

# THE PATH TO GENOCIDE

## Context



The defeat of Germany in the First World War, blamed for causing the conflict and thereby encumbered with onerous terms of a peace treaty, was the reason for a prevalent feeling of humiliation and injustice within German society. The gloomy public mood deepened with the economic crisis at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, which led to a sharp rise in unemployment. The surging public sentiment of being wronged and overall dissatisfaction benefited radical political movements questioning the terms of the Versailles Treaty (1919) and promising an economic improvement with the restoration of Germany to its former global position. One of them, the National Socialist German Workers' Party (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, NSDAP*), formed in 1919, won parliamentary elections in 1932 and became the largest party in the German parliament (*Reichstag*).

On 30 January 1933, Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazi party (as the NSDAP was called), was appointed Chancellor of Germany. In 1933, through intimidation of his political opponents, Hitler made the Reichstag grant him extraordinary broad executive and legislative powers. In the course of 1933, the NSDAP became the only legal political party. Moreover, after the death of President Paul von Hindenburg in August 1934, Hitler assumed the post of head of state, thereby securing complete political authority. He then assumed the title of the leader and Chancellor of the German Reich (*der Führer und Reichskanzler des Deutschen Reiches*). Through large military expenditures and

public spending, the Nazis were able to restore economic stability in the country and quash mass unemployment. Their economic successes significantly contributed to the growing popularity of Hitler within society.

One of their postulates was a 'cleansing' of German society of people deemed inferior. The Nazi racist ideology claimed that Nordic-German people, called Aryans, to which the Germans belonged, were the supreme human race made to lead others. Thus, inferior races were only to serve as slave labour or be eliminated from society. The latter category included Jews, who were considered a particular threat to German society. According to that theory, legislation was passed depriving them of even their basic rights. In order to gain support, the Nazis indoctrinated German society on a broad scale in the mass media. The concept of uniting all Germans within boundaries of the Reich proved to have particular propaganda value. It was accompanied by the slogan 'One nation, one realm, one leader' (*Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer*). Certain milieus also advocated the need to provide Germans, as the 'master race', with living space (*Lebensraum*). The idea served to justify the future territorial expansion of the Third Reich, as the German Reich under Hitler was called, towards the East. Accordingly, the Slavic population residing there, which fell within the 'subhuman' category, was to work as slave labour for Germany.

From the very start of their rule, the Nazis essentially sought to exclude and subsequently eliminate from German society individuals or social groups deemed 'useless'. That applied to social misfits and persons with hereditary diseases, primarily the intellectually and physically disabled. Moreover, the allegedly antisocial groups included the Sinti and Roma as well as homosexuals and prostitutes. Political opponents (primarily socialists and communists, as well as union and public activists weary of the Nazis) constituted a separate category. Some of them were sent to concentration camps created in 1933. The first one was built on the order of *Reichsführer SS* Heinrich Himmler in Dachau, Bavaria, in March 1933. Political opponents of the Nazi regime, the clergy and Jews were sent there. Over time, that camp became a model for other such types of incarceration facilities built throughout the German Reich and the countries it occupied. A special scheme codenamed Action T4 was launched to physically exterminate certain undesirable social groups from society. Its purpose was the 'elimination of life unworthy of living' (*Vernichtung von lebensunwertem Leben*). Its main victims were intellectually and physically disabled people. Some methods of murdering them were subsequently employed for the mass killing of Jews.

Although anti-Semitism was a main element of the Nazi party programme, the plan to exterminate Jews developed only gradually and, until the start of 1942, lacked any coherence. In the 1930s and onwards, the dislike of Jews manifested itself primarily in discrimination against them, as expressed in legislation restricting their public and professional activities. In April 1933, the first boycott of Jewish shops and enterprises took place. In the same month, Jews were prohibited from serving in civil and military administrations, as well as practicing as lawyers or doctors. The culmination came with the introduction in 1935 of what is known as the Nuremberg laws and related executive actions that deprived Jews of full German citizenship and lowered their status to members

of the Reich (*Reichsangehörige*). The prohibition of work in the military and state offices was upheld. Notably, in line with those laws Jews could not marry Gentiles. Such unions were deemed 'shameful to the race' (*Rassenschande*). The policy of excluding and discriminating against Jews was subsequently extended to countries controlled by the Germans during the Second World War.

