

Chapter 1 : BBC - History - The Blitz (pictures, video, facts & news)

Air defenses Great Britain. Army. Anti-Aircraft Command World War, Aerial operations, British History en AA command: Britain's anti-aircraft defences of World War II Preludes.

Action T4 personnel and T4-Gutachter After the official end of the euthanasia programme in , most of the personnel and high-ranking officials, as well as gassing technology and the techniques used to deceive victims, were transferred under the jurisdiction of the national medical division of the Reich Interior Ministry. Further gassing experiments with the use of mobile gas chambers Einsatzwagen were conducted at Soldau concentration camp by Herbert Lange following Operation Barbarossa. Beginning in the spring of , three killing factories were built secretly in east-central Poland. The SS officers responsible for the earlier Aktion T4, including Wirth, Stangl and Irmfried Eberl , had important roles in the implementation of the "Final Solution" for the next two years. Brack showed this paper to Hitler in July, and it may have increased his confidence that the "euthanasia" programme would be acceptable to German public opinion. In Hadamar, ashes containing human hair rained down on the town. The T4 programme was no secret. Despite the strictest orders, some of the staff at the killing centres talked about what was going on. In some cases families could tell that the causes of death in certificates were false, e. In other cases, several families in the same town would receive death certificates on the same day. In some places doctors and psychiatrists co-operated with families to have patients discharged or if the families could afford it, transferred them to private clinics beyond the reach of T4. Other doctors "re-diagnosed" patients so that they no longer met the T4 criteria, which risked exposure when Nazi zealots from Berlin conducted inspections. The first open protest against the removal of people from asylums took place at Absberg in Franconia in February and others followed. The SD report on the incident at Absberg noted that "the removal of residents from the Ottilien Home has caused a great deal of unpleasantness" and described large crowds of Catholic townspeople, among them Party members, protesting against the action. His brain was preserved in formaldehyde for "research" and stored in the clinic for sixty years. Stahle said "The fifth commandment Thou shalt not kill, is no commandment of God but a Jewish invention". It is a terrible, unjust and catastrophic thing when man opposes his will to the will of God We are talking about men and women, our compatriots, our brothers and sisters. Poor unproductive people if you wish, but does this mean that they have lost their right to live? The text was dropped by the Royal Air Force over German troops. Evans wrote that "This was the strongest, most explicit and most widespread protest movement against any policy since the beginning of the Third Reich". Commemorative plaque on wall on bunker No. In , Lifton wrote, "Nazi leaders faced the prospect of either having to imprison prominent, highly admired clergymen and other protesters â€” a course with consequences in terms of adverse public reaction they greatly feared â€” or else end the programme". In , Beth A. Griech-Polelle wrote that, Worried lest they be classified as outsiders or internal enemies, they waited for Protestants, that is the "true Germans", to risk a confrontation with the government first. If the Protestants were able to be critical of a Nazi policy, then Catholics could function as "good" Germans and yet be critical too. Following this, in September , a bold but ineffectual condemnation was read by bishops from pulpits across Germany, denouncing the killing of "the innocent and defenceless mentally handicapped and mentally ill, the incurably infirm and fatally wounded, innocent hostages and disarmed prisoners of war and criminal offenders, people of a foreign race or descent". After the invasion of the Soviet Union in June, many T4 personnel were transferred to the east to begin work on the final solution to the Jewish question. The projected death total for the T4 program of 70, deaths had been reached by August

