

# THE HOLOCAUST

## IT HAPPENED! NEVER AGAIN!

Why we mark Holocaust Memorial Day, 27 January...

As educators UCU members recognise our unique responsibility to tell the truth about our past to ensure the lessons are learnt for our future. The millions who died at the hands of the Nazis and their allies during the Holocaust must be remembered not just as the victims of an unparalleled man-made tragedy – but also as a warning that we must never allow it to happen again. We must continue to educate our children against the dangers of anti-Semitism, fascism and racial discrimination. Encouraging them – and us – to take a stand against hatred and intolerance wherever they find it is the best way to ensure a just, democratic and tolerant society where all can live free from fear.

**Sally Hunt, UCU general secretary**

**The Holocaust** was a "specific genocidal event in the twentieth-century history; the state sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation" of 6 million Jews, "...by Nazi Germany and collaborators."

**The Nazi Party**, formed in 1920s by Hitler, organised the Holocaust. They won power on the back of German defeat in World War One, promising to create jobs in the midst of the 1929 world wide economic depression, and a "racially pure" Germany.

**6 million Jews** were murdered in the Holocaust.

**Millions** of other "undesirables" were killed by the Nazis.

**Estimated 39 death camps** across Europe.

**4 million people** (mainly Jewish) were murdered in 6 death camps alone – Chelmno, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzab, Majdanek, and Auschwitz.

**90% of Polish Jews** were killed in the Holocaust.



**Simone Veil**  
Holocaust survivor and politician (1927-)  
Simone Veil was interned in a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War because of her Jewish heritage. After being liberated she later became a lawyer and a French government minister. Her life story, her courage and determination in overcoming the early setbacks in life have made an inspiring symbol in France and internationally.

**Homosexuals**  
Within days of taking power Hitler attacked the German gay population closing down gay organisations. An estimated 10,000-15,000 gay people died in the concentration camps.

**Leon Greenman**  
Witness to a new generation (1910-2008)  
Born in London and taken to Holland as a child, Leon Greenman was arrested after the Nazis invaded. He was subjected to experimentation and beatings at Auschwitz. His wife and son were gassed. He spoke of his experiences to successive generations in the UK, publishing a book, *Leon Greenman, Auschwitz survivor 1928-88*. He later said, "Whatever some historians say, it happened. And it could happen again."

**Jehovah's Witnesses**  
Due to their religious beliefs, Jehovah's Witnesses refused to swear allegiance to the Nazi regime. Approximately 2,000 were killed for refusing to renounce their faith.

**Anne Frank**  
Diarist (1929-1945)  
Born in Frankfurt-am-Main in Germany, Anne Frank's family went to Holland to escape Nazi persecution of Jews. Given a diary for her 13th birthday she began to chronicle her forced hiding for 2 years. She was arrested and taken to Auschwitz where she died. Fortunately, her diary was saved. In it she wrote, "It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals because they seem so absurd and impossible... Yet, I keep them, in spite of everything."

**Roma and Gypsies**  
The "Parajamos" or the devouring led to the extermination of approximately 200,000 Gypsies and Romas by the Nazis. Gypsy and Roma people were sterilised, experimented on, and used as forced labour in a number of death camps.

**Noor Khan**  
Courageous Fighter (1914-1944)  
Born to an Indian father and American mother in Moscow, Noor Khan was an outstandingly brave woman. She escaped from France after it fell to Hitler's armies in 1940. As wartime British agent she was sent to Nazi occupied France in 1943. She was betrayed and sent to a concentration camp. She was tortured and shot in gruesome circumstances but refused to capitulate.

**The Disabled**  
The Nazis exterminated approximately 70,000 disabled people deeming them to be inferior. After 1939 all children under 3 with Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy, or "suspected idiosy" were targeted for termination.

**Primo Levi**  
Chronicler of Holocaust (1919-1987)  
Primo Levi was born in Turin, Italy. He was sent to Auschwitz in 1944. Managing to survive he later penned the poignant and moving book *If this be a man*. He managed to powerfully portray the moral, physical, and emotional degradation that marked life in the death camps. His work evocatively describes how the survivors survived the camps and how they reconstituted themselves afterwards. He committed suicide.

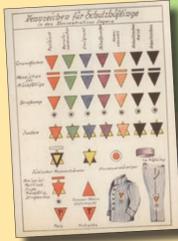
**Black people**  
Black Germans (24,000 before 1933 according to some estimates) were systematically sterilised and murdered. Captured African American soldiers said their horrific treatment did not compare to that meted out to black Germans.

