Interwar Years and World War 2

Vocabulary Supplement

The Holocaust helped create a new term, **genocide**, which means the deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular ethnic group or nation. The genocide of Jews in Nazi Germany became decisive when the Germans decided in the “**Final Solution**” to exterminate the Jews in death camps. The roots for this decision lay in European **anti-semitism**, a prejudice toward Jews. In Nazi Germany, this discrimination became legalized with the **Nuremberg Laws** of 1933, making them non-citizens. Violence became condoned by the state In 1938 on **Kristallnacht**, the “night of the broken glass”, when almost 200 synagogues were destroyed and over 8,000 shops Jewish shops sacked and looted. Jews were then moved into **ghettos**, walled neighborhoods to isolate the Jewish population with miserable living conditions. Eventually these became staging grounds for transporting Jews to death camps. While most Germans failed to act to resist these actions, some outside of Germany acted. Denmark was noteworthy in helping ferry the majority of the Jewish population there to neutral Sweden.

The **Nuremberg trials** were a series of trials held between 1945 and 1949 in which the Allies prosecuted German military leaders, political officials, industrialists, and financiers for crimes they had committed during World War II.