World History 3201

2.2.8: Analyze Nazi policies toward Jews, gypsies, communists, homosexuals and religious minorities.

According to the census of June 1933, the Jewish population of Germany consisted of about 500,000 people. Jews represented less than one percent of the total German population of about 67 million people. Unlike ordinary census-taking methods, the Nazi racist criteria codified in the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 and subsequent ordinances identified Jews according to the religion practiced by an individual's grandparents. Consequently, the Nazis classified as Jews thousands of people who had converted from Judaism to another religion, among them even Roman Catholic priests and nuns and Protestant ministers whose grandparents were Jewish.

Eighty percent of the Jews in Germany (about 400,000 people) held German citizenship. The remainder were mostly Jews of Polish citizenship, many of whom were born in Germany and who had permanent resident status in Germany. About 70 percent of the Jews in Germany lived in urban areas. Fifty percent of all Jews lived in the 10 largest German cities, including Berlin (about 160,000), Frankfurt am Main (about 26,000), Breslau (about 20,000), Hamburg (about 17,000), Cologne (about 15,000), Hannover (about 13,000), and Leipzig (about 12,000).

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF JEWISH PERSECUTION 1933-38

- JEWISH CIVIL SERVANTS, LAWYERS AND TEACHERS SACKED.

- RACE SCIENCE LESSONS WERE INTRODUCED TO SCHOOLS TO TEACH THAT JEWS ARE UNTERMENSCH.

- JEWS COULD NOT BE DOCTORS.

- JEWS COULD NOT GO TO THEATERS, CINEMA, OR VACATION RESORTS; OR RESIDE OR EVEN WALK IN CERTAIN SECTIONS OF GERMAN CITIES.

- JEWISH CHILDREN FORBIDDEN TO GO TO SCHOOL.
SPECIFIC KEY DATES/EVENTS IN JEWISH PERSECUCTION 1933-38

#1: APRIL 1, 1933 (NATIONWIDE BOYCOTT OF JEWISH-OWNED BUSINESSES)
At 10:00 a.m., members of the Storm Troopers (SA) and SS (the elite guard of the Nazi state) stand in front of Jewish-owned businesses throughout Germany to inform the public that the proprietors of these establishments are Jewish. The word "Jude," German for "Jew," is often smeared on store display windows, with a Star of David painted in yellow and black across the doors. Anti-Jewish signs accompany these slogans. In some towns, the SA march through the streets singing anti-Jewish slogans and party songs. In other towns, violence accompanies the boycott; in Kiel, a Jewish lawyer is killed. The boycott ends at midnight. Boycotts organized at the local level continue throughout much of the 1930s.

#2: SEPTEMBER 15, 1935 (NUREMBERG LAWS ARE INSTITUTED)
At their annual party rally, the Nazis announce new laws that make Jews second-class citizens and revoke most of their political rights. Further, Jews are prohibited from marrying or having sexual relations with persons of."German or related blood." "Racial infamy," as this becomes known, is made a criminal offense. The Nuremberg Laws define a "Jew" as someone with three or four Jewish grandparents or who is a practicing Jew. Consequently, the Nazis classify as Jews thousands of people who have converted from Judaism to another religion, among them even Roman Catholic priests and nuns and Protestant ministers whose grandparents were Jewish.

#3: NOVEMBER 9, 1938 ("KRISTALLNACHT": A NATIONWIDE POGROM)
In response to the murder of German diplomat Ernst vom Rath by a young Jew in Paris, German propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels delivers a fiery speech to the Nazi party faithful in Munich; these party members are gathered to commemorate the anniversary of the abortive 1923 Beer Hall Putsch (Adolf Hitler's first attempt to seize power). The speech is a signal for an organized assault upon Jewish homes, businesses, and places of worship by members of the SA, SS, and other Nazi party organizations such as the Hitler Youth. Although Nazi officials later portray the pogrom as a spontaneous act of public outrage, the population's participation in the pogrom is limited. The violence against Jews lasts into the morning of November 10 and becomes known as "Kristallnacht": the "Night of Broken Glass." At least 91 Jews are killed and up to 30,000 more are arrested and confined in concentration camps. "Aryanization," the transfer of Jewish-owned businesses to " Aryans," accelerates following the pogrom.