

- 0. STALKING A MADMAN - Story Preface
- 1. SUICIDAL RESISTANCE
- 2. UNLIKELY CHOICE
- 3. A BUDDING INTELLECTUAL
- 4. HITLER'S 'FINAL SOLUTION'
- 5. STALKING A MADMAN**
- 6. ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF HITLER
- 7. HITLER'S HORRORS WORSEN
- 8. A MARTYR'S DEATH
- 9. FINAL MONSTROUS ACTS
- 10. BONHOEFFER'S LEGACY
- 11. POLITICALLY INCORRECT HEROES

With their increasing "legal" authority, Nazis began direct attacks against Jews on Kristallnacht, "the Night of Broken Glass." Engineered by Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's troops began a virulent rampage against Jewish businesses and synagogues, on the evening of November 9, 1938, and continuing into the next day. That night, the Nazis burned more than 200 synagogues throughout Germany.

The following day - next to Psalm 74:8 in his Bible - Bonhoeffer penned in the date of Kristallnacht. It is the only date contained anywhere in his Bible. The verse reads:

They said in their hearts, let us plunder their goods! They burn all the houses of God in the land...Oh God, how long is the foe to scoff? How long will the enemy revile your name?

As Nazi oppression worsened, Bonhoeffer stepped up his activism. He became involved in the plot to assassinate Hitler. He explained this apparent inconsistency with Christian beliefs to his sister-in-law, Emmi Bonhoeffer:

If I see a madman driving a car into a group of innocent bystanders, then I can't, as a Christian, simply wait for the catastrophe and then comfort the wounded and bury the dead. I must try to wrestle the steering wheel out of the hands of the driver.

By June of 1939, Bonhoeffer was able to get out of the country. Originally fleeing to the safety of America, he returned to Germany in a few weeks. His reason:

I have come to the conclusion that I made a mistake in coming to America...I shall have no right to take part in the restoration of Christian life in Germany after the war unless I share the trials of this time with my people.

Keeping his work undercover, Bonhoeffer continued his political resistance and helped to smuggle 15 Jews to Switzerland in a mission called "Operation 7." The Nazis arrested him in 1943, at his family home, for his anti-Nazi resistance. Weeks earlier, he had announced his engagement to Maria von Wedemeyer.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/STALKING-A-MADMAN-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/STALKING-A-MADMAN-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer>



Maria von Wedemeyer - Fiance of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Image online, courtesy the crossingchoir.com website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Maria-von-Wedemeyer-Fiance-of-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer>

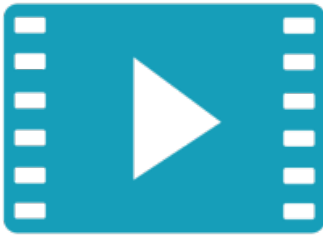


The Restless Conscience - Germans Resist Hitler

Trailer from "The Restless Conscience," by Hava Kohav Beller. Clip online, courtesy Hava Kohav Beller.

View this asset at:

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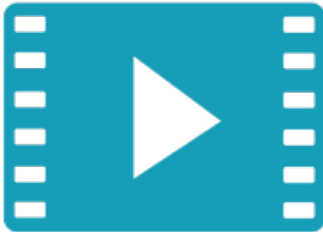
Kristallnacht - The Night of Broken Glass, Part 1

From a documentary on *Kristallnacht*, David Clarke, Producer; Laszlo Barna, Executive Producer.

Clip online, courtesy [History Television](#) and Canadian Television Fund (now known as [Canada Media Fund](#)).

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Kristallnacht - The Night of Broken Glass, Part 3

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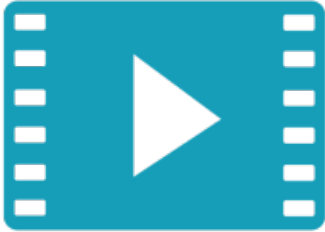
Kristallnacht - The Night of Broken Glass, Part 4

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Kristallnacht - The Night of Broken Glass, Part 5

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