

Nazi Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust

The situation:

- 500,000 Jews in Germany. They were successful in business, medicine, law, etc.
- Anti-Semitism was traditionally based on three factors:
 - Jealousy at economic success.
 - Some held the Jews responsible for Jesus' death.
 - They were not seen as true Germans – some blamed them for loss in WWI, others saw communism as being led by Jews.
- The Nazis added the belief in the superiority of the **Aryan race**.
 - They wanted to purify the German race to achieve this ideal appearance.
 - They saw non-Aryans as *Untermenschen* [subhumans] – Jews made up most of them.

Excluding Jews from German life

- Boycott of Jewish shops was organised. It was called off due to international pressure.
- The **Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service** was passed, which meant that anyone working for the government with one or more Jewish grandparents was retired.
- Jews were barred from law and medicine.
- The German Evangelical Church removed non-Aryan pastors.
- Jews were banned from the armed forces.
- Offensive slogans painted everywhere, signs banning Jews were in shop windows, Jews were banned from swimming pools, names of dead Jewish soldiers were removed from war memorials, etc...
- This led to a mass exodus of Jews from Germany, which included Albert Einstein and other Nobel Laureates.

The Nuremberg Laws

- Announced at the 1935 Nuremberg Rally.
 - They prohibited marriages and sexual intercourse between Jews and Germans.
 - Jews were stripped of their citizenship, instead becoming 'state subjects'.
- You were judged as Jewish by race, not belief: having 3-4 Jewish grandparents.

Anti-Semitism was toned down during the 1936 Olympics.

Kristallnacht

- An outburst of anti-Semitism organised by Goebbels, night of 9th November 1938.
- It was in response to the murder of **Ernst vom Rath** in Paris by a Jewish student.
- SA, SS, and Hitler Youth burned down synagogues and Jewish shops.
- They broke into Jewish homes and terrorised the occupants.
- 91 Jews killed, over 30,000 arrested and taken to concentration camps (although soon released).
- Not a popular uprising – there was little enthusiasm among the general population for it.
- The Nazis then fined the Jews 1 billion marks for the murder of vom Rath.

Taking over Jewish businesses

- 60 percent of Jewish businesses had been taken over before Kristallnacht.
 - Intimidation, withdrawal of loans, frequent health inspections, pressure on customers or suppliers.
- After Kristallnacht, laws were passed which worsened the situation.