

Subject : Junior Cycle History
Teacher : Niall Lenehan

LESSON 20

**The Holocaust and the impact
of World War II in the North and
South of Ireland**

Learning Intentions

- The causes, course and consequences of the Holocaust.
- The impact of WW2 in the north and south of Ireland.

3.4 discuss the general causes and course of World War One or World War Two and the immediate and long-term impact of the war on people and nations.

3.10 explore the significance of genocide, including the causes, course and consequences of the Holocaust.

2.8 describe the impact of war on the lives of Irish people, referring to either World War One or World War Two.

Key Words - define these

Genocide

Extermination camp

Anti-Semitism

The Emergency

The Compulsory Tillage Scheme

Belfast Blitz

The Holocaust

- The holocaust was a form of genocide carried out by the Nazis during WW2.
- **Genocide** is when a large number of people from a different nation or ethnic group are deliberately killed.
- During the holocaust, the Nazis **killed 6 million Jews** and other ethnic minorities during WW2.

Steps towards the Holocaust

- Anti-Semitism was the **prejudice and hatred towards Jews**. They were persecuted under the Nuremburg laws. In Nazi Germany.
- Jews had to wear a **star of David** as an ID badge.
- When the Nazis conquered Europe, Jews were **forced into ghettos** where they were forced to live in harsh conditions.



Entrance to a Jewish ghetto

- By 1941, The German (Einsatzgruppen) army began **murdering Jews** in rural areas in Eastern Europe.
- In 1942, the **Final Solution** was planned – This was the official plan to exterminate the Jewish population of Europe.
- The Nazis began to move Jews to concentration camps which contained **gas chambers** designed to murder large amounts of people.
- Concentration camps included **Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka and Dachau.**



Entrance to Birkenau

The Course of the Holocaust

- Jews were transported on trains to concentration camps. Upon arrival, their possessions were taken away and a **number was tattooed on their arm.**
- Prisoners were used for **labour** and often worked to death, those who could not were executed instantly.
- The majority of prisoners were **executed in gas chambers.** The Nazis used a gas called **Zyklon B.**
- Prisoners were also forced to go on **death marches** where they died from starvation or were executed.



Labour carried out in a concentration camp



Concentration camp prisoners kept in horrible conditions

- Towards the end of the war, the Allies began to liberate Concentration camps. They were horrified at what they had discovered.

The consequences of the holocaust

- **6 million Jews were murdered** in the holocaust.
- Millions of others including **Communists, Slavic peoples** and members of the **LGBT** community were also murdered.

- Many Jewish survivors **left Europe after the war** and settled in places such as Canada, the US and South Africa.
- In 1948, the **state of Israel** was founded to house the population. It has over 6.5 million Jews in it today.

Recap exercise 20.1

Q1. Apart from Jews, name two other groups persecuted by the Nazis during the Holocaust.

Q2. What is meant by 'Anti-Semitism'?

Q3. Explain three consequences of the holocaust.

WW2 in the North and South of Ireland

WW2 in the south

- The **south of Ireland (Éire) was neutral during WW2** – This meant we would not fight or support any side in WW2.
- Ireland **did not have a strong military** and wanted to **demonstrate its independence** from Britain by not join their side.
- Despite not fighting, Ireland did **favour the Allied side in some ways**; We provided weather reports to the Allies, downed German pilots were imprisoned, Allied planes could fly over Donegal.
- 50,000 Irishmen also joined the British army.

The Emergency Powers Act

- The Irish government passed the **Emergency Powers Act in 1939** – Its purpose was to preserve Irish neutrality.
- Under the Act, the government could censor newspapers, books and other media.
- Private post could also be opened and examined.



Life in Éire during the Emergency

Rationing

- Ireland relied on **imports of food and fuel** from Britain during the war. British ships were attacked by German U-boats which impacted on supplies and **caused shortages in Ireland**.
- **Seán Lemass was Minister for supplies** and set up the Irish Shipping Company to transport goods to Ireland so we were not as reliant on Britain.

- The **Compulsory Tillage Scheme** was introduced; all farmers had to produce a certain amount of wheat on their land.
- Irish people were given ration books which helped to limit the amount of food being consumed.



Labour carried out in a concentration camp

Fuel shortages and the glimmer men

- **Electricity, gas and petrol were scarce** – It was mainly only to be used in times of emergency.
- Ireland's coal came from Britain, so we began to use our own turf instead.
- Factories in Ireland closed as they suffered from fuel shortages – **emigration from Ireland increased**.
- The **Glimmer men** checked that people were not overusing gas supplies.
- Farmers also struggled as **they lacked fertilizers**.



