

This week in Holocaust History - 10 May to 16 May

1933

May 10

The National Socialist German Students' League enthusiastically carried out the destruction of "un-German books" on college campuses across Germany. In Berlin, some 40,000 persons gathered in the Opernplatz to hear Joseph Goebbels deliver a fiery address: "No to decadence and moral corruption!" Goebbels enjoined the crowd. "Yes to decency and morality in family and state!"



May 16

Nobel Prize-winning physicist Max Planck, President of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, met with Adolf Hitler in an unsuccessful attempt to keep Planck's Jewish colleagues from being dismissed from their jobs. Planck later stated that Hitler informed him: "Jews are all Communists and they are the enemy I am fighting against. A Jew is a Jew. All Jews hang together like burrs."

1934

May 11

Joseph Goebbels opened a campaign against "defeatists and critics" of the Nazi government. During his announcement he issued a "last warning" to the nation's Jews, saying they would have to "behave as guests."

1937

May 13

Antisemitic rioting broke out in three towns near Brześć-Litewski, Poland after a police officer pushed a Jewish butcher and was stabbed to death by the butcher's son. Jewish-owned stores were looted and at least 53 Jews were injured during the violence.

1939

May 13



The German ocean liner MS St. Louis departed Hamburg for Cuba with 936 passengers, mostly Jewish.

The Cuban government had already canceled their landing certificates, but many passengers boarded the ship anyway hoping the Cubans would honor the certificates they had already obtained.

May 15

Ravensbrück concentration camp opened.

1940

May 10

Germany invaded France and the Low Countries at dawn. The Battles of France, the Netherlands, and Belgium began.

1941

May 14

The first mass round-up of Jews in Paris took place. More than 3,700 foreign Jews were arrested when they reported to a gymnasium for police examination of their status. They were sent to the internment camps of Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande.

1942

May 16

Sobibór extermination camp became operational in occupied Poland.

1943

May 16

The end of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising was complete as SS Polizeiführer Jürgen Stroop sent his triumphant dispatch to Berlin, announcing that "The former Jewish quarter of Warsaw is no longer in existence. The large-scale action was terminated at 2015 hours by blowing up the Warsaw Synagogue ... Total number of Jews dealt with 56,065 including both Jews caught and Jews whose extermination can be proved." The operation had been commenced on April 19.

1944

May 15



Hungarian officials under the guidance of SS officials began deporting Jews from Hungary. By July 9 a total of about 440,000 Jews would be deported from the country, mostly to Auschwitz.

The Auschwitz Album is the only surviving visual evidence of the process leading to the mass murder at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The photos show the arrival of Hungarian Jews from Carpatho-Ruthenia. Many of them came from the Berehovo Ghetto, which itself was a collecting point for Jews from several other small towns.

1945

May 12

The United Nations War Crimes Commission indicted Hermann Göring, Joseph Goebbels and Fritz Sauckel on eight counts.