

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people, in their righteous might, will win through to absolute victory.

I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph. So help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

REINHARD HEYDRICH

Wannsee, 20 January 1942

'The final solution'

One of the most important events in the history of the twentieth century occurred at a villa on the banks of the Wannsee, a lake near Berlin, on 20 January 1942. It was a conference under the chairmanship of Reinhard Heydrich, head of the SS Intelligence Service, at which Hitler's Nazis planned the final solution, the extermination of about eleven million Jews in Europe. Heydrich had been appointed 'Plenipotentiary for the Preparation of the Final Solution of the European Jewish Question'.

This was his address to the senior civil servants.

We have the means, the methods, the organization, experience and people. And we have the will. This is a historic moment in the struggle against Jewry. The Führer has declared his determination . . . to destroy European Jewry. The Führer sees himself . . . as exterminating fatal bacteria to save the organism. It is them or us.

What has happened so far? Step by step we have forced the Jews out of all levels of German life . . .

We have forced them out of the *Lebensraum* of the people partly by transfers to concentration camps, and partly due to Obersturmbannführer Eichmann's organization by permitting 537,000 Jews to emigrate before the war; and finally . . .

We have seen since the beginning of the war the liquidation of hundreds of thousands of Polish, Baltic and Russian Jews. You gentlemen from the Party Chancellery, the Reich Chancellery, the Foreign Office, General Government and Ministry for the East have been kept informed by Gestapo reports of the Action groups' activities . . .

The Reichsführer SS has forbidden any further emigration of Jews. The Jews remaining in the Reich and all European Jews in our present and future spheres of influence will be evacuated to the East for the final solution . . .

We shall work effectively but silently. Total cooperation will be required in this matter of life or death for the Reich. So that we can all envisage what the Jewish question in the Reich involves (*pointing to a map of Europe*) the red area shows the Reich on the eve of war. This is the Eastern front. Behind in white conquered Eastern territories under Germany's civilian rule. In pink territories subject to the Reich – in vertical red stripes occupied territories in the rest of Europe. Horizontal red stripes, our Allies or countries under our influence. The dots on the map like fly spots represent the density of the Jewish population. That is our problem the further we advance between Riga and Odessa.

We must deal with the settlements of our Jewish opponents. They've made themselves comfortable there for centuries. In my own home town of Odessa there are more than 70,000 Jewish inhabitants. There were, used to be (*laughter*). To sum up gentlemen, our Action groups following hard on the heels of our troops have virtually eliminated the Jewish concentrations. We have influenced the old anti-Semitism by certain procedural measures.

Now the rough work has been done we begin the period of finer work. We need to work in harmony with the civil administration. We count on you gentlemen as far as the final solution is concerned. What is to be resolved will be resolved here (*pointing to the East*), at

the world's arse, as my men say. War and gunsmoke have made immense achievements possible. It is the Reichsführer SS's will that the Jewish question is settled there in one clean sweep. The total Jews concerned – 11,000,000.

This breaks down as follows:

In the old Reich – 130,000
 In Austria – 43,000
 In the Protectorate – 75,000
 In the General Government – 2,500,000
 In the Balkans – 1,600,000
 In Occupied France – 165,000
 In Unoccupied France – 740,000 (Quite a task!)
 In the New Europe for which we shall be responsible, in foreign unoccupied countries, like England – 330,000
 In neutral countries like Switzerland – 18,000 of the Chosen People.

In the final solution we will use the Jews as labour in the East. They will be marched, both sexes segregated, in columns, building roads on the way, breaking rocks, draining marshes. We'll give them every opportunity to find out what work means, on the extensive industrial plants now being constructed by Comrade Pohl of the SS's Economic Office . . .

Of course, most of these Jews will succumb to natural wastage: the remainder, the toughest, will have to be processed accordingly. Why? Because it is the survival of the fittest. Otherwise they'd seed a new Jewish resurrection. Look at history!

Heydrich was wounded in Prague on 27 May 1942 by two Czechs parachuted in from Britain. He died eight days later. His death was revenged by the massacre at Lidice. Wherever Heydrich went, a trail of blood was always left behind. He was correctly described as a butcher and a bangman.

GENERAL BERNARD MONTGOMERY

Cairo, 13 August 1942

'We will stand and fight here'

The fame of Bernard Montgomery (1887–1976) as a field commander was established with the British Eighth Army from July 1942 to January 1944 as the Desert Rats fought Erwin Rommel, the brilliant German general, from Alamein across north Africa and then into Sicily and southern Italy.

Monty, as he was universally known, was an inspiring leader who cared for his soldiers' morale. He could play with an audience of British troops like a fanatical ecclesiastic launching a crusade, said one contemporary observer. Monty arrived in Cairo on 12 August 1942, and assumed command of the Eighth Army the next day, when he made this address to his demoralized officers.

I want first of all to introduce myself to you. You do not know me. I do not know you. But we have got to work together; therefore we must understand each other, and we must have confidence each in the other. I have only been here a few hours. But from what I have seen and heard since I arrived I am prepared to say, here and now, that I have confidence in you. We will then work together as a team; and together we will gain the confidence of this great Army and go forward to final victory in Africa.

I believe that one of the first duties of a commander is to create what I call 'atmosphere', and in that atmosphere his staff, subordinate commanders, and troops will live and work and fight.

I do not like the general atmosphere I find here. It is an atmosphere of doubt, of looking back to select the next place to which to withdraw, of loss of confidence in our ability to defeat Rommel, of desperate defence measures by reserves in preparing positions in Cairo and the Delta.

All that must cease.

Let us have a new atmosphere.

The defence of Egypt lies here at Alamein and on the Ruweisat