**Esther Brunstein**  
Survivor and Witness (1928-)  
Esther Brunstein was born in Lodz, Poland. When the Nazis invaded in 1939 she was forced to wear a yellow star identifying her as a Jew. In 1940 she had to live in the Lodz ghetto. In August 1944 she was taken to Aushwitz and then to Bergen Belsen. Almost all her family did not survive. After being liberated she settled in the UK. Today she gives meetings in schools and elsewhere recounting her experiences.

**Political opponents.**  
Millions of political "undesirables" ranging from communists, trade unionists, members of the boy scouts, to pacifists were killed by the Nazis. Any freedom of expression or difference was crushed along with elections and other political parties.

**Gustav Schiefer**  
Anti Nazi Trade Unionist (b. 1876)  
Gustav Schiefer, Munich Chairman of the German Trade Union Association, was arrested, beaten and imprisoned in Dachau concentration camp. Members of trade unions and the Social Democratic Party were targeted by the Nazis. Later he testified against the Nazis. "And how decent were we once more in the year 1945. Not a hair on the head of any of these swine was harmed on behalf of the Trade Unions. We bore witness today, for human dignity and justice."

**Pastor Niemoller, victim of the Nazis**  
First they came for the communists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a communist;  
Then they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist;  
Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist;  
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew;  
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak out for me.



### GROUPS VICTIMISED BY THE NAZIS

**JAN. CHANCELLOR** Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.

**FEB. NO MORE TRADE UNIONS** The property of communists and pacifists is confiscated. Independent trade union buildings are attacked and trade unions banned two months later.

**MAR. OPPONENTS PUT AWAY** Thousands of Jews, church people, homosexuals, and communists are sent to the growing Dachau concentration camp.

**APR. UNLAWFUL BOYCOTT** Jewish establishments are boycotted by Nazis across Germany. Jews are expelled from universities. In the following weeks books are burnt.

**JULY STERILISATION** People with "genetic defects" are forcibly sterilised. Four months later beggars, the homeless, alcoholics and the unemployed are sent to concentration camps.

**RACE LAWS** The Nuremberg race laws are passed which mean Jews lose their German citizenship and are forbidden relationships with non Jews. Jews are then barred from cinema ownership.

**HEALTH** Jews can no longer get National Health insurance, and are banned from getting legal qualifications.

**DIVISION OF DEATH** A special division, SS Death's-head unit, guards concentration camps. By the end of 1936 thousands of Jews leave Germany fleeing relentless persecution.

**AUG. COMBATING HOMOSEXUALITY** An Office for Combating Homosexuality and Abortions is established. Soon after 25% of all Jewish wealth is taxed.

**MAR. TAKE OVER** The Nazis seize Austria. Adolf Eichmann later establishes an office for Jewish immigration in Vienna. Jews lose the right to property; employment; the right to enter parks.

**MAR. CZECHOSLOVAKIA TAKEN OVER** The Nazis take Czechoslovakia. Following this, the Slovaks pass the equivalent of the Nuremberg laws in Germany (see 1935).

**JUNE BUSINESS** Jewish businesses must register with special ministry.

**JULY EVIAN** 32 countries meet in Evian, France to consider the plight of Jews escaping Hitler. No country accepts them.

**AUG. MORE REPRESSION** Nazis destroy the Great Synagogue in Nuremberg. Jewish women must add Sarah to their names, and men Israel on all legal documents. A month later, Jews cannot practice law and their passports are stamped with J in red.

**OCT. ARRESTED** 17,000 Polish Jews are arrested in Germany. They are expelled to Poland which refuses them entry leaving them with nowhere to go.

**SEP. POLAND AND WAR** The Nazis invade Poland. Jews are put into ghettos in preparation for the "final goal." England and France declare war. Jews in Germany cannot be on the streets after 8pm (winter) and 9pm (summer). It is now illegal for Jews to own radios in Germany.

**OCT. EUTHANASIA** All sick and disabled people are rounded up extermination by the Nazis in Germany.

**NOV. KRISTALLNACHT** Thousands of Jewish businesses and synagogues were attacked and 30,000 Jewish men arrested by Nazis. Jews are later fined 1 billion marks for damages arising from Kristallnacht (The Night of Broken Glass). Jews are expelled from non Jewish German schools.

**DEC. GORING** It is decreed that all Jewish businesses must be aryanised.

**JAN. SPEEDY DEPORTATION AND THREATS** The deportation of Jews increases. The following month Jews must give their gold and silver to the state.

