Polish Jews Assemble in the Center of Nuremberg for Evacuation to the Polish Border (October 28, 1938)

Abstract

For Hitler, the end goal of National Socialist policy was the removal of the Jews from the "body of the German populace." In the mid-1930s, the SD [Security Service or *Sicherheitsdienst*] under the leadership of Reinhard Heydrich began formulating a policy to achieve this goal. Initially, the plan was to remove the Jews by pressuring them to emigrate, a task in which Adolf Eichmann's Central Office for Jewish Emigration [*Reichszentrale für jüdische Auswanderung*] became instrumental after the annexation [*Anschluss*] of Austria in 1938. In the end, pressured emigration was given up in favor of outright deportation. The first mass deportation occurred in the fall of 1938. Back in March of that year, the Polish government had announced that all Polish citizens living abroad who failed to renew their passports by October 31st would lose their Polish citizenship. The new policy had serious implications for the roughly 70,000 Polish Jews living in Germany, for failure to comply threatened to prevent them from either returning home or emigrating elsewhere. As a result, Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop ordered police action against Polish Jews living in Germany. On the night of October 28, 1938, the Gestapo arrested about 17,000 Polish Jews with the intention of deporting them to Poland. Poland closed its borders on October 31st, however, so that the majority of the deported were stuck in the no-man's-land between the German and the Polish border near the town of Zbaszyn. Since the Polish government initially refused to admit them, they had to endure extremely harsh living conditions for several weeks until their situation was finally resolved.

Source

Source: Polish Jews gather in the center of Nuremberg for deportation to the Polish border. About 17000

Polish Jews were expelled from Germany on October 28 and 29, 1938. Date: 28.10.1938. Photo: H. Grossberger.
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