Chapter 2 : Siege of Calais () - Wikipedia

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The next day, Guderian gave orders for the 2nd Panzer Division Generalleutnant Rudolf Veiel to advance to Boulogne on a line from Baincthun to Samer, with the 1st Panzer Division Generallautnant Friedrich Kirchner as a flank guard on the right, advancing to Desvres and Marquise in case of a counter-attack from Calais; the 1st Panzer Division reaching the vicinity of the port during the late afternoon. Parts of the 1st Panzer Division and 2nd Panzer Division were also held back to defend bridgeheads on the south bank of the Somme. Battle of Boulogne Calais had been raided by Luftwaffe bombers several times, which caused disruption to military movements, confusion and traffic jams, with refugees making for Calais meeting refugees fleeing the port. Various army stragglers, including infantry and a machine-gun company had arrived in the town. The 20th Guards Brigade was sent to Boulogne. After these orders were cancelled, the brigade was posted to East Anglia to meet a supposed threat of invasion. All the motor-cycle combinations and other vehicles were to be left behind. Keller was briefed at Dover to go to Calais and given sealed orders for the British port commander. They arrived at Calais around 1: The QVR landed without their motorcycles, transport or 3-inch mortars and only smoke bombs for the 2-inch mortars. Many of the men were armed only with revolvers and had to scavenge for rifles from those dumped on the quay by personnel hastily departing for England. More delay was caused by the tank guns having been coated in a preservative and loaded separately. The guns had to be cleaned off, before they could be remounted. Omer road according to the orders received from GHQ via Bailey. The patrol found the town empty, under bombardment and illuminated by the fires of burning buildings, at which the patrol returned to Coquelles at about 8: Omer road for the night. Six British fighters were lost. During the afternoon, French rearguards, with some parties of British and Belgian troops, were met at Desvres, Samer and the vicinity of Boulogne. The Allied air forces were active and made bombing and strafing attacks on the German forces, with little opposition from the Luftwaffe. The 10th Panzer Division was released from its defensive role and Guderian ordered the 1st Panzer Division, which was near Calais, to turn east towards Dunkirk and the 10th Panzer Division to move from Doullens to Samer and thence to Calais. The 10th Panzer Division advance was delayed around Amiens , because infantry units which were to relieve the division in the bridgehead on the south bank of the Somme, arrived late and the British reinforcements sent to Calais forestalled the Germans. Most of the Junkers Ju 87 Stuka dive-bombers were based around Saint Quentin , after leap-frogging forward in the wake of the advance but Calais was at the limit of their range. Flying from forward airfields at Monchy-Breton , Hauptmann Captain Wilhelm Balthasar led JG 1 against the British Spitfires and claimed two of the four from his unit but lost one pilot killed. Bailey became separated from the escort, ran into the advanced guard of the 1st Panzer Division at a crossroads on the St. Omer road and the driver was killed. Bailey and the wounded passenger returned to Calais at about noon and told Keller that another attempt should be made, since the Germans had retired. Keller had already received information from the French that German tanks were moving towards Calais from Marquise. Omer road but despite losses, the heavier German tanks and anti-tank gun screen knocked out from 7â€™12 British tanks, before Nicholson ordered the 3rd RTR back to Calais. C Troop had built a roadblock with a bus and a lorry, covered by Bren guns, rifles and Boys anti-tank rifles and held out for about three hours before being overrun. Omerâ€™Calais road but were caught in crossfire from other posts and the guns of the 58th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment on high ground near Boulogne. The Germans were repulsed until the post was withdrawn at 7: As night fell the division reported that Calais was strongly held and broke off its attacks to resume the advance on Gravelines and Dunkirk. Schaal had ordered the main body of his 10th Panzer Division, consisting of the 90th Panzer Regiment two tank battalions and 86th Rifle Regiment two infantry battalions supported by a battalion of medium artillery, to advance up the main road from Marquise to the high ground around Coquelles, which would give them good observation over Calais. Nicholson ordered the 1st RB to hold the outer ramparts on the

