

1935

Nazis pass the Nuremberg Laws

1937

Jewish businesses forcibly "Aryanized."

1938

Kristallnacht violence results in destruction of Jewish synagogues and businesses

1942

The "final solution" announced at Wannsee Conference

1943

Warsaw ghetto uprising

1944

Roosevelt creates the War Refugee Board

1945

Allied troops liberate concentration camps

1935**1940****1945**

4 The Holocaust

SECTION PREVIEW

Objectives

- 1 Explain how persecution of Jews and other minorities increased in Germany under the Nazis during the 1930s.
- 2 Describe how the Nazis carried out their plans for genocide.
- 3 **Key Terms** Holocaust; anti-Semitism; concentration camp; *Kristallnacht*; Wannsee Conference; death camp; War Refugee Board.

Main Idea

During World War II, the Nazis carried out a brutal plan that resulted in the deaths of 6 million Jews and millions of other victims.

Reading Strategy

Arranging Events in Order As you read the section, create a time line of the events related to the Holocaust. Write a sentence to describe each event.

When Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933, he set about implementing the Nazi philosophy outlined in his book *Mein Kampf*. Chief among his goals was the removal of so-called "non-Aryans," in particular the Jews.

No persecution of Jews in world history equals the extent and brutality of the **Holocaust**, Nazi Germany's systematic murder of European Jews. In all, some six million Jews, about two thirds of Europe's Jewish population, had been massacred by the end of World War II. Some five to six million other people also died in Nazi captivity.

The Start of Persecution

Theories that European peoples, so-called Aryans, were superior to Middle Eastern peoples called Semites had developed in Germany in the mid-1800s. (Semitic peoples include Arabs, Ethiopians, and other Middle Eastern and North African groups, as well as Jews.) Although these theories were rejected by all responsible scholars at the time, others used them to justify continued persecution. By the 1880s **anti-Semitism** had come to mean hostility toward Jews. When the Nazi party gained

control of Germany's government in 1933, anti-Semitism became the official policy of the nation.

The Nazis Take Action Under Nazi rule, German citizens were encouraged to stop patronizing Jewish businesses. In 1935, the Nazis passed the Nuremberg Laws, stripping Jews of their German citizenship and forbidding marriage between Jews and non-Jews.

In 1937 and 1938 the Nazis began a program to "Aryanize" Jewish businesses. They required Jews to register their property and dismissed Jewish employees and managers. Jewish doctors were banned from treating non-Jews. All German people had to carry identity cards. The Nazi government marked Jews' cards with a red letter "J" and gave all Jews new middle names—"Sarah" for women and "Israel" for men. This practice made it easier for the police to identify Jews.

When the Nazis came to power, they organized the SA, a police unit charged with silencing opposition to the Nazis. Later, Hitler formed the SS, an elite guard that became the private army of the Nazi party. In addition, a Secret



Nazis singled out Jews for persecution by forcing them to wear yellow Stars of David like this one.

Austria looted and destroyed Jewish stores, known as *Kristallnacht* ("Night of the Broken Glass"), referring to the broken windows of the Jewish shops. Mass arrests of Jews followed.

Refugees Seek an Escape From 1933 through 1937 about 130,000 Jews fled Germany. The Nazis encouraged this emigration because it helped to achieve their plan. At first, most refugees merely moved to other European nations. As the numbers grew, however, Jews began to go to Palestine, Latin America, and the United States.

Responding to calls for the United States to take action, President Roosevelt called for an international conference to discuss the growing numbers of Jewish refugees. However, the Evian Conference, held in France in July 1938, failed to deal with the situation. With the exception of the Dominican Republic, none of the 29 nations represented, including the United States, was willing to ease its immigration laws.

From Murder to Genocide

In 1939, the invasion of Poland brought some 2 million Jews under German control. In Warsaw over 350,000 Jews, about 30 percent of the Polish capital's population, were rounded up and confined in less than 3 percent of the city's area. The Warsaw ghetto was sealed off by a wall topped with barbed wire. Guards prevented movement between the ghetto and the rest of the city. Hunger, overcrowding, and a lack of sanitation brought on disease. The death rate soared as Jews were placed in ghettos throughout Poland and Eastern Europe.

