

Essay on how was the holocaust possible

[People](#), [Adolf Hitler](#)



Type of paper

Introduction

The Holocaust refers to the mass persecution and genocide of the Jews carried out by the Nazi Party under the rule of Hitler throughout Germany and the territories under German occupation. Not only Jews, Holocaust also claimed the lives of disabled people, homosexuals, Romani populace and prisoners of war. Holocaust is infamous for nearing extermination of the Jewish race with about 5.5 to 6.1 million Jews killed in the massacre. The mastermind of the holocaust was Adolf Hitler who shifted the religious anti-Semitism to racial and ethnic anti-Semitism making use of the mass sentiments against the Jews to fulfill his hideous objective of mass slaughter. Hitler was quite meticulous in his plan of executing holocaust and did it with utmost secrecy possible. Given the current world being so connected through information and media, we often wonder how holocaust took place without catching notice, but holocaust was made possible because of many reasons including anti-Semitism and Hitler's exploitation of mass sentiments, the Great Depression and poor wartime conditions, anti-Jewish policy and strategic execution and the use of technology.

Anti-Semitism and Hitler's Use of Mass Sentiments

The Holocaust was possible because of anti-Semitism existing in Europe and Germany for several centuries. Contrary to people's belief anti-Semitism was not Hitler's invention in Germany. Anti-Semitism was there in Germany long before Hitler arrived. The Christians always accused the Jews for the death of Jesus. During the 1800s Germany was rife with anti-Semitic ideas. In the mid-

1800s, Germans nationalists and journalists often blamed Jews for creating recessions and trade slumps. In spite of over 100, 000 Jews having participated in World War I on behalf of the German military, they were often held guilty of undermining the war efforts with many Germans believing that German could have won the WWI had not the Jews and Marxists betrayed Germany by signing the November 1918 armistice. The infamous stab in the back theory fanned the anti-Semitic ideas further. German pride was hurt in WWI and Germans were determined to restore that pride. Many right wing groups emerged around that with leaders like Hitler coming into prominence.

The anti-Semitic racial hatreds thrived in the years of 1920s, but despite the anti-Semitic ideas harbored by the right wing groups, anti-Semitism was in check. The most intense and vehement anti-Jewish people were always kept out of the ruling parties of Germany such as DNVP or the German National People's Party. Under the growing influence of Hitler, these fanatics entered the NSDAP or the National Socialist German Workers Party, but very tactfully Hitler restrained the actions of these hardline anti-Semites in the initial years of the NSDAP's formation as he didn't want to draw negative attention or invite problem from the powerful Jewish business houses as NSDAP was a small association then. He wanted to make the Nazi anti-Semitism systematic and organized in its execution and not impulsive and emotional. He desired to eliminate Jews permanently from the German soil and not merely thrashed by the SA. He stated his views in 1919, " Anti-Semitism based purely on emotion will find its ultimate expression in pogroms but anti-Semitism based on reason must lead to the organized, legal campaign and

removal of Jewish privileges. Its ultimate, unshakeable goal must be the elimination of the Jews."

After Hitler came to power in 1933, he started his organized legal campaign against the Jews of Germany vociferously. He put the anti-Semitism into work to bind the common mass of Germany with a shared cause of pure hatred for the Jews. Many of the Jews were quite rich at that time as they controlled the business section of Germany. Most of the common Germans didn't have regular jobs and were very poor. In order to spread anti-Semitic propaganda, the first thing Hitler did was to project the Jews as an inferior race to the Aryan Germans. He propagated the idea that Germans being pure bred Aryans deserved the wealth and power in Germany and not the Jews. Within a short span he snatched all the citizenship rights from the Jews that they were enjoying as German citizens. Hitler then portrayed the Jews as greedy and scheming preying upon innocent Germans through their conniving means. They were labeled as rapists and child molesters. Jewish businessmen were given the image of being untrustworthy unscrupulous selling shoddy goods to Germans in order to make fast profit. Jewish singers, artists, theatre owners and producers were considered as saboteurs trying to sabotage the moral and Christian values of the Aryan Germans. Jewish financiers and bankers were portrayed as extortionists of German's hard earned money to thwart German prosperity.