The culmination in the pre-war persecution of Jews in Germany was a nationwide pogrom staged by the Nazis on 9 November 1938. It has gone down in history as the 'Night of Broken Glass' (*Kristallnacht*) or 'Pogrom Night' (*Pogromnacht*). As a result, more than 30,000 Jews were placed in concentration camps and approximately 100 murdered. During the November pogrom, most synagogues in the Third Reich were set ablaze or damaged, whereas Jewish shops and businesses were destroyed and plundered.

Many Jews, aware of the danger of living in Germany, sought to leave the country. Nevertheless, their emigration was hindered due to the reluctance of many countries to take them in. Still, more than 300,000 Jews managed to leave Germany in the 1930s despite numerous obstacles. The first wave of refugees included intellectuals, political activists and Zionists. Emigration accelerated after the pogrom of November 1938. Jews mainly left for the United States or Western European countries (e.g. France, the Netherlands or Great Britain) or Palestine. In 1938–1940, transports of Jewish children (*Kindertransport*) to Great Britain were also organised. It is estimated that approximately 214,000 Jews lived in Germany until the outbreak of the Second World War. The vast majority of them were murdered shortly thereafter.

Many restrictions coupled with other mechanisms and anti-Jewish actions that the Nazis introduced in Germany in 1933–1939 were expanded to Nazi-occupied countries during the Second World War.

# THE PATH TO GENOCIDE



## Chart 1. NAZI IDEOLOGY

### Unit 1

A caricature drawing from 1919 depicting the 'stab-in-the-back' myth, which allegedly was the reason for Germany's defeat in the First World War. Public domain



### EXERCISE:

**Look at the drawing and answer the following questions:**

- Who is presented in the drawing?
- Who is represented in terms of behaviour and appearance?
- What was the purpose of publishing this caricature?

**Search for additional information and think:**

- What did the 'stab in the back' myth mean?
- Why did the Nazis use it in their anti-Jewish propaganda?

## Unit 2

### An excerpt from the 1920 NSDAP programme.

The Programme of the German Workers' Party is a programme for our time. Its leadership rejects the establishment of new aims after those set out in the Programme have been achieved, solely for the purpose of making it possible for the Party to continue to exist as the result of artificially stimulated dissatisfaction of the masses.

1. We demand the unification of all Germans within one Greater Germany on the basis of the right to self-determination of nations.
2. We demand equal rights for the German people (*Volk*) with respect to other nations and annulment of the peace treaty of Versailles and St. Germain.
3. We demand land and soil (Colonies) to feed our People and settle our excess population.
4. Only Nationals (*Volksgenossen*) can be Citizens of the State. Only persons of German blood can be Nationals, regardless of religious affiliation. No Jew can therefore be a German National.
5. Any person who is not a Citizen will be able to live in Germany only as a guest and must be subject to legislation for Aliens.
6. Only a Citizen is entitled to decide the leadership and laws of the State. We therefore demand that only Citizens may hold public office, regardless of whether it is a national, state or local office.

Source: *Documents on the Holocaust. Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria*, ed. Y. Arad, I. Gutman, A. Margalio, Jerusalem 1999, p. 15.

## EXERCISE:

### Read the text and answer the following questions:

- What were the Nazis' demands with regard to German foreign policy? What do they tell us about their approach to peace treaties ending the First World War?
- What socio-political problems were raised in the Nazi party's programme? In what manner were they to be solved?
- Who, in the view of the programme's authors, could enjoy full citizen rights in Germany? What status did the Jews hold in the German state?