**MAR. POGROMS, PRONOUNCEMENTS, PARIS.** 2,000 Jews are killed in a pogrom in Romania. During the same year Himmler visits Auschwitz and orders its expansion. The Nazis invade Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Greece. Thousands of Jews are arrested in Paris.

**JUNE NAZIS INVADE THE SOVIET UNION** In the course of the war the Nazis let 5 million soviet prisoners die of starvation. The Nazis unleashed a wave of genocide against the millions of Jews living in the Soviet Union.

**FINAL SOLUTION** Himmler meets Hess, Auschwitz commandant declaring "The Führer has ordered the Final solution of the Jewish question... I have chosen Auschwitz for this purpose." Later that year Zyklon B (poison gas) is used at Auschwitz for the first time.

**NEW GHETTOS, NEW MASSACRES, NEW CAMPS** New Jewish Ghettos were established in occupied territories e.g. Minsk, Lvov, and Bialystok in Russia. 3,800 Jews are murdered in pogrom in at Kovno, Lithuania. Also, 33,771 Jews are murdered at Babi Yar in Kiev, Russia. A new camp is established in Majdanek in Poland.

**AUG. MADAGASCAR** A plan is proposed to deport all European Jews to an island near East Africa, Madagascar. Nazi-occupied France passes severe measures against its Jewish populations deporting thousands. The Nazis begin to seal off Jewish ghettos from the world e.g. the Krakow ghetto in Poland.

**JAN. MECHANISED GENOCIDE AND A CONFERENCE** Mass killings of Jews at Auschwitz Birkenau using gas begin. Leading Nazis at the Wannsee conference agree the details of the "Final Solution" i.e. the extermination of all Jews.

**MAR. ANOTHER CAMP** Belzec camp is built with fitted gas chambers. Slovak and French Jews deported to Auschwitz.

**MAY SOBIBOR DEATH CAMP** Fitted with three gas chambers, this camp would later become the scene of the most heroic instances of resistance to the Nazis. The New York Times reported the same month that as many as 400,000 Jews had been machine gunned in Nazi-occupied territory.

**JUNE YELLOW STARS** Jews in a number of occupied territories forced to wear a yellow star.

**EFFICIENCY** Nazis hold a special meeting to co-ordinate Jewish deportations. Later that month, a new gas chamber is opened at Auschwitz. Sterilisation experiments begin at Auschwitz the following month.

**LEAKS** News of the death camps is leaked to the British and American governments. Dutch and French Jews are sent to Auschwitz the same month. Later that year, they will be joined by German Jews.

**CAMP OPENING AND OPPOSITION** A new camp called Treblinka is opened in Poland. It has 10 gas chambers (200 persons per chamber). At Sachsenhausen camp, however, the SS meet stiff Jewish resistance. Belzec extermination camp is closed after killing an estimated 600,000 Jews. The Nazis try to hide its existence. Meanwhile, sterilization experiments are tested on women in Birkenau.

**RESISTANCE** Jews mount serious resistance in the Warsaw ghetto. This comes at a time when the Nazis send Gypsies to extermination camps.

**STALINGRAD** The Nazis are defeated by the Russian army at Stalingrad in Russia.

**AUSCHWITZ EXPANDED** The Nazis open 4 new gas chambers at Auschwitz. Jews are deported to the camp from Italy and Austria. It is reported later that 106 castrations were performed there by December 1943.

**TREBLINKA EXTERMINATIONS CEASE** Two hundred Jews manage to escape Treblinka death camp soon after the extermination, but 870,000 were killed there.

**FIRST WARNINGS ABOUT AUSCHWITZ** An escapee from Auschwitz, Rudolf Vrba, gives one of the first accounts of what has happened there. Jews from Hungary and Greece deported to Auschwitz. By the end of June half of Hungary's Jews were at Auschwitz.

**BAD TRADE** The Nazis offer to trade Jews for trucks and other commodities with Western Allies.

**HIGHEST DAILY MURDER RATE EVER RECORDED** 9,000 people a day are gassed or burned at Auschwitz-Birkenau during the summer. A revolt by some Jewish inmates leads to the destruction of one the crematoriums.

**OCT. TRANSPORT** The last transport of Jews was to Auschwitz. A little later people were gassed there for the last time. Himmler later ordered the destruction of the crematoriums in Auschwitz.