The Einsatzgruppen Special forces called the *Einsatzgruppen*, or mobile killing units, were sent to Poland in 1939. There they systematically murdered members of Poland's upper class, along with intellectuals, priests, and influential Jews. In 1941 the *Einsatzgruppen* carried out Hitler's orders to eliminate Communist political leaders and Jews during the invasion of the Soviet Union. While Hitler accepted mass murder by firing squad as appropriate for a war zone, he felt the method was not suitable for nations already



Above, a Jewish shopkeeper sweeps up shop windows left shattered by *Kristallnacht*. At right, the "J" stamp on this girl's identification paper identifies her as Jewish.

Government In what other ways did the Nazis organize the persecution of Jews?

State Police, or Gestapo, was formed to identify and pursue those people who did not follow the new laws of the Nazi regime. Political enemies were thrown into hastily built "camps" in empty warehouses and factories guarded by SS troops. Typically, **concentration camps** are places where prisoners of war and political prisoners are confined, usually under harsh conditions. However, the Nazi camps soon held many other people considered by them to be "undesirable," including the homeless, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, and persons with mental and physical disabilities. By the late 1930s, Gypsies were also being imprisoned.

Kristallnacht Organized attacks on Jews began in early 1938, after Hitler's annexation of Austria. On the night of November 9–10, 1938, Nazi thugs throughout Germany and



quered. In January 1942, government officials met at the **Wannsee Conference** outside Berlin to announce a plan for what one Nazi leader called the “final solution to the Jewish question.” The plan called for establishing a number of special concentration camps in rural areas of Germany and elsewhere. There, the genocide, or deliberate destruction of Europe’s Jewish population, was to be carried out.

The Death Camps In 1941 the Nazis had begun experimenting on Jews and Soviet prisoners of war to determine the most efficient way of killing people. They chose a poison gas, called Zyklon B, to be administered in specially designed chambers disguised as showers. In December 1941 a “model” operation was opened in western Poland. On the first day, some 2,300 Jews were killed.

Eventually the Nazis built six camps in Poland. Unlike the earlier concentration camps, where prisoners were forced to perform hard labor, these **death camps** existed only for mass murder. Jews were crammed into trains and transported to these extermination centers. Most Jews did not know where they were going when they boarded the trains.

On arrival at the camps, prisoners were organized into a line and quickly inspected. The elderly, most women with children, and those who looked too weak to work were herded into gas chambers and killed. Guards forced prisoners to carry the dead to the crematoria, where the bodies were burned in huge ovens.

Those who escaped immediate death at the extermination camps endured almost unbearable conditions. Men and women alike had their heads shaved and a registration number tattooed on their arms. Given only one set of clothes, prisoners were interred in crowded, unheated barracks. There were no bathrooms or beds. Food was usually a thin, foul-tasting soup made with rotten vegetables. Diseases swept through the camps and claimed many who were weakened by harsh labor and the lack of food. Periodic “selections” took place where the weak and ill were sent to the gas chamber.

The number of people killed in the labor and death camps is staggering. About 43,000 prisoners perished at Germany’s Buchenwald labor camp, between 1937 and 1945. However, this number pales in comparison to the genocide at Auschwitz, a death camp in Poland. There, more victims were murdered than anywhere else—as many as 1.5 million people, some 90 percent of them Jews.

Fighting Back Some Jews, both in and outside the camps, fiercely resisted the Nazis. In April 1943, the Warsaw ghetto revolted against deportation to the death camp Treblinka. For some 27 days about 700 Jews armed with little more than pistols and homemade bombs held out against more than 2,000 Germans with tanks.

Revolts also erupted in the camps themselves. In August 1943, rioting Jews damaged Treblinka so badly that it had to be closed. Escape was the most common form of resistance, however. Most attempts failed, but a few people managed to bring word of the death camps to the outside world.

Rescue and Liberation American newspapers showed little interest in the Holocaust during the war years. In addition, the Jewish community in the United States was ineffective in rousing the government to take action toward rescuing Jews. Immigration quotas were not raised and existing quotas for Jews were not filled.

Finally, in January 1944, over the objection of the State Department, Roosevelt created the

Main Idea CONNECTIONS

What were conditions like in the camps?

