Holocaust Timeline 1933-1945

1933

January 30 -- Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.
March 20 -- The Nazis establish their first concentration camp: Dachau.
March 23 -- Germany passes the Enabling Act, giving Hitler dictatorial powers.
April 7 -- Nazis' first anti-Semitic decree removes all Jews from the civil service.

1935

September -- Nazis enact the Nuremberg Laws. Among other things they deprive German Jews of the right to vote and hold public office, and they outlaw marriages between Jews and non-Jews.

1936

October 25 -- Hitler and Mussolini form Rome-Berlin Axis.

1938

March 13 -- "Anschluss:" Germany annexes Austria.
April 26 -- German Jews required to register their property.
July -- Convened by President Roosevelt, 32 countries meet at the Evian Conference in France to discuss refugee problem. Little is accomplished; most Western countries unwilling to accept Jewish refugees.
September 29 -- Munich Agreement is signed. Britain and France accept Hitler's annexation of Sudetenland.
November 9-10 -- "Kristallnacht," The Night of Broken Glass. Throughout Germany and Austria, the Nazis destroy Jewish property and deport some 30,000 Jews to concentration camps.
November 12 -- All Jewish retail establishments in Germany ordered to cease business by end of year.

1939

February - June -- Wagner-Rogers Bill proposes admitting 20,000 German refugee children to the U.S. The bill dies in committee.
March 15 -- Germany occupies Czechoslovakia.
May - June -- The S.S. St. Louis, carrying 930 Jewish refugees, is turned away by Cuba. The U.S. refuses to admit the refugees, who are forced to return to Europe.
May -- British government issues a White Paper restricting future Jewish immigration to Palestine to 75,000 over the next five years.
September 1 -- Germany invades Poland.
September 3 -- Britain and France declare war on Germany.
November -- Germans kill more than 16,000 Polish civilians in first six weeks of war. 5,000 of them are Jewish.

1940

May 10 -- Germany launches attacks against Holland, Luxembourg, Belgium and France.
June -- Germans establish the Auschwitz concentration camp.
June 22 -- France surrenders to Germany. Marshal Pétain signs armistice with Germany
September 7 -- German begins massive bombing campaign on London.
October 22 -- Germany deports 15,000 from the Rhineland to internment camps in France.
November -- Warsaw Ghetto created.

1941

June -- More than 13,000 Jews have died of starvation in the Warsaw ghetto since January.
June 22 -- Germany attacks U.S.S.R.
July -- New York Yiddish dailies reveal that thousands of Jewish civilians have been massacred by Nazi soldiers in Minsk, Brest-Litovsk, Lvov and other places.
July 31 -- Reich Marshal Hermann Göring instructs Reinhardt Heydrich to organize a "complete solution of the Jewish question."
September -- First gassing experiments at Auschwitz.
November 27 -- Nazis establish Theresienstadt, "a model ghetto," in Czechoslovakia.
December 8 -- First gassings at Chelmno death camp.
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1942

January 20 -- Nazis hold the Wannsee Conference, during which they outline a plan to kill eleven million Jews in Europe.

March -- Jewish aid organization reports that eyewitness accounts indicate the Nazis have already massacred 240,000 Jews in the Ukraine alone.

March -- The Nazis begin the forced evacuation of Slovakia’s Jews. They are the first Jews taken to Auschwitz.

May 4 -- Gassing of more than one million Jews begins at Auschwitz.

May -- The Jewish Labor Bund in Poland compiles summary of verified massacres and transmits it to the Polish government-in-exile in London.

June 29 -- At a press conference in London, the World Jewish Congress estimates that the Nazis have already killed over a million Jews.

July 15 -- Nazis begin deportation of Jews from Amsterdam.

July 16 -- Nazis begin deportation of Jews from France.

July 22 -- Nazis begin deporting Jews from the Warsaw ghetto.

August 8 -- Gerhart Riegner informs U.S. consulate in Geneva about a Nazi plan to murder the Jews of Europe.

August 11 -- U.S. Legation in Switzerland passes information received from Gerhart Riegner to State Department regarding Nazi plan to kill all European Jews.

August 21 -- President Roosevelt warns Axis powers that the perpetrators of war crimes would be tried after their defeat and face “fearful retribution.”

September -- State Department grants permission for 5,000 Jewish children in France to enter the U.S. The initiative fails because of stalling by the Vichy government.

September -- Representative Emanuel Celler introduces bill into the House calling for the opening of U.S. doors to refugees in France who can prove they are facing persecution. The bill dies in committee.

September 2 -- Rabbi Stephen Wise contacts State Department about Nazi plan to kill all European Jews. Wise agrees to remain silent until the information is confirmed.

November 24 -- For the first time, reports of Jews being methodically murdered at Auschwitz reach outside world.

December 8 -- Jewish leaders meet with President Roosevelt and hand him a 20-page summary of the Holocaust.

December 17 -- The Allies issue a statement condemning "in the strongest possible terms this bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination."

1943

January -- State Department receives information from Switzerland that discloses that 6,000 Jews a day are being killed at one location in Poland.

April 19 -- First day of Warsaw ghetto uprising.

May 16 -- Nazis liquidate the Warsaw ghetto.

August -- A report received by Jewish leaders in the U.S. advises that the death toll of European Jews has reached four million.

September -- A bill is introduced into the House that would allow refugees who don’t endanger public safety to come to the U.S. temporarily. The bill doesn’t reach the floor of either House.

October 6 -- Four hundred Orthodox rabbis gather outside the White House to present a petition to FDR calling for a rescue agency. The president declines to meet them.

October -- Danish citizens help 7,200 Jews in Denmark escape to Sweden.

November 9 -- Identical resolutions are introduced into the House and Senate calling on the president to create a government rescue agency.

November 10 -- FDR suggests setting up refugee camps in North Africa and southern Europe. State Department demolishes plan.

1944

January 16 -- Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. proposes to FDR that a rescue commission be established.

January 22 -- President Roosevelt establishes the War Refugee Board.

April -- Two escapees from Auschwitz provide Jewish underground in Slovakia with full description of the death camp.

May 15 -- Nazis begin deporting Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz. Four trains leave per day, each carrying 3,000 Jews.

June 6 -- The Allies land at Normandy in the D-Day invasion of France.

June -- War Department turn downs appeals to bomb rail links between Hungary and
Holocaust Timeline 1933-1945

August 14 -- War Department writes that bombing Auschwitz would divert air power from "decisive operations elsewhere."

August 20 -- One hundred twenty-seven Flying Fortresses drop high-explosives on the factory areas of Auschwitz, less than five miles east of the gas chambers.

September 13 -- U.S. heavy bombers rain destruction on factory areas of Auschwitz, but not on crematoria just a few miles away.

October 7 -- In a suicidal uprising, Jewish inmates in Auschwitz manage to destroy one and damage another of the crematorium buildings.

November 2 -- SS Chief Heinrich Himmler orders a halt to the gassing of Jews, followed by destruction of gas chambers and crematoria.

1945

January -- Death marches into the interior of Germany begin, taking 250,000 Jewish lives.


May 7 -- Germany surrenders unconditionally to the Allies.

July 1 -- The U.S. visa system reverts to pre-war procedures, ending Washington’s complex security-screening machinery.

November 20 -- Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal commences.