

## Franz Wohlfahrt, Jehovah's Witness Standing Firm in Faith

*The following glossary has been created to assist students and teachers with potentially unfamiliar words, phrases, or concepts in Franz's testimony.*

**Anschluss**<sup>2</sup> After a prolonged period of economic stagnation, political dictatorship, and intense Nazi propaganda inside Austria, German troops entered the country on March 12, 1938. They received the enthusiastic support of most of the population. Austria was incorporated into Germany the next day.

**Dachau**<sup>1</sup> Dachau was a concentration camp located near Munich, Bavaria. The first group of prisoners, consisting mainly of communists and social democrats, was brought here on March 22, 1933. During the camp's 12-year existence, the prisoner population included political opponents, criminals, Sinti and Roma ("Gypsies"), Jews, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, and members of the Catholic clergy. More than 200,000 prisoners were incarcerated at Dachau during its existence. American forces liberated the camp on April 29, 1945.

**Gangrene**<sup>3</sup> A medical term used to describe the death of an area of the body. It develops when the blood supply is cut off to the affected part as a result of various processes, such as infection, vascular (pertaining to blood vessels) disease, or trauma. Gangrene can involve any part of the body; the most common sites include toes, fingers, feet, and hands.

**Gestapo**<sup>2</sup> The German Secret State Police, which was under SS control. It was responsible for investigating political crimes and opposition activities.

**Hitler Youth**<sup>1</sup> The Nazis established the Hitler Youth (Hitler *Jugend* or HJ) organization in 1926 to teach German boys the beliefs of the Nazi Party and to transform them into a "violently active, dominating, brutal youth." Once they had been indoctrinated, Hitler Youth were highly disciplined and fanatically loyal to Hitler. During the Third Reich, the Hitler Youth became Germany's principal youth organization, and in 1936 it was made a state agency. German boys ages 14 to 18 were expected to enlist. Membership in the Hitler Youth became compulsory after 1939.

**Jehovah's Witnesses**<sup>1</sup> Established as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society in the United States in 1884, Jehovah's Witnesses (International Bible Students) developed communities based on beliefs that broke away from mainstream Christianity. The members of the community regarded themselves as citizens of Jehovah's Kingdom, emphasized the Old Testament, and did not swear allegiance to secular governments or serve in armed forces. Witnesses generally endorse the observance of laws in their country of residence but firmly reject the observance of laws contrary to their teachings.

**Rodgau-Dieburg**<sup>1</sup> A penal camp established in 1937 by German authorities in the area of Dieburg, Germany, southeast of Frankfurt am Main.

**SA**<sup>2</sup> (In German, *Sturmabteilung*; Storm Troopers) Also called "Brownshirts." Members of a special armed and uniformed branch of the Nazi Party.

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**Shoah**<sup>4</sup> A Hebrew word meaning “catastrophe,” referring to the Holocaust

**SS**<sup>2</sup> (In German, *Schutzstaffel*; Protection Squad) Units formed in 1925 as Hitler's personal bodyguard. The SS was later built into a giant organization by Heinrich Himmler. It provided staff for police, camp guards, and military units (Waffen-SS) serving with the German army.

### Source of Definitions

<sup>1</sup> USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archives Search Terms and Definitions

<sup>2</sup> The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum online glossary and/or *Holocaust Encyclopedia*

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.emedicinehealth.com/medical-dictionary-definitions/article\\_em.htm](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/medical-dictionary-definitions/article_em.htm)

<sup>4</sup> *Echoes and Reflections: a Multimedia Guide on the Holocaust*