

Life of the germans during the holocaust

Business



Imagine living in Germany on January 30th, 1933. You just heard on the radio that Hitler had taken over parts of Germany and is capturing citizens and moving them to concentration camps around Europe. How would you react? What would you do to protect your family and your loved ones? Many Jewish families went into, what they called, hiding. They moved their families to different places around the world, or just shut themselves out from the world around them. One might have read or heard of a story, or diary, written by a girl named Anne Frank. This diary tells about what life was like for Jews during the Holocaust.

Anne's family went into hiding in an attic above her father's company. There were many families that did this. Jews couldn't attend public schools or go to local hospitals or even local stores. Many of these places had signs above them that said "No Jews allowed." All Jews were forced to wear a star on everything they wore so everyone knew that that person was a Jew.

Eleven million people were killed during the Holocaust and 6 million of them were Jewish. Hitler wasn't the only child in his family, he had three other siblings. However, they died when he was young. Someone that knew about Hitler's past wouldn't say that he had an easy childhood. When Hitler grew older, he became a soldier in World War I. When he returned, he was determined to enter politics.

He soon became a member of a political group called the German Workers Party. He then became the leader of the group and established a bold and red background with a white circle and swastika in the middle as the party symbol. Over the next years, Hitler began doing speeches and gaining

supporters, followers, and financial support. In November of 1923, Hitler began an attempt to take over Germany's government through a putsch called the Beer Hall Putsch. When his plan had failed he was sentenced to five years in prison.

After only nine months he was released and his attempt has started again. He began to rebuild his army and gain more and more power and eventually it led to the Holocaust. Many of the Jews that were taken to concentration camps died, or were even killed within four months to a year. Others were more fortunate and may have lived until the Holocaust was over on May 8th, 1945. Concentration Camps were camps that imprisoned people or, as they called them "inmates", usually in harsh conditions.

Have you ever thought about how you are going to die, or what is going to happen to you the next day? These "inmates" wondered that every day. Did you know that most prisoners were escorted to chambers and were burned alive with exhaust fumes or pesticide. Some were killed by being put in cells to slowly perish by starvation, dehydration, and many other things.

Depending on how the prisoner obeyed or did the job he/she was given, they could be hung or beaten to death. Some were even buried or cremated alive, especially children. In Soviet Camps, the most popular way to kill prisoners was to line them up in a row and shoot them, or to save bullets some would even run them over with heavy vehicles.

Some believed that there was a way out of these chambers, or a way to survive these horrific ways of the Nazis. Camps like Auschwitz-Birkenau believed that the way out was the chimney. Prisoners weren't normally

commanded to death unless they felt sick or could no longer work anymore. Generally in all places, one typical method was having people work very hard under malnutrition, causing all kinds of medical conditions leading to death. How many days have you gone without eating? What do you eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner? These prisoners went days without eating, sometimes more than a week.

Their daily meals, if they had a meal, was for breakfast they were given ten ounces of stale bread, dinner was stale bread, butter, and jam. With not getting enough food, thousands of prisoners died from starvation or lack of food. They lost muscle tissue and weight dramatically; each person probably lost 5-10 every 10 days. Prisoners who worked less physical activities received approximately 1,300 calories a day. After several weeks on such starvation rations in the camp, most prisoners began to experience organic deterioration that led to the so-called "Muzulman" state, extreme physical exhaustion that ended in death.

They used these camps to torcher and/or to use as slaves. The prisoners were forced to dig their own graves and do heavy metal work. They labored in various sectors of the economy. Initially, they worked at building the camp: leveling the ground, erecting new blocks and buildings, laying roads, and digging drainage ditches. Later, the industries of the Third Reich made increasing use of cheap prison labor.

The pace of the work, the starvation rations of food, and constant beatings and abuse exacerbated the death rate. More than 50% of prisoners died from starvation or constant beating. Inmates slept on wooden bunks that

were installed in each building, held together by bricks and concrete. These bunks were located in buildings called "barracks" there were approximately seven hundred prisoners in each barrack. These buildings did not have heating, cooling, blankets, or pillows.

Some camps had "Birkenau", these consisted of wooden stables, and also contained several hundred prisoners and 52 horses. Leaky roofs and the fouling of straw and straw mattresses made living conditions very harsh, also made rats, mice and fleas very popular. These animals made diseases easy to spread. The buildings lacked water for washing, which made the living conditions even worse. Should we remember the Holocaust or forget it?

Should we remember? When we hear facts about the Holocaust we often say "How gross" or "Why are we talking about this?". Some of us have heard a Holocaust survivor speak, it may have made you look at it from a different perspective, or maybe you chose not to think about it at all.

We know that the years 1933 to 1945 were gruesome and awful years for everyone, but for some it was worse. We can't just forget about it. We should all take time to read about it and really understand what the Holocaust was like for Jews and everyone else in Germany. We hear the stories of the people that survived the camps or lived through this period in history, but rarely do we think about how hard it is to live with these memories and thoughts that occur to them everyday; the loved one and friends that they lost during the time of the concentration camps or even not knowing what happened to them.