### Search for additional information and think:

- Which postulates in the NSDAP programme were reflected in Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*? How were they argued?
- Which of these postulates were the Nazis able to turn into reality after taking power?

Programm  
der  
National-Sozialistischen Deutschen Arbeiter-Partei

## Unit 3

Adolf Hitler surrounded by young members and supporters of the Nazi party in a Munich beer hall (a photograph taken in the early 1930s). Getty Images



### EXERCISE:

**Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:**

- How are these young people looking at and listening to Hitler?
- What can you say on this basis about the subject of their relationship to the Nazi party leader?

**Search for additional information and think:**

- What could Hitler impress young people with?
- Why did the Nazis enjoy great popularity within German society?

## Chart 2. NAZIS IN POWER

### Unit 1

German President Paul von Hindenburg congratulates Adolf Hitler after his assumption of the office of Chancellor, 30 January 1933. PAP



## EXERCISE:

### Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:

- Who are the people in the photograph and what are they doing?
- What is the symbolic meaning of this scene?

### Search for additional information and think:

- What were the consequences of appointing Hitler German Chancellor?
- What warning can the history of the Nazis taking power in Germany be for us today?

## Unit 2



Prisoners standing during a roll call at the Buchenwald concentration camp. Each is wearing a striped hat and uniform bearing coloured triangular badges and identification numbers. KL Buchenwald was established in 1937 and was one of the first and largest of the Nazi concentration camps within Germany's 1937 borders. Many actual or suspected communists were among the first internees. Just like other Nazi concentration camps (including KL Sachsenhausen and KL Ravensbrück), it was modelled on the first Nazi concentration camp in Dachau erected in March 1933. From 1938 onwards, KL Dachau functioned as a type of 'training centre' for leaders and guards at subsequent concentration camps built throughout occupied Europe (a photograph taken between 1938 and 1941). USHMM, courtesy of Robert A. Schmuhl

## EXERCISE:

### Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:

- Who are the people in the photograph? What are they doing?
- How are they dressed? What elements of their clothes show that they are camp prisoners?
- What is their physical and psychological state?

### Search for additional information and think:

- What was the purpose of the Nazis creating concentration camps?
- Who was sent there and why?
- In what conditions were the prisoners held?
- What was a roll call and what purpose did it serve?

## Unit 3

A public burning of 'un-German' books by members of the SA and university students on the Opernplatz in Berlin, 10 May 1933. USHMM



### EXERCISE:

**Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:**

- What significance did the campaign to publicly burn prohibited books have for the Nazis?
- What did they want to manifest and achieve that way?

**Search for additional information and think:**

- What were the reactions to that campaign in Germany and outside the country?

## Unit 4

**The Act on the Protection of German Blood and German Honour of 15 September 1935.**

(Translated from Reichsgesetzblatt I, 1935, p. 1146–7.)

# Reichsgesetzblatt

Teil I

1145

1935	Ausgegeben zu Berlin, den 16. September 1935	Nr. 100
Tag	Inhalt	Seite
15. 9. 35	Reichsflaggengesetz .....	1145
15. 9. 35	Reichsbürgergesetz .....	1146
15. 9. 35	Gesetz zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre.....	1146

Moved by the understanding that purity of German blood is the essential condition for the continued existence of the German people and inspired by inflexible determination to ensure the existence of the German nation for all time, the Reichstag has unanimously adopted the following law, which is promulgated herewith:

### Article 1

1. Marriages between Jews and citizens of German or related blood are forbidden. Marriages nevertheless concluded are invalid, even if concluded abroad to circumvent this law.
2. Annulment proceedings can be initiated only by the state prosecutor.

## Article 2

Extramarital relations between Jews and citizens of German or related blood are forbidden.

## Article 3

Jews may not employ female subjects of the state of Germany or related blood under the age of 45 in their households.

## Article 4

1. Jews are forbidden to fly the Reich or national flag or display Reich colours.
2. They are, on the other hand, permitted to display Jewish colours. The exercise of this right is protected by the state.

