

# **Integrity: A Choice**

---

*One Group's Response to  
Nazi Persecution*

# The Holocaust

- “Holocaust” Greek original meaning: “sacrifice by fire”
- Nazi’s targeted 6 million Jews
- “THE FINAL SOLUTION”: annihilate the Jewish people
- We call it: “GENOCIDE”
- US Holocaust Memorial Museum
  - Memorial to millions murdered in the Holocaust



# Others Persecuted

- **The Nazi's considered these groups inferior**
  - Roma(Gypsies)
  - Slavic people(Poles, Russians and others)
  - The disabled
- **Persecuted on political, ideological or behavioral grounds**
  - Communists
  - Socialists
  - Jehovah's Witnesses
  - Homosexuals



# How prisoners were identified

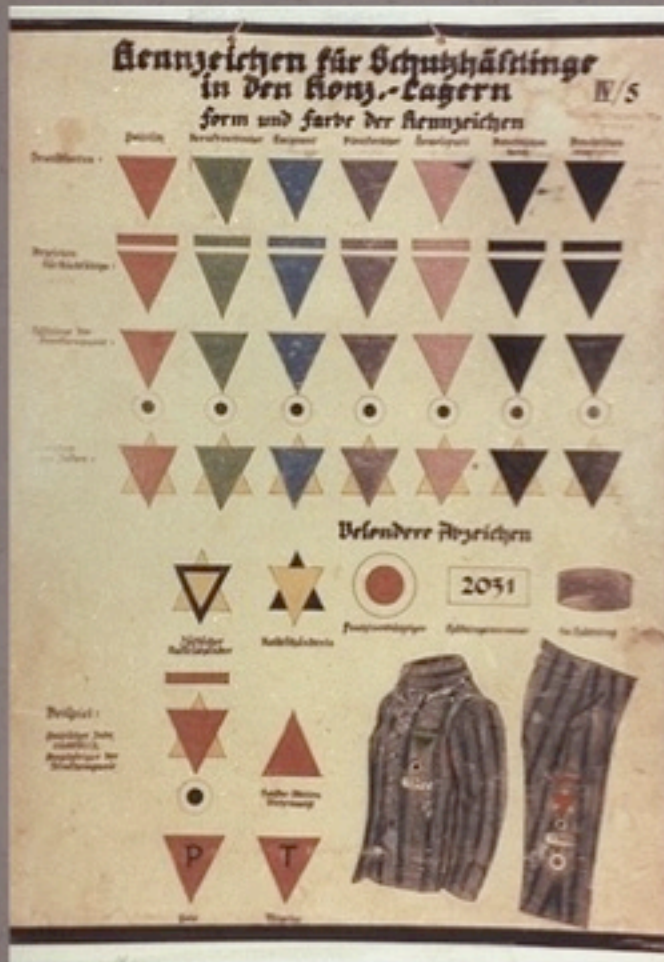


Chart of Prisoner Markings

Yellow	Jew
Brown	Gypsy
Purple Triangle	Jehovah's Witnesses
Pink	Homosexual
Green	Habitual Criminal
Red	Political Prisoner
Black	Asocial
Blue	Emigrant


# Integrity Defined:

---


*“adherence to moral and ethical principles;  
soundness of moral character; honesty”*

*[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)*





# A Unique Group



- **Jehovah's Witnesses were targeted for these reasons:**

- Refused to "Heil Hitler"
  - Refused military service
  - Would not fly Swastika flag on homes
  - Their children refused to join Nazi Youth
  - Refused to stop practicing their faith
- **Why were they unique?**
    - They had a choice:

**SIGN A DECLARATION RENOUNCING THEIR FAITH**

**They Refused**



# Declaration Renouncing Beliefs (in German)

Konzentrationslager  
Abteilung II

## Erklärung.

Ich, - der - die .....  
geboren am: ..... in: .....  
gebe hiermit folgende Erklärung ab:

1. Ich habe erkannt, dass die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung eine Irrlehre verbreitet und unter dem Deckmantel religiöser Betätigung lediglich staatsfeindliche Ziele verfolgt.
2. Ich habe mich deshalb voll und ganz von dieser Organisation abgewandt, und mich auch innerlich von dieser Sekte freigemacht.
3. Ich versichere hiermit, dass ich mich nie wieder für die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung betätigen werde. Personen, die für die Irrlehre der Bibelforscher an mich werbend herantreten oder in anderer Weise ihre Einstellung als Bibelforscher bekunden, werde ich unverzüglich zur Anzeige bringen. Sollten mir Bibelforscherschriften zugesandt werden, so werde ich diese umgehend bei der nächsten Polizeidiensstelle abgeben.
4. Ich will künftig die Gesetze des Staates achten, insbesondere im Falle eines Krieges mein Vaterland mit der Waffe in der Hand verteidigen und mich voll und ganz in die Volksgemeinschaft eingliedern.
5. Mir ist eröffnet worden, dass ich mit meiner erneuten Inschutzaffnahme zu rechnen habe, wenn ich meiner heute abgegebenen Erklärung zuwiderhandle.

....., den .....



# Declaration translated into English

Concentration camp.....

Department II

## DECLARATION

I, the.....

born on.....

in.....

herewith make the following declaration :

1. I have come to know that the International Bible Students Association is proclaiming erroneous teachings and under the cloak of religion follows hostile purposes against the States.

