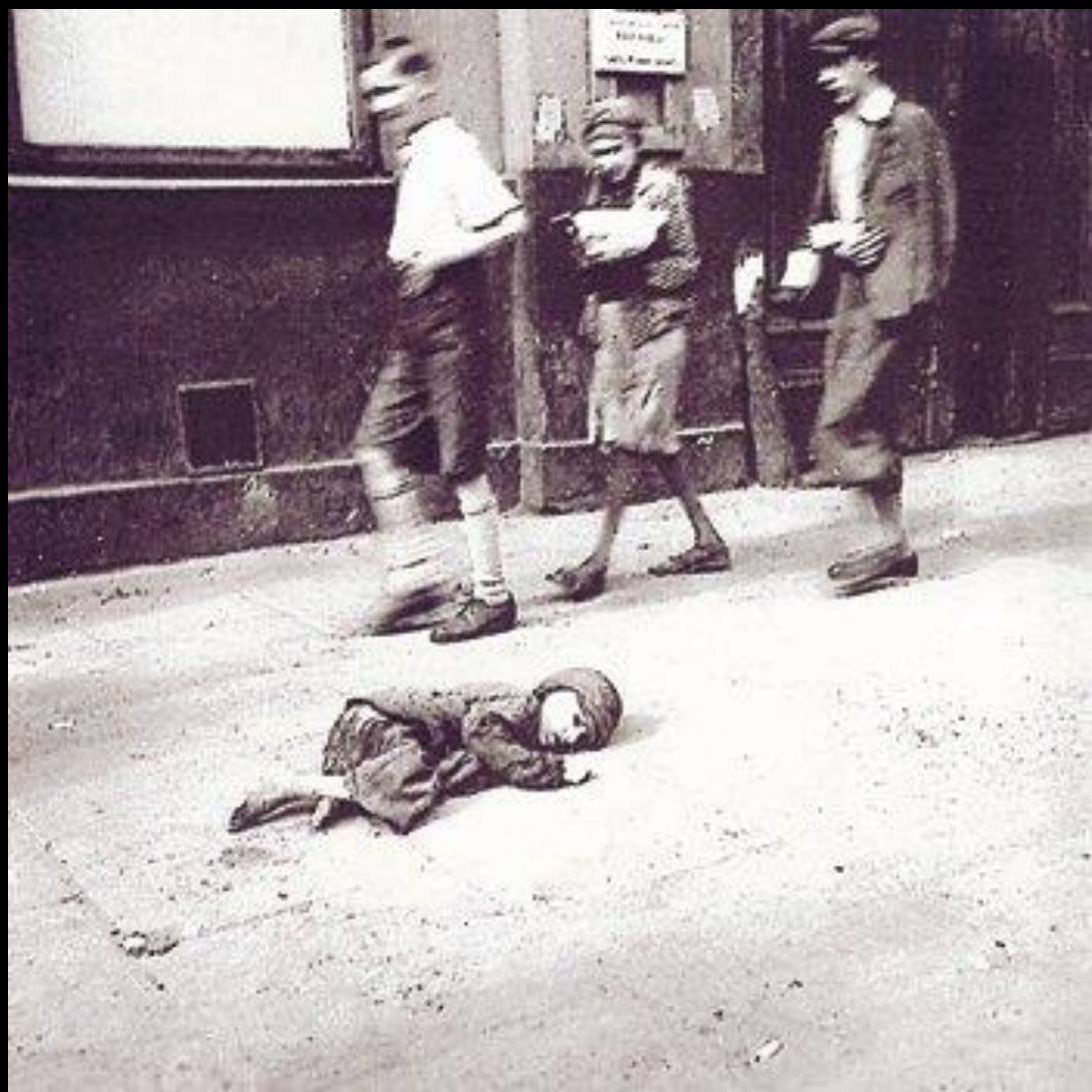
- The Jews were transported in cattle cars in terrible conditions.
- The SS used to train their new guards by encouraging them to set fire to a pit full of live victims – usually children.

- Victims were taken to deserted areas where they were made to dig their own graves and shot.
- When the SS ran out of bullets they sometimes killed their victims using flame throwers.
- Or had them stand in a line and shoot the first and see how many people the bullet would go through.
 - Why?
 - Conserve ammunition.



Children Dying of Starvation in the Warsaw Ghetto





“Final Solution”

Step 7: Extermination

- “Final Solution of the Jewish Question”
- Holocaust- “massive destruction by fire”
- Decided that the most efficient and cheapest way to exterminate the Jewish population was gas chambers.
- “We shall regain our health only by eliminating the Jews”

Final Solution (cont.)