FACT

Finder

Estimated Jewish Losses in the Holocaust

Country	Estimated Minimum Loss	Percentage of Initial Jewish Population Lost
Poland	2,900,000	88–91%
Soviet Union	1,000,000	33–36%
Hungary	550,000	67–69%
Romania	271,000	44–47%
Czechoslovakia	146,150	71%
Lithuania	140,000	83–85%
Germany	134,500	24–25%
Netherlands	100,000	71%
France	77,320	22%
Latvia	70,000	77–78%
Greece	60,000	78–87%
Yugoslavia	56,200	72–81%
Austria	50,000	27%
Belgium	28,900	44%
Italy	7,680	17%

Interpreting Tables The horror of the Holocaust touched many nations. **Culture** Which country do you think was most altered by the Holocaust?



The haunted faces of these starving prisoners reflect the horrors they experienced in a concentration camp in Ebensee, Austria. **Foreign Relations** How did camp liberation lead to the Nuremberg Trials?

War Refugee Board (WRB) to try to help people threatened with murder by the Nazis. In a short time, its programs helped save some 200,000 lives. With WRB funding, for example, Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg rescued thousands of Hungarian Jews by issuing them special Swedish passports. Wallenberg disappeared into Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe after the war. After he disappeared, Congress made Wallenberg an honorary U.S. citizen for his humanitarian war work.

A WRB effort to bring Jews to America was less successful. Some 1,000 refugees were held

at an army camp in Oswego, New York, but Roosevelt would not expand the program.[†]

As Allied armies advanced in late 1944, the Nazis abandoned concentration camps outside Germany and moved their prisoners to camps on German soil. In May 1945, as Germany collapsed, camp guards fled and American troops for the first time were able to witness the horrors of the Holocaust. A young soldier described the conditions he discovered as he entered the barracks at Buchenwald:

AMERICAN VOICES

“The odor was so bad I backed up, but I looked at a bottom bunk and there I saw one man. He was too weak to get up; he could just barely turn his head. . . . He looked like a skeleton; and his eyes were deep set. He didn’t utter a sound; he just looked at me with those eyes, and they still haunt me today.”

—Leon Bass, American soldier

Sickened by the death camps, in November 1945 the Allies placed 24 leading Nazis on trial for crimes against humanity. At the Nuremberg Trials 12 of them received the death sentence. More significant than the number of convictions, the trials established an important principle—the idea that individuals were responsible for their own actions. No longer could war criminals escape punishment by saying they were only “following orders.”

[†] A larger rescue was carried out by a single individual. Oskar Schindler was a Nazi industrialist who purposely employed some 1,300 Jews in his factories in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Their jobs saved them from being shipped to the gas chambers.

SECTION 4 REVIEW

Comprehension

- Key Terms** Define: (a) Holocaust; (b) anti-Semitism; (c) concentration camp; (d) *Kristallnacht*; (e) Wannsee Conference; (f) death camp; (g) War Refugee Board.
- Summarizing the Main Idea** What was the Holocaust?
- Organizing Information** Create a web diagram that organizes information about Nazi persecution of Jews and others in Germany during the 1930s. In the center circle write *Nazi Persecution Grows*. Include at least four supporting details in the surrounding circles.

Critical Thinking

- Analyzing Time Lines** Review the time line at the start of the section. Explain how the first entry made it easier for the third to take place.
- Identifying Central Issues** How did the Nazis implement their plans for genocide?

Writing Activity

- Writing an Expository Essay** Several survivors of the Nazi concentration camps wrote books describing their experiences in the camps. Research and write an essay that relates the story of one survivor.

Why Study History?

To understand that . . .

Genocide Has Happened Again

The threat of genocide did not end with the defeat of Nazi Germany. It continues to deserve worldwide attention today.



Nazis rounding up Jewish families

Entire families tortured to death. Children beaten savagely. Elderly men and women shot and buried in mass graves. In this chapter you read about the horrors of the Holocaust. Nazi Germany murdered an estimated 6 million Jews, as well as some 5 to 6 million Slavs, gypsies, Communists, homosexuals, and disabled people. Only the Allies' conquest of Germany stopped the mass killing.

In this century, and even in your own lifetime, there have been other mass murders. Between 1915 and 1923, for example, hundreds of thousands of Armenians were killed by the Turkish government. In Cambodia in the 1970s, the Communist Khmer Rouge government killed an estimated 1 million people. In 1994, Hutu soldiers and civilians in the African nation of Rwanda slaughtered at least 1 million men, women, and children of a rival tribe, the Tutsi.