east side of Calais and the 2nd KRRC to garrison the west side, behind the outposts of the QVR and the anti-aircraft units outside the town, which began a retirement to the enceinte from about 3: Nicholson received an order from the War Office to escort a truck convoy carrying , rations to Dunkirk to the north-east, which was to supersede any other orders. Nicholson moved some troops from the defence perimeter to guard the Dunkirk road, while the convoy assembled but the 10th Panzer Division arrived from the south and began to bombard Calais from the high ground. The tanks drove through the first barricade, then found lots of Germans beyond the third road block, who mistook the tanks for German, even when one of the tank commanders asked if they "Parlez-vous Anglais? Two mines were blown up by 2-pounder fire and the rest dragged clear, the tanks then becoming fouled by coils of anti-tank wire, which took twenty minutes to cut free. The tanks then drove on and reached the British garrison at Gravelines but the radio in the A13 failed to transmit properly and Keller received only garbled fragments of messages, suggesting that the road was clear. The retirement of the QVR, searchlight and anti-aircraft troops from the outlying roadblocks had continued overnight until about 8: The German bombardment was extended to the harbour, where there was a hospital train full of wounded waiting to be evacuated. The harbour control staff ordered the wounded to be put aboard the ships, which were still being unloaded of equipment for the infantry battalions and rear echelon of the tank regiment. The dock workers and rear-area troops were also embarked and the ships returned to England, with some of the equipment still on board. The French garrison of Fort Nieulay, outside the western ramparts surrendered after a bombardment. French marines in Fort Lapin and the coastal artillery emplacements spiked the guns and retreated. On the southern perimeter the Germans broke in again and could not be forced back, the defence being hampered by fifth columnists sniping from the town. The German troops who broke in began to fire in enfilade on the defenders from the houses they had captured. The defenders on the ramparts ran short of ammunition and the th Battery was reduced to two operational anti-tank guns. The Germans had great difficulty in identifying British defensive positions and by 4: Nicholson was told that the fighting troops would have to wait until 25 May. Le Tellier had set up the French headquarters in the Citadel on the west side of the Old Town but command of the French forces remained divided, with Lambertye still in charge of the naval artillery. Nicholson was informed by a signal at As the harbour had lost its significance, Nicholson was to choose the best position from which to fight on; ammunition would be sent but no reinforcements. Nicholson was told that the 48th Division Major-General Andrew Thorne had begun to advance towards Calais to relieve the defenders. Lambertye refused to go, despite being ill, and asked for volunteers from the 1, navy and army personnel to stay behind, about fifty men responding despite being warned that there would be no more rescue attempts. The volunteers took over Bastion 11 on the west side and held it for the duration of the siege. During the night, Vice-Admiral James Somerville crossed from England and met Nicholson, who said that with more guns he could hold on for a while longer and they agreed that the ships in the port should return. At dawn on 25 May, the German bombardment resumed, concentrating on the old town, where buildings fell into streets, high winds fanned fires everywhere and smoke from explosions and the fires blocked the view. The last guns of the th Anti-Tank Battery were knocked out and only three tanks of the 3rd RTR remained operational. Distribution of rations and ammunition was difficult and after the water mains were broken, derelict wells were the only source. At noon, Schaal offered another opportunity to surrender and extended the 1: In the east, the 1st Rifle Brigade and parties of the QVR on the outer ramparts and the Marck and Calais canals repulsed a determined attack. The French then eavesdropped on a German wireless message, which disclosed that the Germans were going to attack the perimeter on the west side, held by the 2nd KRRC. Hoskyns, the 1st RB commander objected, since the plan required the withdrawal of tanks and men from where the Germans were close to breaking through. Hoskyns was over-ruled and it took too long to contact Nicholson, because telephone and radio communication had been lost. The attack went ahead but the carriers bogged in the sand and the attempt failed. Allan, the second-in-command of 1st RB, took over the battalion which then made a fighting withdrawal northwards through the streets, to the Bassin des Chasses, the Gare Maritime and the quays. In the south-east corner, at the 1st RB positions near the Quai de la Loire, a rearguard was surrounded and a counter-attack to extricate them was repulsed. Some of the rearguard broke out in a van driven by a fifth columnist at gunpoint but he stopped before reaching safety and few of the wounded reached cover. Only 30

men of the in the area escaped. The units of the RB and QVR withdrawing from the northern part of the enceinte gained a respite when German artillery mistakenly shelled their own troops II Battalion, Rifle Regiment 69 who were forming up in a small wood to the east of Bastion No.

Chapter 3 : Chinese Nationalist Army “ Forces of China

After Dunkirk (May June 4) and a brief respite, the Germans turned south. Now Parisians began to pour out of the city in large numbers and head south to escape the advancing Germans. Now Parisians began to pour out of the city in large numbers and head south to escape the advancing Germans.