## Article 5

1. Any person who violates the prohibition under Article 1 will be punished with a prison sentence with hard labour.
2. A male who violates the prohibition under Article 2 will be punished with a jail term or prison sentence with hard labour.
3. Any person violating the provisions under Articles 3 or 4 will be punished with a jail term of up to one year and a fine, or with one or the other of these penalties.

## Article 6

The Reich Minister of the Interior, in coordination with the Deputy of the Führer and Reich Minister of Justice, will issue legal and administrative regulations required to implement and complete this law.

## Article 7

The law takes effect on the day following promulgation, except for Article 3, which enters into force on 1 January 1936.

Depiction of the „pure Aryan“ family, 1938. A depiction of the „pure Aryan“ family on the cover of the 1938 calendar published by Neues Volk, the magazine of the Nazi Party's Race Political Office. Note the eagle hovering in the background. USHMM



Nuremberg, 15 September 1935

At the Reich Party Congress of Freedom

Führer and Reich Chancellor [signed] Adolf Hitler  
Reich Minister of the Interior [signed] Frick Reich  
Minister of Justice [signed] Dr. Gürtner  
Deputy of the Führer [signed] R. Hess

Source: *Documents on the Holocaust. Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria*, ed. Y. Arad, I. Gutman, A. Margalio, Jerusalem 1999, p. 78–79.

## EXERCISE:

### Read the text and answer the following questions:

- What was the purpose of adopting the Act on the Protection of German Blood and German Honour?
- What issues did the law regulate?
- What were the penalties for failure to observe certain provisions of the law?
- Why is this law considered racist?
- Which of these postulates were the Nazis able to turn into reality after taking power?

## Unit 5

Adolf Hitler announces the annexation of Austria (Anschluss) on Heldenplatz in Vienna, 15 March 1938.

Bundesarchiv Bild 183-1987-0922-500, Wien, Heldenplatz, Rede Adolf Hitler.jpg



### EXERCISE:

**Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:**

- What did the declaration to annex Austria to the German Reich look like?
- Did this decision find support among the Austrian public?

**Search for additional information and think:**

- Why did most Austrians welcome the annexation of Austria to the German Reich?
- How did Hitler deal with Austrian opposition to the Anschluss?

## Chart 3. DISCRIMINATION and PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS

### Unit 1

Sturmabteilung (SA) members blocking the entrance to a Jewish shop in Berlin with a placard reading: 'Germans, defend yourselves, do not buy from Jews!'. Bundesarchiv



## EXERCISE:

### Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:

- How did passers-by react to the boycott of Jewish shops?
- Why did SA members have to block customers' entrance to Jewish shops? What does this tell us about the boycott's effectiveness?

### Search for additional information and think:

- How was the boycott of Jewish shops presented in the German press and how was it presented abroad?

## Unit 2

1 April 1933

### An excerpt from Goebbels' Diary on the Nazi boycott of Jewish businesses.

The boycott against international atrocity propaganda has burst forth in full force in Berlin and the entire Reich. I drive along Tauentzien Street to observe the situation. All the Jews' businesses are closed. SA men are posted outside their entrances. The public has proclaimed its solidarity everywhere. Discipline is exemplary. An imposing performance! It all takes place in complete quiet; in the Reich too...

In the afternoon, 150,000 Berlin workers marched to the Lustgarten to join us in a protest against incitement abroad. There is incredible excitement in the air.

The press is already operating in total unanimity. The boycott is a great moral victory for Germany. We have shown the world abroad that we can call up the entire nation without causing the least turbulence or excess. The Führer has once again struck the right note.

Source: *Documents on the Holocaust. Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria*, ed. Y. Arad, I. Gutman, A. Margalit, Jerusalem 1999, p. 35.

## EXERCISE:

### Read the text and answer the following questions:

- In what way does Goebbels explain the reasons for boycotting Jewish shops? Against whom was it directed?
- How does he describe people's behaviour during the boycott? Why does he call the boycott a 'great moral victory of the Germans'?
- How do you understand Goebbels' words: 'The Führer has once again struck the right note'?