Genocide was also committed during a civil war in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995. The war, fueled by long-standing ethnic and religious

hatreds, claimed the lives of roughly 200,000 Bosnian Muslims, Serbs, and Croats.

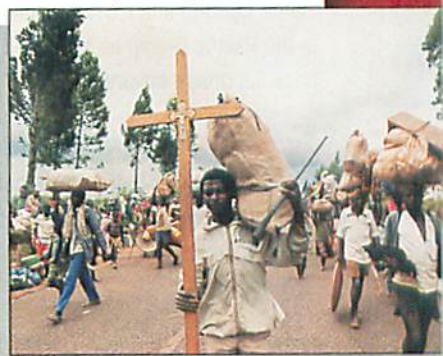
The Impact Today

International laws and tribunals have condemned genocide and punished those who take part in it. In 1948, the United Nations declared genocide a crime under international law. A number of Nazis charged with "crimes against humanity" were tried and executed at the Nuremberg Trials. (Only a fraction, however, of those who participated in the killing were prosecuted.) More recently, there have been efforts to bring to trial those who committed atrocities in the Bosnian war.

Unfortunately, prosecuting war criminals cannot bring back their victims or mend the lives of loved ones who survived them. Only changes in peoples' attitudes toward others can ensure that genocide will never happen again.

The Impact on You

Brainstorm with your classmates to create a list of places in the world where serious racial, ethnic, or religious hatreds exist today. Try to find out the history behind these conflicts by doing library research. Think of ways that people in those places could help ease the hatreds. Write a short essay on what individuals can do to create greater understanding among different peoples.



Rwandan refugees fleeing violence

Chapter Summary



The major concepts of Chapter 24 are presented below. See also the *Guide to the Essentials of American History* or *Interactive Student Tutorial CD-ROM*, which contains interactive review activities, time lines, helpful hints, and test practice for Chapter 24.

Reviewing the Main Ideas

German, Italian, and Japanese aggression in the 1930s led to war in Europe and Asia. Many Americans hoped that the United States could remain neutral. They quickly changed their minds after Japan bombed the American naval base at Pearl Harbor. At the end of the war, people around the world reacted in horror as they discovered the full extent of Nazi Germany's attempt to destroy the Jews of Europe.

Section 1: Prelude to Global War

Depressed economic conditions and a desire to build powerful nations led to the rise of dictators in Germany and Italy and eventually to a second global conflict.

Section 2: The Road to Victory in Europe

To secure victory in Europe, the Allies waged war in North Africa, Western Europe, and the Soviet Union between 1941 and 1945.

Section 3: The War in the Pacific

Fierce fighting and heavy casualties characterized the war in the Pacific Ocean as the Allied forces struggled to turn back Japanese advances.

Section 4: The Holocaust

During World War II, the Nazis carried out a brutal plan that resulted in the deaths of 6 million Jews and millions of other victims.



The threat of genocide did not end with the defeat of Nazi Germany. It continues to deserve worldwide attention today. Despite international laws condemning genocide, other mass killings have taken place in the twentieth century.

Key Terms

For each of the terms below, write a sentence explaining how it relates to this chapter.

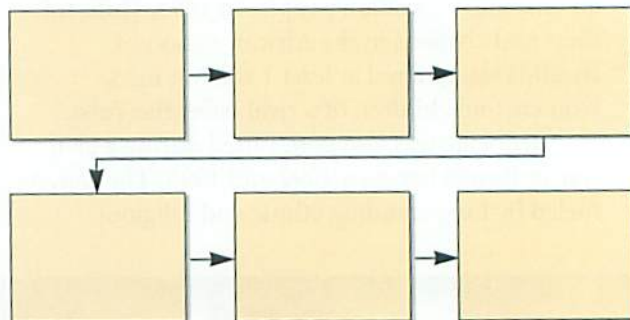
- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Lend-Lease Act | 6. Yalta Conference |
| 2. Battle of Midway | 7. Kristallnacht |
| 3. Holocaust | 8. totalitarian |
| 4. Axis Powers | 9. GI |
| 5. concentration camp | 10. Allies |
| | 11. D-Day |

Comprehension

- How did Hitler come to power in Germany?
- How did the United States support the Allies with economic aid while staying out of the fighting?
- Why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor?
- What contribution did Native Americans make to the American military effort?
- What events in Europe and the Pacific helped turn the tide in favor of the Allies?
- What was the D-Day operation?
- Why did the United States not have to invade Japan to end the war?
- What was Hitler's "final solution"?