Anti-Semitic campaign became stronger with the information, press and propaganda being totally under the manipulation of Nazis. Jews were incriminated for every anti-social activity that took place in the country; murder, rape, begging, street violence, theft, prostitution, pollution, selling of

illegal drugs and alcohol and every imaginable and unimaginable petty crime. Julius Streicher was one of the hardline exponents of anti-Semitism. He started a weekly journal called Der Sturmer in 1923 and published anti-Jewish cartoons and fabricated stories about Jewish conspiracies, conduct and crimes. He also started producing children's books with outrageous anti-Semitic stories. One of the popular of such books was 'The Toadstool' or Der Giftpilz which warned youngsters about Jews being a poisonous breed lost among the crowd. When Nazi came in power, this book made its way into German schools and was taught in class to recognize Jews.

Thus through rigorous anti-Semitic political campaigns Hitler generated hatred for the Jews among the common mass and this common racial hatred against the Jews resulted in

combining the German people together and this ultimately helped Hitler execute his plan exterminating the Jews smoothly.

Reason 3: Great Depression and Wartime Conditions

In Psychology it is believed that decisions taken under non-desperate situations are often logical and decisions taken under extreme stressful situations are often emotion driven. Probably in normal economic and political conditions holocaust was unthinkable. But 1930s Germany was anything but normal. At that time Germany was politically broke and was in desperate need of a leader who can give them back their lost pride.

Germany was not convinced that democracy or leftist ideas could change the situation. Germany wanted someone who would take them to the top again quickly. Hitler with his strong rightist ideology and authoritative power came as messiah to German people. Great Depression in the market and high

unemployment rates were creating absolute social chaos and Hitler with a strong agenda of Jews hatred and “Aryanization” of Germany had presented hope to the common mass which they desperately wanted at that time. Common people were blind to judge right or wrong as they were hypnotized by Hitler’s charisma. His idea of creating a dream Germany for Germans where they will be the superior race and all others like Jews will be inferior to them worked like a magic among the German mass. German people thought if they could come together and take Jews out of the equation, they would once again become the superior race and would retrieve their lost pride. They could not logically think about the bigger picture as the situation was economically extremely bad and Hitler exploited it to perfection. citizens and took away almost all the citizenship rights from the Jews that they enjoyed as German citizens. However, if we look at the mass killing of Jews, it started after the start of World War II. As World War II started it was easy for Hitler to isolate Jews from other people without many people paying attention. During World War II, the main focus was on the war and less focus was on internal affairs. Hitler used that tactics to perfection to slaughter millions of Jews during World War II without many people noticing. During World War it was easy for German soldiers to isolate Jews in the concentration camps in the name of war. They were often killed by Germans in concentration camps or gas chambers and the news that was released to common public was that they were killed in the war or lost during the war. Without World War II, it

would have been impossible for Hitler to kill 60 Million Jews without drawing notice.

Anti-Jewish Policy and Strategic Execution

Hitler was very much organized in the execution of the Jews. After successful results of his anti-Semitic campaigns, he tried to get rid of the Jews through forced emigration from 1933 to 1939. Almost two third out of 700, 000 Jews, who were wealthy and younger, left Austria and Germany before the start of WWII. However, this process was hindered due to more and more countries restricting Jewish immigration and the Nazi seeing the doors for the Jewish immigrants closed everywhere decided to eliminate them. One after another regulation were imposed on the Jews barring them from working or doing business anywhere in Germany. They were stripped of their citizenship rights and their personal properties were confiscated. They were prohibited from marrying non-Jews or Aryan Germans for the protection of the purity of German blood and honor. In 1938 on November 9 and 10, a nationwide pogrom was launched. About 1, 000 synagogues were vandalized, Jewish shops were looted and destroyed and 30, 000 Jews were arrested and incarcerated in concentration camps.