2. I therefore left the organization entirely and made myself absolutely free from the teachings of this sect.

3. I herewith give assurance that I will never again take any part in the activity of the International Bible Students Association. Any person approaching me with the teaching of the Bible Students, or who in any manner reveal their connections with them, I will denounce immediately. All literature from the Bible Students that should be sent to my address I will at once deliver to the nearest police station.

4. I will in the future esteem the laws of the State, especially in the event of war will I, with weapon in hand, defend the fatherland, and join in every way the community of the people.

5. I have been informed that I will at once be taken again into protective custody if I should act against the declaration given today.

Signature..... dated.....



# The Nazi Salute: “Heil Hitler”

- “Heil” in German means “Salvation”
- English translation: “Hitler Saves”
- Jehovah’s Witnesses refused this salute, Why?
- They believe Salvation is through Jesus Christ
- The Nazi Salute was a matter of Integrity
- Refusal to salute was a Choice of Integrity
- Even their children refused





# Young Ones Choose Integrity

- **Simone Arnold**
- **11 Years old**
- **Refused to Heil Hitler**
- **Expelled from school**
- **Sent to 're-education' center**
- **Wolfgang Kusserow**
- **20 Years old**
- **Refused induction into the army**
- **Beheaded by guillotine**





# The Campaign Against Them

- **1933: Police occupied their offices and printing sites**
- **1934: Witnesses send letter to the government explaining their beliefs and political neutrality**
- **1935: They are officially banned by law**
- **1936: 400 imprisoned at Sachsenhausen concentration camp**
- **1936: Gestapo agents infiltrate Bible study meetings**
- **1939: An estimated 6,000 Witnesses in camps**



# Response to efforts to destroy them and others

- **1934: Official letter to German government explaining beliefs and neutrality**
- **1936: A resolution is adopted condemning the Nazi regime on an international scale**
- **The resolution and other literature brought into Germany:**
  - **Indicted the Third Reich**
  - **Denounced persecution of:**
    - **German Jews, Nazi savagery toward Communists, remilitarization of Germany, Nazification of schools, Nazi propaganda and the regime's assault on mainstream churches**



# They Spoke Out

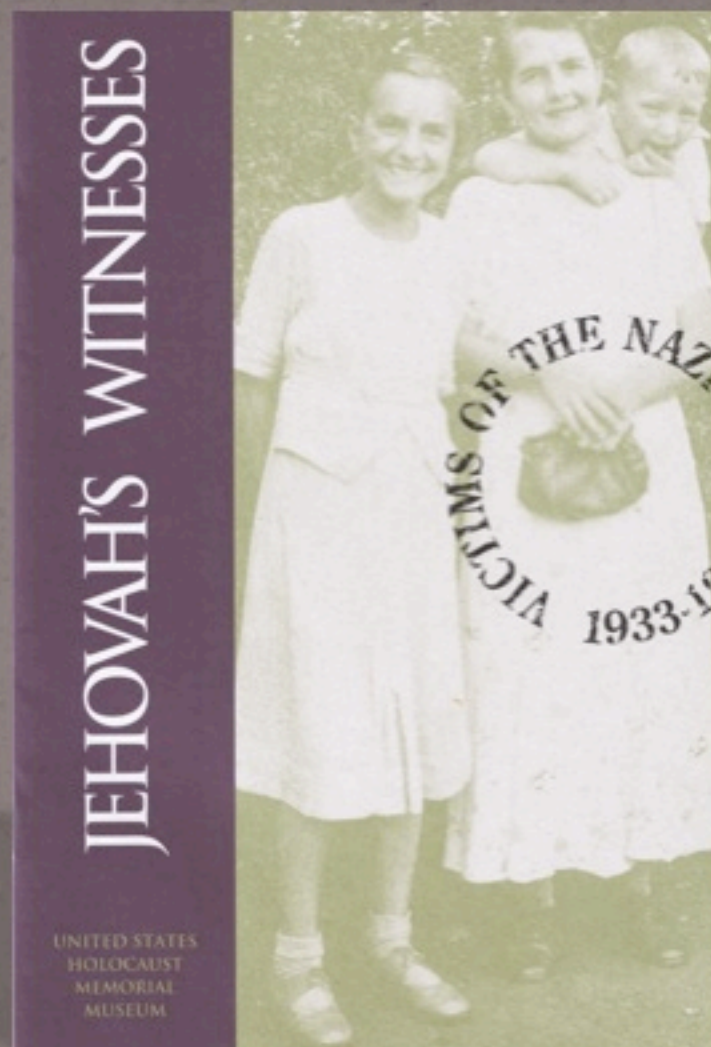
- Detailed descriptions of camps were published in Jehovah's Witness publications
- Their magazine, *Consolation* presented sketches of the camps
- By 1940, 20 different camps had been reported
- Conditions and experimentations were reported



Esterwegen Camp



# Brochure from the Museum



[Click on Brochure to Read Contents](#)



## References

- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum ([www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org))
- Arnold Liebster Foundation ([www.alst.org](http://www.alst.org))
- US Holocaust Memorial Museum Brochure- *Jehovah's Witnesses, Victims of the Nazi Era, 1933-45*
- *Awake! Nazism Could it Happen Again?*, June 8, 1985
- *Awake! The Holocaust Who Spoke Out?, 50th Anniversary of Liberating the Camps*, August 22, 1995
- *Watchtower, Forward You Witnesses*, March 15, 1988