Using Graphic Organizers

On a separate piece of paper, copy the flowchart to organize information about the events of World War II. Add additional boxes if you need to. Begin your chart with the entry 1939: *Germany invades Poland*. End with May 1945: *Germany surrenders*; August 1945: *Japan surrenders*.

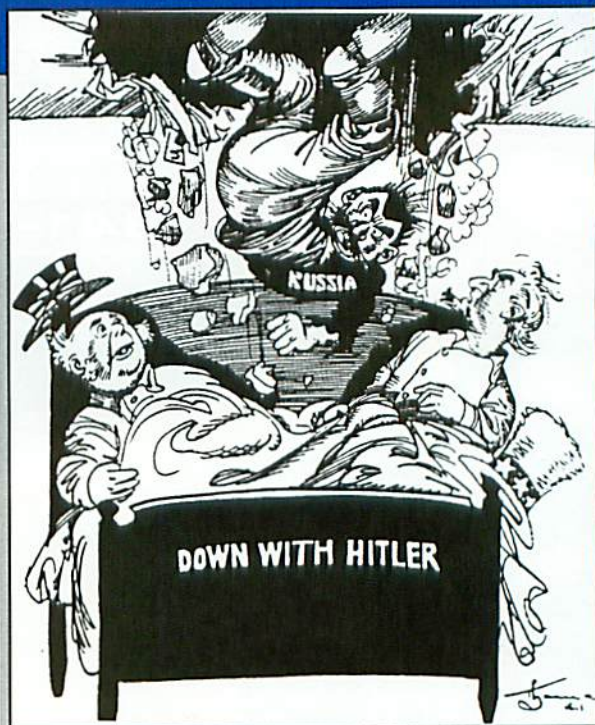


Analyzing Political Cartoons ►

1. Analyze the images in the cartoon. (a) What do the two figures in the bed represent? (b) How do you know? (c) Who is the third figure joining them?
2. What is the common interest the three figures share?
3. Why is the “unexpected guest” joining the other two by circumstance?

Critical Thinking

1. **Applying the Chapter Skill** Turn to the photo on page 710. What can you learn about the Holocaust from this photograph?
2. **Expressing Problems Clearly** The Soviet Union fought on the Allied side during World War II, yet soon after became a bitter enemy of the United States. Give evidence to show that the seeds of conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union were already present during World War II.
3. **Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment** World War II propaganda influenced the way many Americans viewed the Japanese. List two reasons that stereotypes created by propaganda may have affected the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japan.
4. **Predicting Consequences** If Britain and France had not adopted a policy of appeasement, would Adolf Hitler have been as successful as he was in overrunning Europe?



INTERNET ACTIVITY

For your portfolio: CREATE A GRAPH

Access Prentice Hall's *America: Pathways to the Present* site at www.Pathways.phschool.com for the specific URL to complete the activity. Additional resources and related Web sites are also available.

Create a bar graph showing the number of casualties the United States suffered in the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I, and World War II. Which war claimed the most casualties? Why do you think this is so?

ANALYZING DOCUMENTS ◀ ▶ INTERPRETING DATA

Turn to the “American Voices” quotation on page 704.

