ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM
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INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY PROPAGANDA THEMATIC TOUR

These notes are meant to provide additional information about some of the topics included in some of the slides. This was originally included in the presentation, but we felt that most would be more comfortable paraphrasing or sharing in your own words, and this would enable you to pick and choose what you wish to elaborate on given time constraints.

VICTOR KLEMPERER QUOTE – Slide 2

Victor Klemperer (1881 – 1960) was a Jewish professor of philology who studied the use of language in Nazi propaganda. This quote is taken from his book, ***The Language of the Third Reich***. He is also known for his diaries which captured every aspect of life under the Nazi Regime. His two volume ***I Will Bear Witness*** diaries "…stand as an unparalleled and intimate record from the innards of the beast…" from 1933 – 1945

PROPAGANDA TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES - Slides 4 - 8

The Nazis incorporated both insights into mass psychology and the latest approaches to propaganda in their political campaign prior to Hitler coming to power. The success of the Nazi party in rising to prominence in the 500-member German Parliament in 1928 was a feat unparalleled in German history. They did it by communicating carefully crafted messages that appealed to a German people devastated by the Great Depression and disillusioned with the status quo. They played on popular fears of Communism and pledged to end reparation payments forced on them by the Treaty of Versailles that ended WWI. They sold a vision of hope, unity, and prosperity.

They learned from messaging techniques employed by Socialists, Communists, Italian Fascists, and even American propagandists in WWI. They created a brand with Hitler crafting an image of himself as the unknown soldier, a common man, who pulled himself up by the bootstraps to become a national leader.

Design of the Nazi flag, a black swastika emblazoned on a background of red and white amounted to a logo for his movement, a rarity at that time,

Although the Nazis never abandoned their antisemitic platform, they understood from their audience research that anti-Jewish rhetoric did not appeal to all segments of the German population or resonate in all areas of Germany. When Hitler ran for the German presidency in 1932, he refrained from antisemitic rants because he was interested in gathering as many votes as possible. Instead of confronting Nazi antisemitism and racism, many Germans just preferred to overlook these ugly aspects of the party's ideology.

THE VOLKSGEMEINSCHAFT - REVIVING NATIONAL PRIDE AND UNITY - Slides 10 - 21

The word means *national community*, and its appeal reflected a yearning for stability, peace, unity and order after the failed post WWI Weimar Republic. This ideal of a cohesive community was linked to older German traditions promoting social harmony over conflict and middle-class ideals of hard work, clean living, and law and order. For some it was attractive because it promised a new order wherein it would equitably reconcile competing economic interests within Germany while excluding "foreigners" from the racially defined nation. Young Germans seeking to belong to a group or community were especially receptive to the theme. The Nazi party considered itself the party of youth and viewed young Germans as critical to the development of the "new Germany."

Shortly after rising to power in 1933, Hitler created the ***Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda*** headed by Joseph Goebbels.

Symbols and Slogans - Slides 11 - 14

Nazi Swastika - A Logo for the Nazi Party - Slide 12

The ***svastika*** has existed in Eurasia for over 7,000 years. In Sanskrit, it means "good fortune" or "well-being," and is a sacred symbol of divinity and spirituality in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism.

The Nazi symbol became the most reviled symbol of the 20th century during the Nazi regime. Once a symbol of national pride, it became a symbol of hate, fear, and collaboration with a regime intent on eradicating European Jewry and other racial minorities from the face of the earth.

Today it is used by hate-groups and neo-Nazi extremists

SPREADING THE MESSAGE - RADIO, LOUDSPEAKERS, AND FILM Slides 15 - 19

The Volksempfänger (People's Receiver) - Slide 15

To Goebbels, the radio was the future of propaganda... With it, the Nazis could bombard the masses... in their homes, in their villages, in their market squares... with fiery speeches and emotionally charged broadcasts effusing the Nazi perspective and creating a ***"volksmeinschaft"*** or national community, unified under a shared ideology.

By 1935, the radio had reached an audience of over 56,000,000 people.

Not only had the German people become addicted to the broadcasts, but also placed their faith in "the voice of the nation."

Additional Info on Radio

As purpose-built propaganda devices, the ***Volksempfänger*** radios allowed their listeners to tune in to only the nearest local stations. This limitation served to further the radios' ultimate objective, as stated in the propaganda poster ***Ganz Deutschland hört den Führer mit dem Volksempfänger*** *("All of Germany hears the Führer with the People's Receiver"*).

The Nazi party was not subtle in its indoctrination. The Propaganda Ministry's slogan was ***Rundfunk in Jedes Haus***, or *"Broadcasting in every home,"* and this radio allowed it to

become a reality. The cheap, standardized model was readily accessible to buyers, and roughly twelve and a half million units were sold by the start of World War II in 1939.

"We want a radio that reaches the people, a radio that works for the people, a radio that is an intermediary between the government and the nation, a radio that also reaches across our borders to give the world a picture of our character, our life, and our work," Goebbels proclaimed.