### Search for additional information and think:

- What was the propaganda purpose of boycotting Jewish shops and the actual one? Did the Nazis actually achieve it?
- Why is that boycott considered one of the forms of discriminating against Jews in Nazi Germany?

## Unit 3

This 1935 chart shows racial classifications under the Nuremberg Laws: German, crossbreed (*Mischlinge*) and Jew. Visible are columns with headings *Deutschblütiger* (German blood), *Mischling 2. Grades* (crossbreed of the second-degree), *Mischling 1. Grades* (crossbreed to the first-degree) and *Jude* (Jew).

Public domain/USHMM



## EXERCISE:

Look at the poster and answer the following questions:

- What criteria were applied to distinguish specific categories of people?
- Who was considered a German (with German blood), crossbreed (first and second degree), and who a Jew (first and second degree)?

Search for additional information and think:

- For what purpose could this poster be used?

## Unit 4

A young man who allegedly had illicit relations with a Jewish woman is marched through the streets of Norden for public humiliation. Flanked by German police officers, he has been forced to wear a sign that reads 'I am a defiler of the race'.

Such events were supposed to punish alleged offenders as well as to make them a public example serving as a deterrent to others who may not fully subscribe to the Nazi racial theory (July 1935). Niedersächsisches

Archiv - Aurich Staatsarchiv



## EXERCISE:

### Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:

- Who are the people in the photograph and what are they doing?
- What can you say about the emotions of those depicted on the basis of their behaviour and facial expression?
- How would you feel if forced to wear a sign on your neck stating ‘I am a defiler of the race’?

### Search for additional information and think:

- Who could have taken this photograph and why?
- For what purpose could it be used?

## Unit 5

An anti-Jewish sign posted on a road in Germany reads ‘Jews are not wanted here’ (a photograph from the 1930s). USHMM



## EXERCISE:

### Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:

- How do you understand the signpost reading ‘Jews are not wanted here’?
- Why was it placed on a road?
- How could Jews seeing this sign feel?

### Search for additional information and think:

- What did the Nazis wish to achieve by placing such road signs?

## Unit 6

The burning of the Böhmestraße Synagogue in Frankfurt during the November Pogrom of 1938 (*Kristallnacht*, Night of Broken Glass). The pogrom was a series of attacks against Jews throughout Nazi Germany carried out on 9–10 November 1938 by Sturmabteilung (SA) paramilitary forces and German civilians. Over 1,000 synagogues were burnt and over 7,000 Jewish businesses either destroyed or damaged. *Yad Vashem*



### EXERCISE:

**Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:**

- What are the people gathered around the burning synagogue doing? What is their behaviour?
- What role does a synagogue play in Jewish social life? Why did the Nazis decide to burn synagogues during the pogrom?

**Search for additional information and think:**

- What event became a pretext for the Nazis to stage the November 1938 pogrom?
- How was it conducted and exploited for propaganda purposes? Why did the Nazis insist on presenting it as a spontaneous act by German society?
- What were the pogrom's consequences for the Jewish community in Germany?

## Chart 4. NAZI PROPAGANDA

### Unit 1

Crowds in Bad Godesberg on the Rhine as local residents are greeting Hitler during his visit on 22 September 1938.

Meetings with Hitler and his speeches would attract crowds of followers. Mass media (the press, radio and cinema) were also important propaganda tools used by the Nazis to gain more support.

Bundesarchiv Bild 183-H12704



## EXERCISE:

### Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:

- What did Hitler's drive through the city look like?
- How did people along the streets behave?
- What is the meaning of the festooned buildings and apartment balconies?

### Search for additional information and think:

- What were the reasons for Hitler's enormous popularity in German society?
- How did the Nazis use the media in their propaganda drive?