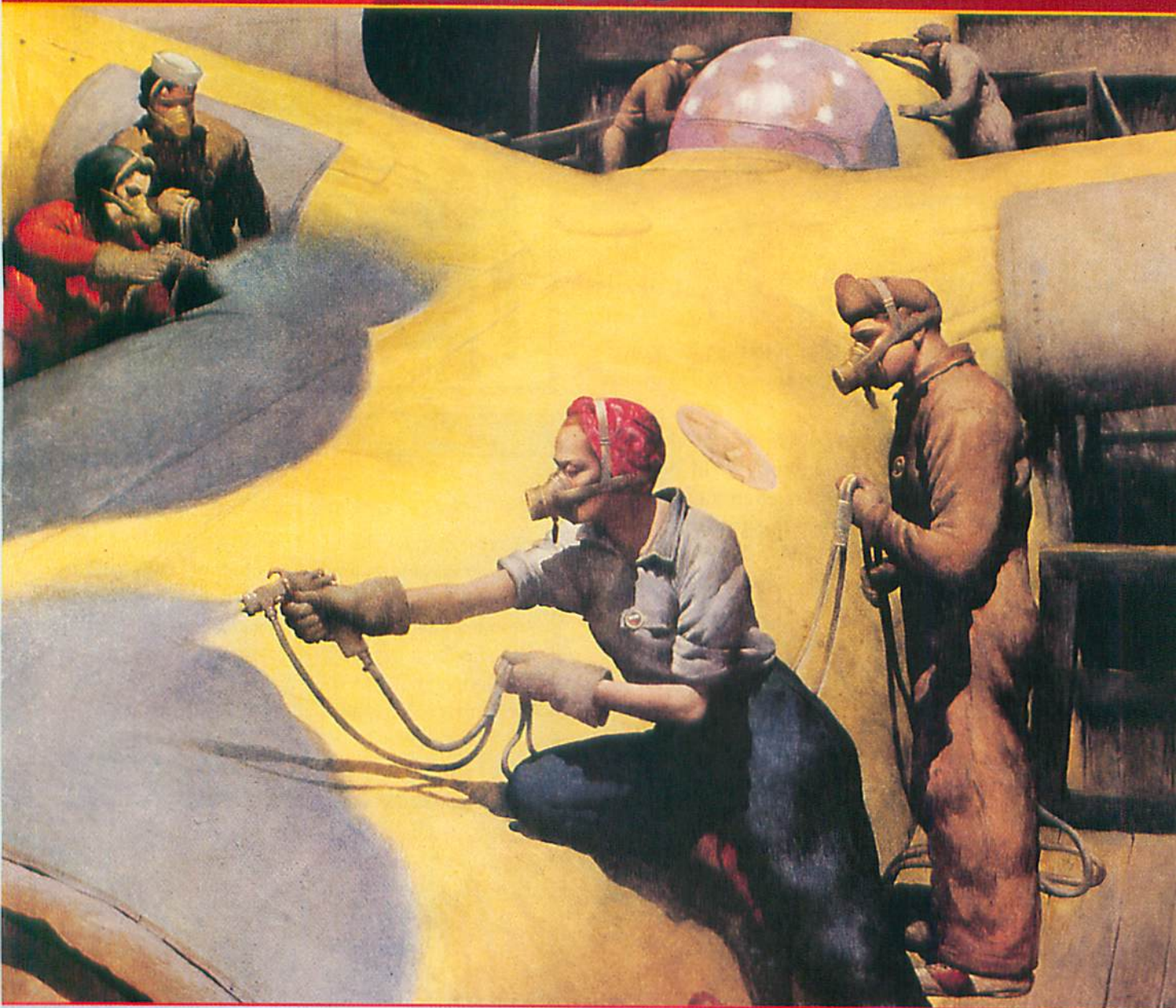
1. Which phrase best describes the American campaign on Okinawa?
(a) long and hard fought (b) easy
(c) completely safe (d) over in one day
2. According to the description of the fighting, you can infer that the terrain on Okinawa was
(a) flat and sandy. (b) heavily wooded. (c) rocky. (d) hilly.
3. **Writing** Write a brief paragraph describing how you think the GIs felt during the long nights on Okinawa.

Connecting to Today

Essay Writing The horrible slaughter of six million Jews during the Holocaust is an example of genocide. Research and write an essay on a more recent case where one group tried to carry out a campaign of genocide against another ethnic group. In your essay, include the global community's reactions to the killings.

World War II at Home

1941-1945



CHAPTER FOCUS

As war raged in Europe, the United States government faced the enormous challenge of mobilizing American businesses and civilians to help win the war. The government launched a massive campaign to remind people to conserve, participate, and sacrifice.



The *Why Study History?* page at the end of this chapter explores the connection between women's work during World War II and their work today.

▲
VIEWING HISTORY

Men and women work side by side to produce war planes in this 1944 illustration from *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Culture How did the war change life at home?