To make that happen, Goebbels seized control of the national network of radio stations placing them under the control of the ***Reichs-Rundfunk-Gessellschaft,*** the Reich Broadcasting Corporation, in July of 1934.

After solidifying control of the broadcast infrastructure, he imposed rules on permissible content. His final task was to make sure everyone had access to an affordable radio receiver. But radios in Germany in the early 1930s were expensive, easily exceeding a month's wages for ordinary workers

The radio was able to pick up foreign broadcasts, but after the start of WWII, listening to these became punishable by fines, imprisonment, and even death.

The Telefunken Pilzlautsprecher (Mushroom Speakers) - Slide 17

After January 1933, large loudspeaker systems became an important instrument in the staging of Nazi rallies.

Loudspeaker systems were installed at strategic sites including public squares, rally locations, schools, offices, and restaurants... and when the sirens howled from these loudspeakers, everything stopped and people gathered to listen and take part in the 'community reception.'

Film - Triumph of the Will – Slide 18

In 1932, Germany had 3,800 cinemas equipped to play sound films. A year later, in June 1933, new regulations gave major tax advantages to films exemplifying the Nazi spirit. Film thus became an important means of disseminating Nazi propaganda.

Triumph of the Will was the propaganda film directed by Leni Riefenstahl who supported Hitler and became known as the "movie-queen of Nazi Germany." It begins with Hitler's airplane descending from the clouds, floating over the beautiful towns and assembled masses, creating the impression that this man is godlike.

It was filmed as a documentary to capture the Nazi Party Rally in Berlin 1934, to instill national pride, and to show the solidarity and unity of the German people and the greatness of their leader, Hitler. The film portrayed the Nazi party as the embodiment of the nation's resurgence and Hitler as the savior of the "new Germany."

News Reel or propaganda? The film appeals to the emotions of the viewer through powerful speakers, music, symbols: eagles, flags, swastikas and beautiful German landscape.

The Olympic Games - August 1 - 16, 1936 / Camouflaging a Racist Ideology Slide 19

The Olympic Games had been awarded to Berlin before Hitler's dictatorship took hold. To Goebbels, this was a perfect opportunity to showcase Aryan superiority and to advance the myth that Aryans were inheritors of Greek culture, physical prowess and beauty.

To present this image to the world, the Nazis had to "clean-up" Berlin... thus 800 Roman-Sinti were forcibly removed to Marzhan, an open field next to a sewage dump in eastern Berlin.

By relaxing its antisemitic restrictions and removing any signs barring Jews from public places, the Nazis successfully camouflaged their racist ideology, bedazzling the world with a spectacle of technological wizardry and magic.

The face presented to the world was that of a nation united behind its leader... a welcoming, peaceful, and tolerant Germany returning to the world stage.

Jessie Owens Shatters the Myth of Aryan Racial Superiority (not included in this children's version)

Indeed, Hitler was annoyed... The eighteen Black athletes representing the United States won 14 gold medals in the Führer's Olympics. And that "marvelous colored runner," Jesse Owens, won four.

While the American press called our Black athletes heroes, Nazi censorship of the press prohibited German journalists from freely expressing their opinions.

Indoctrination of Aryan Youth - Slides 20 - 21

THE NAZI VOLKSGEMEINSCHAFT / "US" VS. "THEM" - SLIDES 22 - 40

Controlling the Press - Nurturing the "Big Lie" - Slides 28 - 29

Writing the News - Fomenting Hate

- Anti-Semitic newspapers and publications began circulating in Nuremberg in 1923
- Under the Nazi's Editors Law, enacted on October 4, 1933, all editors and journalists had to be Aryan; those of Jewish faith and those of dissenting political groups were dismissed
- Under Goebbels, news content was controlled by the Reich Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, effectively extinguishing the free press.
- Of 4,700 newspapers circulating before 1933, 1,600 were shut down by 1935, by 1939, 69% were directly owned by the Nazis, and by 1941 80% were directly owned by the Nazis.

Published by Julius Streicher, the whole intent of ***Der Stürmer*** was to incite antisemitism. Every issue was filled with negative articles about the Jews. And to increase its visibility, Streicher created public display boxes on city streets, thereby increasing both circulation and access.

- Circulation of ***Der Sturmer*** increased from 14,000 in 1927 to 473,000 in 1938

Children's Books - Slides 30 - 33

Trau Keinen Fuchs Alf Gruner Heid... *Trust No Fox in the Green Grass...)

Elvira Bauer, an 18-year old kindergarten teacher, created this book of pictures and nursery rhymes to depict the Jewish people as loathsome creatures born of the devil.
Its title refers to a quote Martin Luther's 1543 pamphlet, ***Von den Jude and Ihren Luger*** (On the Jews and Their Lies).

The book was published by Julius Streicher, the publisher of ***Der Stürmer***, the viciously antisemitic newspaper.

