

Eisenhower, Dwight David

(1890--1969), American military leader and president of the United States from 1953--1961. During World War II Eisenhower organized and commanded the Allied invasion of Europe, and served as commander in chief of the Allied forces in Europe. When the war ended, he was appointed commander in chief of the American occupation forces in Europe.

In 1945 Eisenhower's forces liberated tens of thousands of Jews from Concentration Camps and Forced Labor camps. He personally visited several newly-liberated camps, and ordered that as many American soldiers as possible visit the camps to see the remnants of the Nazis' horrible crimes with their own eyes. Over and over, Eisenhower reiterated to the public his feelings of shock and loathing regarding the Nazis' genocidal activities.

As head of the American occupation forces in Europe after the war, Eisenhower faced the problem of Jewish displaced persons (DPs), Holocaust survivors with nowhere to go. He created the position of advisor on Jewish affairs as an address to deal with the DP issue, and sanctioned the building of separate Jewish DP camps in the American zone in Germany. Later, Eisenhower allowed in thousands of Holocaust survivors who illegally reached the American zone from Eastern Europe. (see also Displaced Persons, Jewish).