Under the authority of the notorious Nazi commander Heinrich Himmler, the SS and the Police became stronger in influence. After the successful invasion of Poland by Germany in 1939, over 2. 5 million Jews of Poland came under the dominance of German. Another eight European countries were defeated one after by the Germans by the turn of 1941. Rules and regulation purported to isolate, deprive and humiliate the Jews throughout the German occupied territory increased. The Jews were forced to wear the yellowish star

to become easily identifiable in the crowd. Their use of communication means and transportation was restricted and their food rations retrenched. Soon building of ghettos took place and the Jews were deported to the ghettos with one family forced to share one room. The poor condition of living led to the death of many with wide spread of diseases. The Jews who survived the ghettos were deported to concentration camps in which they were subjected to inexplicable cruelty including death by gassing, shooting, starvation, over exhaustion and so on. At the end, only 10, 000 Jews survived the holocaust in Germany.

New Technology

Another factor that made holocaust possible was the evolution of new technology. Technology was not a secondary medium; rather it was the most essential medium that facilitated the wipeout of Jewish problem. The role of information technology and technology itself in the genocide of Jewish population was unprecedented. The Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington in USA features a Hollerith machine that was invented by the American statistician Herman Hollerith. The machine which was a precursor to modern computer was used by the

Nazis for keeping a tab on Jewish population and gather information about the success of Jewish

genocide. Zyklon B Gas which was most extensively used in holocaust gas chambers was patented to IG Farben, a German chemical conglomerate that had 42. 2% ownership of Degesch, a subsidiary company which manufactured the mass killing pesticide. Though I. G. Farben denied the charges of producing Zyklon B Gas for the purpose of committing the

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genocide, its management proclaiming of being told that the gas was used to treat delousing; there are ample

evidence of their involvement in the mass slaughter. While it is yet uncertain to what degree I. G Farben involved itself in the genocide but some of the facts we do know is its complicity in Dr. Mengele's medical experimentations on Jews related to testing the drug for typhus, sedatives, birth control pills and many more. At Auschwitz I. G Farben built and ran a factory and lab called Buna in which I. G Farben in collusion with the Nazis participated in the extermination of the Jews. If a slave worker working at Buna was found to be disobedient, debilitated or faulty at work, he or she would be delivered to the SS who would then savagely torture the victim before murdering. About 300, 000 workers used to work at Buna for free and 30, 000 slave workers were killed there.

Hitler's obsession with producing a perfect race of Aryans with blond hair and blue eyes materialized in the hideous medical experimentations of Dr. Josef Mengele known as the 'Angels of Death'. In order to find out the secrets of heredity, he used an array of appalling experiments on twins who, according to Dr. Mengele held the secrets of heredity. Standing at the gate of Auschwitz camp, he used to keep an eye out for identical twins. Twins were initially treated very well with food, no work and sometimes being allowed to play. But then would start the horrendous process of experiments. Almost all the twins had a large amount of blood drawn from their bodies through arms, necks and fingers. Pairs of twins were laid naked side by side and compared. He often would attempt to change eye color by putting

chemicals into the eyes of the children, would perform amputations, castration and removal of organs such as kidney without anesthesia. His perversity was extended in many gruesome experiments including the one in which he sew two Roma twin girls together to create conjoined twins. Between 1943 and 1944, Mengele conducted his genetic experimentation on 1500 pairs of twins, but only 200 of them survived the holocaust. Not only twins, Mengele also took interest in dwarfs and pregnant women for his experimentation. The extent of his experimentation is yet unknown and may never be discovered as lots of evidence of his perverse medical practice had been destroyed before he fled.

Conclusion

In the history of Germany, the Holocaust is embedded as a bleeding truth of German oppression on the Jews under the rule of Hitler. In the current scenario of the world being so connected through media and information right at our grip, we often wonder how holocaust was possible without catching notice. But there are several factors that made the holocaust possible, anti-Semitism, Hitler's strategic employment of anti-Jewish policy, the Great Depression and poor wartime condition and the use of technology. Anti-Semitism existing in Europe for centuries just made it easier for Hitler to use it to his purpose of exterminating the Jews. Very strategically he employed one after another regulation on Jews deporting them to ghettos and finally to the concentration camps. The poor wartime condition with rest of the world being absorbed in the WWII, Hitler took advantage of the moment to carry out his anti-Jewish operation and finally the use of new technology, the medical experimentation of Dr. Mengele brought Hitler's

extermination mission near to its success. The anti-Semitic fire kindled and spread by Hitler literally made the holocaust true to its meaning and definition, " the great destruction".

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