Der Giftpilz (The Poisonous Mushroom)

In 1938, Julius Streicher, the publisher of the rabidly antisemitic newspaper ***Der Stürmer***, published ***Der Giftpilz***, a children's book with denigrating disinformation about the Jewish people.

Der Ewige Jude (The Wandering Jew) A Film, A Book, and An Exhibition - Slides 34 – 36

The book ***Der Ewige Jude*** contained 265 images accompanied by short captions denigrating the Jewish people. It was published in 1937 by Franz Eher Nachfolger, the publishing house of the Nazi party.

Resurgence of a Conspiracy Theory: The Protocols of the Elders of Zion – Slide 37

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, initially appearing in 1903 maintained that the Jewish people were engaged in a plot to control the world by manipulating the economy, controlling the media, and fostering religious conflict.

It resurfaced during the Nazi regime adding to the growing animosity and distrust of the Jewish community.

Note: What this slide makes clear is that Nazi ideology crossed borders, infiltrated many countries, many governments and institutions, and was not a one man show. There were many other players.

Entarte Kunst (Degenerate Art) - Slide 38

Nazi ideology regarding race extended to all aspects of cultural and social life in the Third Reich.

There were strict controls over the works of art, music, literature and film that could be created and enjoyed... and those that could not were referred to as "degenerate."

To the Nazis contemporary art was both aesthetically unappealing and contrary to the ideals of Nazism, thus it was labeled "degenerate."

In 1937, Goebbels authorized the confiscation of any works deemed modern, degenerate, or subversive from museums throughout Germany.

Famous artists like Marc Chagall, Vincent Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, and artists of Jewish ancestry were among the 1,400 artists whose works were banned or confiscated from German museums.

In July 1937, an exhibition of 600 of these works opened in Munich. It was entitled ***Entarte Kunst***, or "degenerate art."

Sloppily put together, the walls covered with graffiti and derogatory slogans discrediting and ridiculing the work, unharmed paintings hung by cord, rooms deliberately chaotic and overfilled... the regime's distain for the works on display was evident. One room was devoted solely to the works of Jewish artists.

These "cultural documents of the decadent work of Bolsheviks and Jews" were touted as the result of genetic inferiority and society's moral decline.

Entarte Musik (Degenerate Music) - Slide 39

Justifying and Fueling the November Pogroms - Slide 40

The Nazis used the murder of Ernst vom Roth, a low-level German diplomat, by 17-year old Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jew seeking to avenge his parents' expulsion from their home in Germany, to incite and justify the November pogroms.

For two days and two nights, violent riots disguised as "spontaneous demonstrations" against Jewish citizens in retribution for the murder, resulted in the destruction of synagogues, Jewish businesses, and Jewish lives.

The Nazis forced the Jews to clean up the destruction and cover the cost of damages, confiscated their insurance monies, and imposed an "atonement tax" of 1 billion Reichmarks (about $400 million) for the repair of their homes and businesses… all while banning them from any gainful business activity.

Note: Kristallnacht is significant in that it reflects a shift in policy toward sanctioned violence

THE "THEM" JEWS AS THE ENEMY - SLIDES 41 - 44

The Nazis created a narrative claiming Germany a victim of foreign aggressors and the Jews whose intent was to eliminate Aryan civilization.

Dehumanizing the Enemy to the Bitter End - Slide 44

THE RESULT - Slide 45

We must ask ourselves this question: How did Nazi propagandists successfully create an atmosphere in which systematic violence and genocide was acceptable to German society?
The result - an estimated 11 million people were murdered, out of that estimate, over 6 million were Jews.

AND GENOCIDE CONTINUES - Slide 46 - 49

The 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi

In 1994, over the course of 100 days, close to 800,000 Tutsi were systematically murdered in Rwanda, the smallest country in Africa. It was the most clear-cut case of Genocide since the Holocaust.

The Belgian colonizers created a strict caste system in which the favored Tutsi aristocracy subjugated and exploited the Hutu peasantry. By cementing arbitrary biological distinctions

into permanent racial identities, the country was effectively divided along ethnic lines. The use of ID cards further rigidified these identities.

When Rwanda gained its independence in 1959, Hutu extremists took control of the government. The Tutsi left the country out of fear of reprisals. In the decades that followed, Tutsi were mistreated, discriminated against and murdered without any repercussions.

When the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front attempted to negotiate a multi-party democracy with the Hutu government, Hutu extremists, in efforts to retain power, used propaganda to fuel hatred and fear, ultimately inciting ***The 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi***.

Kangara Newspaper - Slide 48

Radio-Télévision Libre Mille Collines - Slide 49

Started in March, 1993, this wildly popular radio station, broadcasting music often embedded with anti-Tutsi lyrics along with obscene jokes and incendiary racist propaganda, incited the Genocide Against the Tutsi of 1994.

Unbeknownst to the public, the station was funded and thus controlled by the Hutu President, Juvénal Habyarinana and his party.