## Unit 2

Boycott of Jewish shops in Berlin. SA and SS troops in front of the Wertheim department store, a man with a placard hung around his neck reading 'Germans! Defend yourselves! Do not buy from Jews!'. To the right, a man filming with a camera.

Bundesarchiv Bild 183-H12704



## EXERCISE:

### Look at the photograph and answer the following questions:

- Why did the Nazis photograph and film persons blocking entry to shops?
- How do you understand the slogan 'Germans! Defend yourselves! Do not buy from Jews'?

### Search for additional information and think:

- What propaganda significance did the boycott of Jewish businesses have?

## Unit 3

Front pages of the anti-Semitic periodical *Der Stürmer* of 1934 and 1939 with caricatures depicting the alleged ritual murder of Christian children by Jews. Anti-Semitic caricatures in this publication served to confirm the readers' conviction of a real Jewish threat. A frequent slogan at the bottom of the front page was 'Jews are our misfortune'. USHMM



### EXERCISE:

Look at the caricature drawing and answer the following questions:

- Who does the caricature depict?
- Against whom is it directed?
- What feelings does it evoke among the readers?

Search for additional information and think:

- What were ritual murders and why were the Jews accused?
- Why did the Nazis refer to religious anti-Semitism in their propaganda?

## Unit 4



Front pages of the anti-Semitic periodical *Der Stürmer* of 1934 and 1939 with caricatures depicting the alleged ritual murder of Christian children by Jews. Anti-Semitic caricatures in this publication served to confirm the readers' conviction of a real Jewish threat. A frequent slogan at the bottom of the front page was 'Jews are our misfortune'. USHMM

### EXERCISE:

Look at the caricature drawing and answer the following questions:

- What picture of the Jewish press does it present?
- What did the publisher of *Der Stürmer* wish to communicate through this caricature?

Search for additional information and think:

- In what years was *Der Stürmer* published and by whom?
- What role did it play in Nazi propaganda?
- What happened to the newspaper publisher after the war?

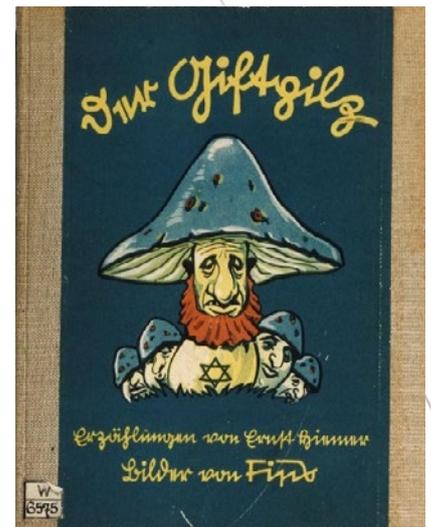
## Unit 5



An anti-Semitic cartoon showing Jewish and communist control of the Western powers drawn by Fips, a caricaturist for *Der Stürmer*. USHMM



A German poster advertising an exhibition titled *The Eternal Jew*, which opened in Munich on 8 November 1937. USHMM



The cover of an anti-Semitic German children's book *Der Giftpilz* [The poisonous mushroom] published by Der Stürmer-Verlag in 1938. USHMM

## EXERCISE:

Look at the caricature drawings and answer the following questions:

- What/who do they present?
- To what anti-Jewish impressions or stereotypes do they make references?
- What technique was used to 'caricature' the Jews?
- What is the message of these caricatures and what is their target audience?