The daylight Blitz begins Britain bombs Berlin, then Germany retaliates. Richard Holmes explains how the bombing campaigns escalated. He also interviews Ernst Wedding, an ex-German bomber pilot, about the war in the sky. Matthew Sweet hosts the arts and ideas programme, featuring debate about the cultural issues of the week and an interview with controversial French film director Gaspar Noe. Hits of the Blitz Paul Morley explores the music people were really listening to during the Blitz. Music journalist Paul Morley finds out what people were really listening to during the Blitz during the Second World War. Duncan Campbell on how Second World War looters and gangsters thrived during the bombs, blackouts and rationing. The Blitz Michael Portillo and leading historians discuss the causes and effects of the Blitz. John F Jungclaussen, UK correspondent of Die Zeit newspaper, travels to Lubeck in northern Germany to find out about the night in when the city was bombed. This concentrated, direct bombing of industrial targets and civilian centres began with heavy raids on London on 7 September during what became known as the Battle of Britain. In September alone, the Luftwaffe - the German air force - dropped 5, tonnes of high explosives on the capital in just 24 nights. Coventry The infamous bombing of Coventry on 14 November brought an even more terrifying twist to the campaign. Five hundred German bombers dropped tonnes of high explosives and nearly incendiary bombs on the city in ten hours of relentless bombardment. This tactic was emulated on an even greater scale by the RAF in their attacks on German cities. Taking cover The British population had been warned in September that air attacks on cities were likely and civil defence preparations had been started some time before, both on a national and a local level. Those with gardens built simple corrugated steel Anderson shelters, covered over by earth. Larger civic shelters built of brick and concrete were erected in British towns and a blackout was rigorously enforced after darkness. The night raids became so frequent that they were practically continuous. Many people who were tired of repeatedly interrupting their sleep to go back and forth to the street shelters virtually took up residence in them. This gave rise to a new spirit of solidarity and community. Londoners took what seemed to them an obvious and sensible solution to the problem and moved down into the Tube stations in their thousands. At first, this was actively discouraged by the government. However, this popular action held sway and it was a common sight for a traveller on the Underground in wartime London to pass through a station crowded with the sleeping bodies of men, women and children and their belongings. A brief respite The main air offensive against British cities diminished after May , with the change of direction of the German war machine towards Russia. However, sporadic and lethal raids, using increasingly larger bombs, continued for several more years.

Chapter 4 : 6 King's Own Royal Regiment at Merville, May " The Heritage Group

- Women in the workforce increased from mill in to mill in , though wages were half that of a mans and were usually employed in jobs with lowest pay and status How did living standards for the middle class change from ???

Japan signs five year neutrality pact with Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. April 22 Yugoslavia breaks diplomatic relations with Finland. April 23 Greece signs armistice with Axis Powers. April 24 Bulgaria declares war on Greece, Hungary and Yugoslavia. Slovakia breaks diplomatic relations with Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. June 24 Finland breaks diplomatic relations with Poland. Hungary breaks diplomatic relations with Greece. June 28 The Netherlands breaks diplomatic relations with Finland. June 29 Belgium breaks diplomatic relations with Finland. July 2 China breaks diplomatic relations with Germany and Italy. July 7 Iceland occupied by the United States. July 28 Finland breaks diplomatic relations with Great Britain. August 1 Great Britain breaks diplomatic relations with Finland. August 22 Vichy France breaks diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia. September 9 Iran accepts British and Soviet terms of occupation. October 5 Japan breaks diplomatic relations with Poland. November 16 Iraq breaks diplomatic relations with Vichy France. December 6 Finland and Romania declare war on Great Britain. Canada declares war on Finland, Hungary, Japan and Romania. Panama declares war on Japan. Greece breaks diplomatic relations with Japan. Nicaragua breaks diplomatic relations with Vichy France. Norway breaks relations with Finland. Yugoslavia at war with Japan. The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with the Government and its Emperor looking towards the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after the Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. While the reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack. It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace. The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu. Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya. Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong. Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam. Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands. Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island. This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island. Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation. As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us. 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 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 very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again. 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 unbounded 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 7th, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire. That the state of war between the United States and the Imperial Government of Japan which has been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared; and the President is hereby authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military forces of the United States and the resources of the Government to carry on war against the Imperial Government of Japan; and, to bring the conflict to a successful termination, all of the resources of the country are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States. Belgium, Colombia and Mexico break