2) Others taken to concentration camps, or slave labor camps

- Mainly in Germany and Poland, then in any German occupied country
- Worked 7 days/wk, severely beaten or killed if not working fast enough, meals were thin soup, bread scraps, potato peelings

3) Final Stage – Extermination camps

- Early 1942, mass extermination
- Camps built with gas chambers and crematoriums
- Built to quicken the “final solution”
- Auschwitz – largest death camp

Where were the Death Camps built?



Entrance to Auschwitz



Notice how it has been built to resemble a railway station

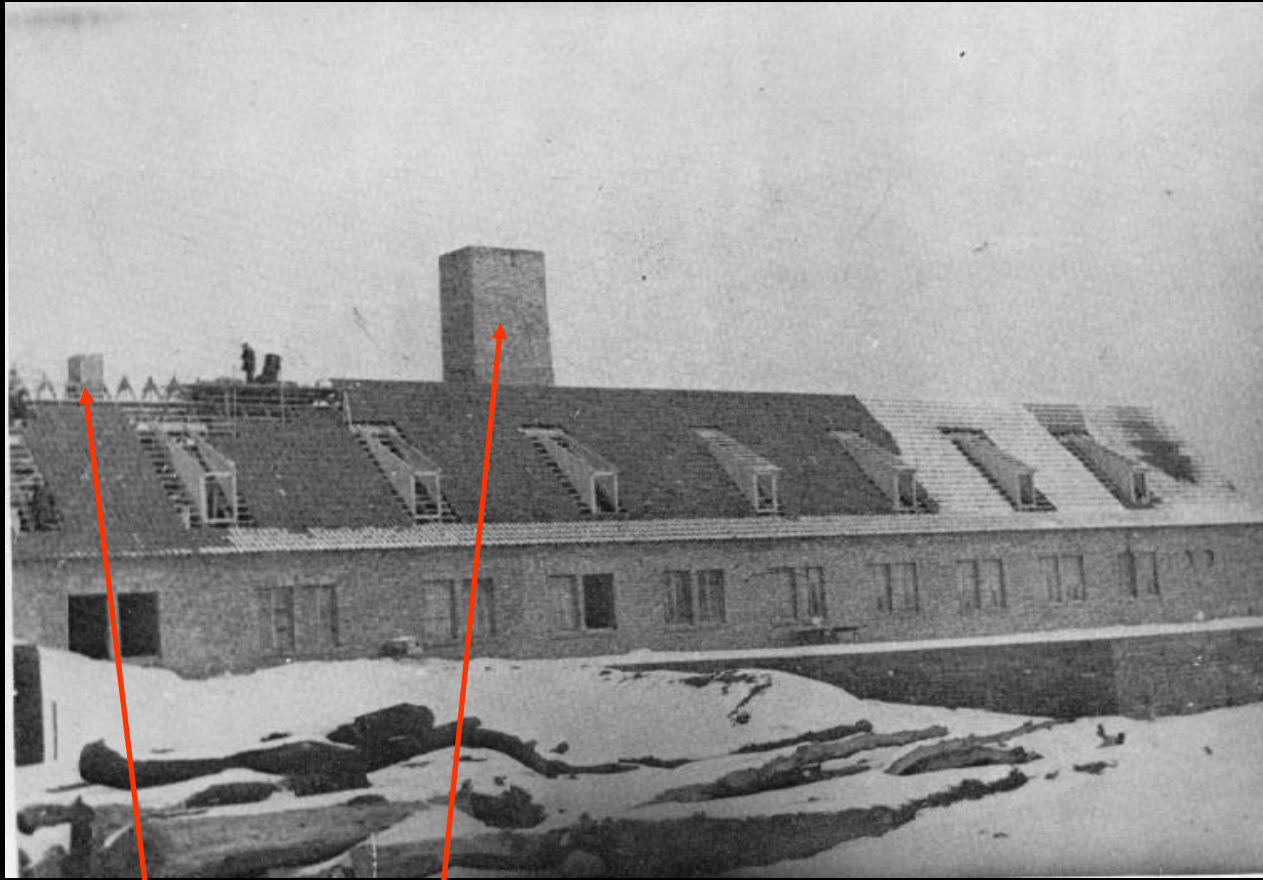
The Gas Chambers



- The Nazis would force large groups of prisoners into small cement rooms and drop canisters of Zyklon B, or prussic acid, in its crystal form through small holes in the roof.
- These gas chambers were sometimes disguised as showers or bathing houses where the gas would come out of the shower heads.

