

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Days of Remembrance Discussion Questions

Survivor Experience

- What did liberation mean for survivors at the end of the war? What obstacles did they face in rebuilding their lives?
- What forms of resistance did victims of Nazi oppression utilize throughout the Holocaust to maintain their dignity and humanity?

Liberation

- As Allied troops moved across Europe, they encountered concentration camps, mass graves, and numerous other sites of Nazi crimes. However, the liberation of concentration camps was not a primary objective of the Allied military campaign. Unprepared for what they encountered, what challenges did these soldiers face as they liberated the camps?
- At the close of the war, Allied forces were on a strategic mission to defeat the Axis powers. They found themselves in humanitarian roles after coming upon the camps and seeing evidence of Nazi crimes. What is the most appropriate way to balance strategic and humanitarian concerns in warfare? Are they equally important?
- What role did Allied soldiers play in restoring humanity to the lives of survivors at liberation and its aftermath?

Justice

- Can justice ever be done for the crimes of the Holocaust? Who is responsible for these crimes — political or military leaders? Members of the clergy? Journalists? Bystanders? Is it ever too late to seek justice?

International Response & Responsibility

- When were there moments, in the history of the Holocaust, when individuals, institutions, or nations had the responsibility to protect the civil rights and liberties of those being persecuted by the Nazis?

Reflect about the history and its meaning today

- The history of the Holocaust continues to resonate on a profound level in the contemporary world. What are its messages for Americans today?
- The Holocaust was a watershed event and its legacy continues to reverberate — genocide became defined in international law as a result. In light of the Holocaust's impact and events in our world, how can you as an individual advance justice and human rights today? As a military professional?
- How far does your responsibility go as a soldier and is it different from your individual responsibility? Where does your individual accountability begin and end? What will you do to keep alive the memory of this important event?