**JAN. AUSCHWITZ LIBERATED** The Red Army liberates Auschwitz on 27 January, and Majdanek camp the previous year. The Red Army also liberates Warsaw and Budapest. The Allied armies liberate numerous death camps like Buchenwald and Dachau in defeating the Nazi war machine.

**APR. HITLER KILLS HIMSELF**

**MAY GERMANY SURRENDERS**

**NOV. NUREMBERG TRIALS** Some, but not all, of the people who were involved in perpetrating the Holocaust are put on trial.

**References and acknowledgements**

If this is about The Holocaust, see: The Holocaust: Lessons for Humanity, Legacies of the Holocaust, How to Stop the Nazis, The Holocaust in the Guardian and The Observer. Handbook for Teachers, Guidelines for teaching about the Holocaust, Task force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Remembrance and Research.

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This poster is dedicated to the memory of the Warsaw Ghetto survivor, Marek Edelman

**UCU**  
University and College Union

## From Black shirts to the BNP – resisting fascism

**British fascist**  
Oswald Mosley, aristocrat and former MP for both the Tory and Labour parties, establishes the British Union of Fascists.

**June Olympia rally**  
The BUF tries to hold a giant rally in Olympia. It is disrupted by hundreds of anti fascists who are beaten up by Mosley's black shirts

**September Follow up rally**  
The BUF try to have a rally in Hyde Park. Again thousands of anti fascists stop the rally from taking place.

**The battle of Cable Street**  
Mosley announces a march through the poorest part of London, the East End, where he hopes to build a base. He is met by 100,000 anti fascists and can't pass Cable Street. The police call off the march. The fascists never recover.

**43 Group**  
After the Second World War the 43 group (Jewish ex-servicemen and anti fascists) smash BUF rallies as it tries to regroup itself in the early post war years.

**New Front**  
A former member of the BUF establishes the National Front

"The sheer presence of the ANL had made it impossible to get NF members on the streets, had dashed recruitment and cut away at their vote"  
Martin Webster, one of the leaders of the National Front

"I am well aware that the orthodox opinion is 6 million Jews were gassed or cremated... Orthodox opinion once held the world is flat... I have reached the conclusion that the 'extermination' tale is a... extremely profitable lie. It's well known that the chimney from the gas chambers at Aushchwitz are fake"  
Nick Griffin, leader of the BNP

**UCU and NMT statement on the BNP**  
The policies and positions of the BNP are incompatible with the ethos and values of teaching, Reason and fairness are the antithesis of the mind of education which strives for the liberation of every learner: a potential, irrespective of age, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, race or religion.  
In common with the mainstream political parties, NMT and UCU find the policies of the BNP utterly unacceptable. We call on the government to take urgent action to ensure that racism and fascism have no place in the classroom or lecture hall, and to give consideration to making membership of the BNP incompatible with membership as a qualified teacher or lecturer, in line with policy for the police. Both unions find support of BNP policies to be incompatible with membership of our organisations.

**National Front grows**  
A speech denouncing non white immigration in 1963 by a mainstream politician Enoch Powell, and the hysteria around immigration, gives the National Front a mass audience. They beat the Liberals into fourth place in 33 seats in the Greater London Council elections.

**Lewisham**  
The National Front tries to march through an area with a high black and Asian presence. They are met by thousands of anti fascists and, like the BUF in the 1930s, are forced to call off the march.

**Rock Against Racism**  
Anti fascists, mainly organised around the Anti Nazi League, manage to unite all sections of the community in exposing the fascism of the National Front and stopping them from marching.

**Carnivals**  
Two successful carnivals organised by Rock Against Racism, sister organisation of the ANL, draws 100,000 people using music to drive home the anti fascist message among the young.

**Lead cash**  
Blat Bech is killed by the police at an anti fascist march in Southall.

**First BNP win**  
British National Party – described as an "openly Nazi Party" by a European committee on racism – wins first council seat on Isle of Dogs, East London.

**Oldham**  
BNP poll 11 percent in local elections in Oldham.

**Blinded**  
First BNP councillor loses seat. Later, Unite Against Fascism and Hope Not Hate are formed to stop the BNP.

**Love Music festival in Stoke**  
Love Music Hate Racism hold music rally in Stoke-on-Trent which thousands attend in the run up to the European elections.

**June European elections**  
BNP wins 2 MEP seats in European elections. Anti-fascists interrupt a press conference by BNP leader, Nick Griffin, in front of the Houses of Parliament. The BBC later invites him on Question Time.