## Chart 5. EMIGRATION

### Unit 1

#### Testimony of Carl Morgenroth on emigration from Nazi Germany

I was born in 1924, June 14th, in the town of Plauen in the state of Saxony which today is in East Germany. From my early years, I still remember all the Nazis marching through the streets and the violence, growing street violence. Finally, Hitler became Chancellor. I believe it was 31 January or thereabouts and things began to go badly for us Jews. My father decided that we should leave Germany and the logic at the time seemed to be to go to Vienna, Austria because we had relatives there. So, in September of 1933 we left Germany for Austria. Things were not too bad there for a while, of course. Then came 1938 and the Nazis in Germany followed us to Austria in one day. When the Anschluss took place, I was living in Vienna and was there to see the Germans march in. I wish to add that the Germans marched in to the jubilation of most of the Viennese. They went wild with joy, some of them, many of them, perhaps the majority. Things started to get very bad as they

turned against us again. It is common knowledge that the Jews began being persecuted in Austria as well as in Germany when the Nazis took over. Then came the so-called Kristallnacht, when they smashed all the synagogues and Jewish-owned stores. Our neighbourhood synagogue was a good-sized building. I saw it go up in flames myself. The fire brigade stood by just to make sure that no adjoining structures would catch fire. The entire building and roof collapsed and it was completely gutted. This took place all over Vienna. We had applied for admission to the United States some months prior to that and... but before I could leave, we were supposed to leave as a family. We registered as a family with the American Consulate for our visas to the United States, but due to the quota system, the immigration quota system of the United States in effect at the time, we were separated. My brother and I, born in Germany, fell under the German quota. My parents, who were born in that part of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire which became Poland after the end of the First World War, fell under the Polish quota which was much smaller, whereas the number, the immigration number for my brother and I, came up much quicker. So, my brother and I were ready to leave for the United States when the Second World War broke out and could not leave the country.

Source: Yad Vashem Archives O.3-8251

## EXERCISE:

### Read the text and answer the following questions:

- *Why did the family of Carl Morgenroth decide to leave Germany? What country did they select as their destination and why?*
- *What was the reason for their decision to leave Austria for the US? Why did that departure prove problematic?*

## Unit 2

Passengers crowd the deck of the MS St. Louis, a German luxury liner carrying more than 930 Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany to Cuba in May 1939. However, the Cuban government invalidated the Jewish passengers' landing certificates during the two-week passage to Havana. When the St. Louis reached Havana on May 27, all but 28 of the Jewish refugees were denied entry. They were likewise refused entry into the United States. Therefore, on June 6 the ship was forced to return to Europe. While it was on its way to Antwerp, several European countries were persuaded to take in the refugees (Great Britain 287, Belgium 214, France 224 and the Netherlands 181). Only those accepted by Great Britain found relative safety. The others were soon to be once again subjected to Nazi rule with the German invasion of Western Europe in the spring of 1940. A fortunate few succeeded in emigrating before this became impossible. In the end, many of the St. Louis passengers who found temporary refuge in Belgium, France and the Netherlands died at the hands of the Nazis, but most survived the war.

USHMM



## EXERCISE:

Look at the photograph, find additional information and describe the course of the passage made by MS St. Louis in the form of several pages from a diary. Please address the following issues in your description:

- who were the passengers?
- where and why did they travel?
- in what conditions did they travel?
- why did the route change?
- what was the atmosphere on the vessel?

### Unit 3

A caricature drawing in *The New York Times* of 3 July 1938 making reference to the situation of Jews in Germany under the Nazi regime and the international conference in Évian-les-Bains aimed at finding a solution to the problem of Jewish refugees in Europe.

The New York Times of 3 July 1938



## EXERCISE:

Look at the drawing and answer the following questions:

- What/who do you see in the picture?
- In what way does the caricature present the problem of Jewish emigration from Germany?
- Does it show a possible solution to this problem?

Search for additional information and think:

- Who initiated the conference in Évian-les-Bains and what countries took part in it?
- How did the conference end and what were its consequences for the fate of European Jews?

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the Republic  
of Poland



#### Authors

Dr. Martyna Grądzka-Rejak (ENRS)  
Prof. Piotr Trojański (Pedagogical University of Cracow)

#### Academic Consultant

Prof. Jan Rydel (Pedagogical University of Cracow)

#### Translation

Edward Assarabowski

#### Proofreading

Mikołaj Sekrecki

#### Graphic design

Danuta Błahut-Biegańska