The SS would try and pack up to 2000 people into this gas chamber

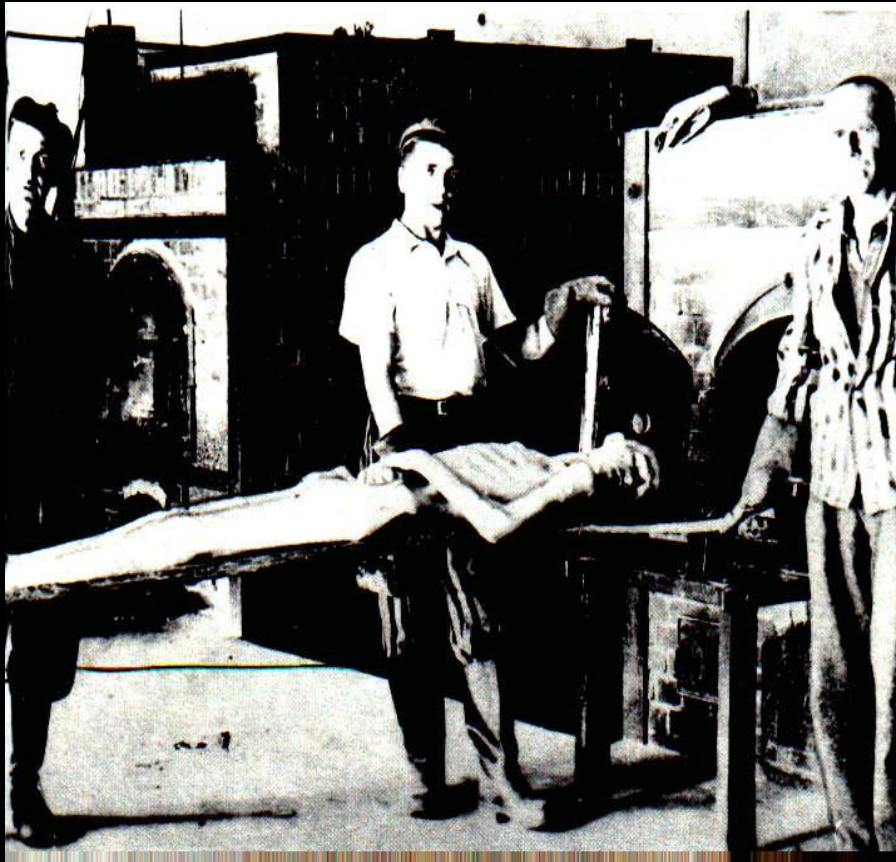
The outside of the Gas Chamber



Notice the Ovens easy located near the Gas Chambers

Processing the bodies

Step 8: Denial



- Specially selected Jews known as the sonderkommando were used to to remove the gold fillings and hair of people who had been gassed.
- The Sonderkommando Jews were also forced to feed the dead bodies into the crematorium.



Reasoning behind cutting hair . . .

- Prevent spread of lice
- Used in mattresses of Nazi military
- Woven into blankets for Army and socks for submarine sailors



The Ovens at Dachau





Dead bodies waiting to be processed



Concentration Camps

- Systematically killed 11-14 million people, six million being Jews.
- Those killed:
- Jews, non-Jewish Poles, Communists, political opponents, resistance groups, homosexuals, physically handicapped, mentally challenged, Soviet prisoners, Jehovah's witnesses, trade unionists, and psychiatric patients.



