100%

Sheet

The world at war: Were ordinary Germans 'consenting mass executioners' of the Holocaust?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Holocaust refers to the genocide and systematic murder by Nazi Germany of approximately six million Jews. Other persecuted minorities include gypsies, homosexual and disabled people. It occurred in stages, having begun in 1933 with persecution and discrimination, with the appointment of Hitler as Chancellor, and led to state-sponsored extermination and genocide, until the defeat of Nazi Germany in WW2.

<u>KEY KNOWLEDGE 1:</u> Denial of rights: What was life like for Jews before the Nazis came to power and how did it begin to change?

- Pre-war context: Europe had a long history of anti-Semitism but Jews had been living similarly to their European peers
- In 1933 Hitler was appointed Chancellor and then Fuhrer in 1934, proclaiming Jews to be amongst the enemies of the Volksgemeinschaft ("people's community"), persecuting Jews and others, denying their legal, political & social rights

SECONDARY INTERPRETATION/ DEBATE ABOUT PERIOD

"Germany during the Nazi period was inhabited by people animated by beliefs about Jews that made them **willing to become consenting mass executioners**"

Daniel Goldhagen, 'Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust'

<u>KEYWORDS</u>: Genocide Anti-Semitism Persecution Concentration camps

Auschwitz Perpetrator Ghetto

Dec 1942-**TIMELINE** Western Nov 1939-Allies Nov 1944-Sept 1941-Jan 1933 - Adolf Sept 1935denounce Himmler Polish Jews in over 33,000 Nuremburg orders end of Hilter becomes ghettos forced massagre of Nov 1938-Soviet Jews laws Jews, but do gassing at to wear vellow German Kristallnacht passed nothing Auschwitz chancellor Feb 1942-July 1944-April 1940 - policy Jan - April Sept 1939-March 1938 -1933of euthanising mass Maidanek 1945 - camps WWII begins Austria deportation of liberated at one day mentally ill in camp annexed. Jews from liberated by boycott of Germany Auschwitz, attacks on Western Soviets and Jewish commences Belsen. Austrian Jews Europe for shops evidence of Buchenwald begin extermination and Dachau mass murder begins uncovered

KEY KNOWLEDGE 2: From ghettos to death camps: How were Jews separated and murdered under Nazi rule?

- Discrimination of Jews (Nuremberg Laws 1935) and increased violence (Kristallnacht 1938) led to segregation as Jews were moved to poor walled off areas called ghettos (and gypsies to a smaller extent)
- This led to mass extermination as Jews were moved to concentration camps/ death camps as the Nazis pursued 'The Final Solution' between 1941 and 1945, building mass killing centres for the industrial killing of Jews- the largest of which was Auschwitz

KEY KNOWLEDGE 3: Architects of genocide: Who is to blame?

- Hitler's leadership endorsed antisemitism and state sponsored violence in the name of racial purity
- However, the SS and high-ranking individuals like
 Himmler are considered architects of genocide, for carrying out orders and murdering with impunity
- Ordinary Germans were complicit, not just bystanders