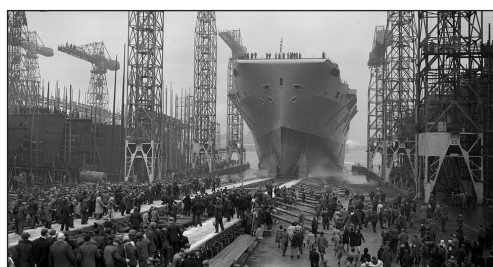
Glimmer man cartoon

Northern Ireland during WWII

As Ireland was part of the UK, they were technically at war.

Industry and Agriculture

- N. Irish industry boomed as material for the war was produced in **Harland and Wolff shipyard and Short Brothers aircraft factory**.
- This included; warships, aircraft, parachutes, uniforms tanks and shells.
- **Agriculture boomed** as flax, oats, potatoes and wheat were grown and exported to Britain.



Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast

Allies based in Northern Ireland

- **Planes and ships** based in N. Ireland patrolled the Atlantic to search for German U boats and protect supplies coming from the US.
- Northern Ireland was also a **base for US troops** who were stationed there before being set to North Africa and Europe.

Belfast attacked

- Belfast was a **target for German bombers** due to its wartime industries.
- Between **April and May 1941**, Belfast was bombed four times by the Luftwaffe – This was known as the **Belfast Blitz**.
- Over 1000 people died, factories were destroyed, and 56,000 homes were destroyed.
- After this, people left the city and **slept rough in the countryside** at night to avoid potential bombing.



Aftermath of the bombing of Belfast

Post war divide between North and South

- The **economy in the south suffered** during and after the war.
- The economy in the north **improved due to its industries**. The North's ties with Britain improved as a result of this.
- The south of Ireland remained neutral, this **damaged relations with Britain** as they wanted us to join on their side.
- **Trade links were damaged** between the south and Britain – These would take years to return to normal.

20.2 Exam Prep

Source: RTE News

Read the extract and answer the following questions

Along with the feed and fertiliser, Churchill had cut the fuel supply and the resultant lack of transport hampered the distribution of food which was hardest felt in outlying rural areas. A senior Irish civil servant visiting a remote Gaeltacht area in 1942 recorded ghostly "half-starving people" begging for food, cursing Dublin and predicting famine.

As supplies of food ran low, Irish people turned to alternative foodstuffs. Ireland had the highest consumption of tea in the world at the time, with government research listing it as the "principle item of food" for the Irish poor. Its absence was therefore keenly felt and wacky and unpalatable substitutes duly appeared. From the many colourful prosecutions of the Emergency period, the fining of one female shopkeeper for selling watered-down turf mould as tea stands out.

The government's hated "black loaf" was trumpeted as more nutritious by health officials. In fact, the 100% wholegrain bread, introduced to conserve wheat supplies, caused nutritional deficiency and was roundly

detested. Many turned to poaching and hunting, with more rabbit meat consumed and even reports of Dublin Zoo's carnivora falling victim to hungry citizens.

Q1. What was a direct impact from the cutting of fuel supplies?

Q2. What evidence suggests to us that Irish people suffered from a severe lack of food?

Q3. Give an example of the 'alternative foodstuffs' that were used.

Q4. Explain why Ireland remained neutral during WW2.

20.3 Homework Correction

Q1. Name three battles that took place during WW2

The Battle of Britain

Operation Barbarossa

The Battle of the Bulge

Q2. Describe the main events of any battle that took place during WW2.

The Allied invasion of Europe was known as Operation Overlord or 'D-Day'. On June 6th, 1944, 160,000 British, American and Canadian troops were landed along 5 beaches on the Normandy Coast in France. The night before, Allied paratroopers were dropped behind enemy lines to sabotage German artillery and communication links. The Allies fought their way inland and would eventually push their way all the way to Paris which was liberated on 25 August 1944.

Q3. Describe two events that brought WW2 to an end.

On 30 April 1945, Hitler was surrounded by allied forces in his bunker in Berlin. He decided to commit in his bunker. Just days later on 8 May, German officially surrendered, this marked the end of war in Europe. In August 1945, the US dropped two nuclear bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As a result of these attacks, Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945.