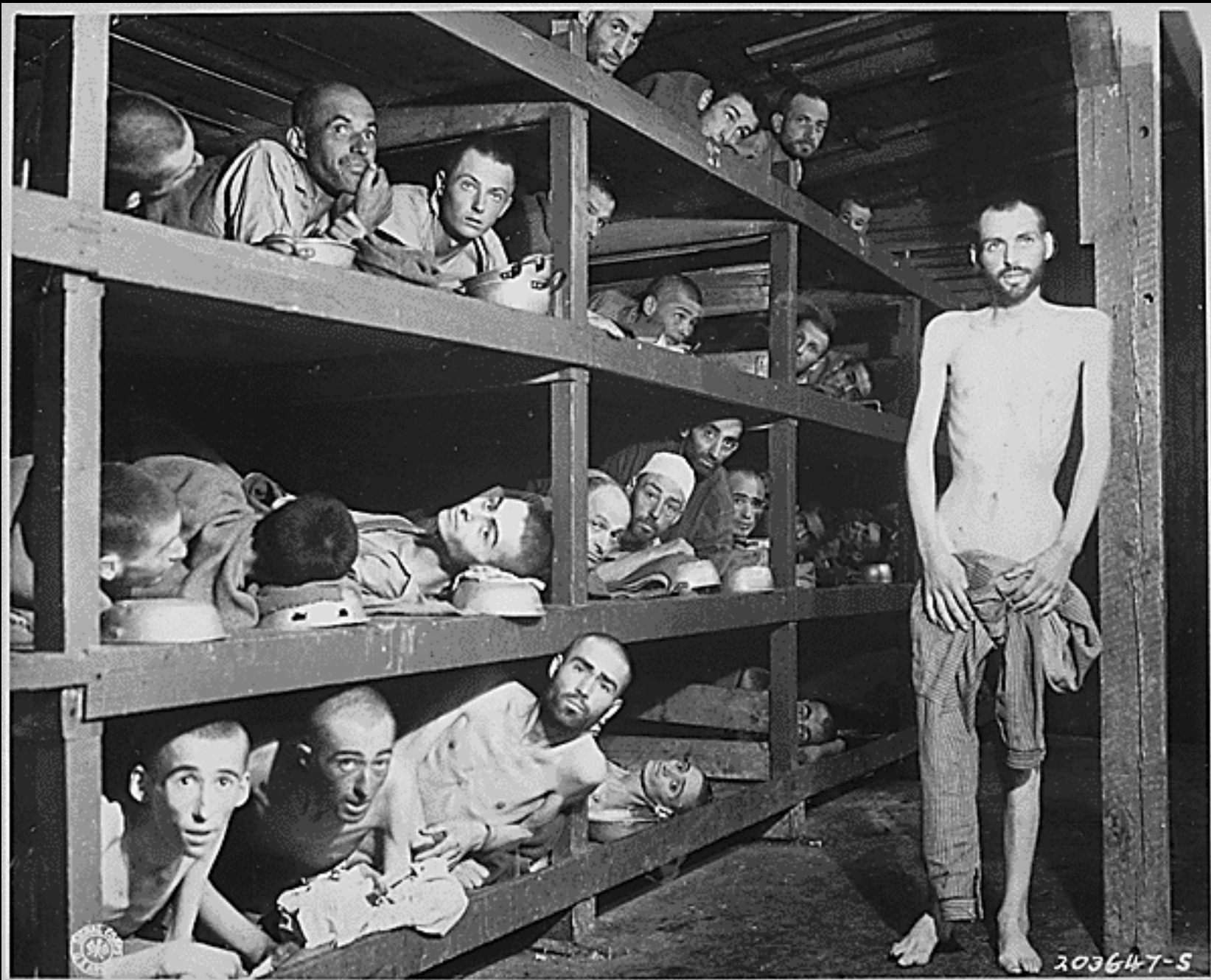
Dachau Concentration Camp

“Work will set you free”











Treblinka

- Arriving by train, victims were pulled from the train, separated by gender, and ordered to strip naked. In winter, the temperature often dropped to -20 °C (-5 °F). The guards chose who would go to the "infirmary." Jews who were too resistant to the process were taken to the infirmary and shot.
- Women had their hair cut off before going into the gas chamber. This hair was used "in the manufacture of hair-yarn socks for 'U'-boat crews and hair-felt foot-wear for the Reichs-railway" to quote from a directive sent to all concentration camp commanders in 1942.

Treblinka

- The gas chamber had portholes through which the Germans could watch the victims die. The victims were gassed with carbon monoxide generated by diesel engines. After the gassing of the victims in the gas chamber, when the doors of the gas chamber were opened, "the disfigured, bitten prisoners, with ears torn off, lay on top of each other in the most varied posture." The bodies were initially buried in large mass graves; in a later stage of the camp's operation, they were burned on open-air grids made of concrete pillars and railway tracks. Sometimes, the people were not dead and began to revive in the fresh air, especially pregnant women. They were shot by the guards and burned like the others. Some 800–1,000 bodies were burned at the same time, and would burn for five hours. The incinerator operated 24 hours a day.
- The camp was disguised as a railway station to prevent incoming victims from realizing their fate, complete with train schedules, posters of destinations and what appeared to be a working clock (in reality, a prisoner would move the hands to the approximate time before each convoy arrived).