diplomatic relations with Japan. Free French National Council declares war on Germany. Manchukuo declares war on the United States. December 9 China declares war with Germany, Italy and Japan. Cuba and Guatemala declare war on Japan. Egypt and Norway break diplomatic relations with Japan. The Netherlands breaks diplomatic relations with Thailand. On September 11, , the President of the United States publicly declared that he had ordered the American Navy and Air Force to shoot on sight at any German war vessel. In his speech of October 27, , he once more expressly affirmed that this order was in force. Acting under this order, vessels of the American Navy, since early September , have systematically attacked German naval forces. Thus, American destroyers, as for instance the Greer, the Kearny and the Rueben James, have opened fire on German submarines according to plan. The Secretary of the American Navy, Mr. Knox, himself confirmed that American destroyers attacked German submarines. Furthermore, the naval forces of the United States, under order of their Government and contrary to international law have treated and seized German merchant vessels on the high seas as enemy ships. The German Government therefore establishes the following facts: Although Germany on her part has strictly adhered to the rules of international law in her relations with the United States during every period of the present war, the Government of the United States from initial violations of neutrality has finally proceeded to open acts of war against Germany. The Government of the United States has thereby virtually created a state of war. The German Government, consequently, discontinues diplomatic relations with the United States of America and declares that under these circumstances brought about by President Roosevelt, Germany too, as from today, considers herself as being in a state of war with the United States of America. The long-known and the long-expected has thus taken place. The forces endeavoring to enslave the entire world now are moving toward this hemisphere. Never before has there been a greater challenge to life, liberty and civilization. Delay invites great danger. Rapid and united effort by all of the peoples of the world who are determined to remain free will insure a world victory of the forces of justice and righteousness over the forces of savagery and of barbarism. Italy also has declared war against the United States. I therefore request the Congress to recognize a state of war between the United States and Germany, and between the United States and Italy. Therefore, be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that the state of war between the United States and the Government of Germany which has thus been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared; and the President is hereby authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military forces of the government to carry on war against the Government of Germany; and to bring the conflict to a successful termination, all of the resources of the country are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States. Mexico breaks relations with Germany and Italy. The Netherlands declares war on Italy. Poland declares war on Japan. Romania declares war on the United States of America. Honduras declares war on Germany and Italy. Italy declares war on Cuba and Guatemala. December 14 Croatia declares war on the United States of America. December 15 Egypt breaks diplomatic relations with Hungary and Romania. December 17 Albania declares war on the United States of America. December 19 Colombia breaks relations with Germany and Italy. Mexico breaks diplomatic relations with Hungary. Nicaragua declares war on Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. December 20 Belgium declares war on Japan. Mexico breaks diplomatic relations with Bulgaria. December 24 Haiti declares war on Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. December 31 Venezuela breaks diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy and Japan. January 6 Australia declares war on Bulgaria. Egypt breaks diplomatic relations with Vichy France. January 11 Japan declares war on The Netherlands. January 24 Peru breaks diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy and Japan. Uruguay breaks diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy and Japan. January 29 Ecuador breaks diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy and Japan. February 5 Iran breaks diplomatic relations with Vichy France. April 13 Iran breaks diplomatic relations with Japan.

Chapter 5 : Luftwaffe losses France, - Page 2 - Axis History Forum

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The change in targeting was driven by Goring and supported by Kesselring, who felt that the anti-airfield campaign had run its course, and that Fighter Command was finished. But Sperrle protested strongly, believing that Fighter Command probably still had a thousand aircraft left, and wished to continue to scourge the No. But it would be a mistake to see the targeting of London as necessarily marking a fundamental change in direction by the Luftwaffe. And London was a vitally important target. Small wonder that it was a tempting target. But just as Goring had rethought his battle plans, so too did Dowding adjust his tactical thinking, and restructured his forces. Thereafter, the frontline squadrons in No. Class B squadrons were fully manned and fully established, and were ready to be called into action, but might be lacking in combat experience or be suffering from a degree of fatigue. Finally, Class C squadrons were those which had suffered severe losses, and were being rested and re-equipped. Experienced survivors from these units were taken as soon as they were ready to act as replacements for pilots killed or wounded in the higher category units. This cut the link between an individual pilot and his original unit, but ensured that newly formed squadrons would have a core of combat-experienced veterans. Meanwhile, Keith Park instructed his controllers and pilots to henceforth obey altitude orders from Group, without making any personal interpretations of the heights given. He did this to ensure that climbing fighters did not emerge below their targets, but it caused delays and sometimes meant that the RAF fighters fought the escorts instead of the bombers, which often flew slightly lower. As if to deliberately confuse Fighter Commander, the Luftwaffe began 7 September as it had begun many of the past days, with a handful of reconnaissance sorties, but thereafter, the radar screens remained clear and the plotting tables empty. The long delay seemed ominous. History records that the first raid counter was placed on the plotting table at Bentley Priory at , and that within minutes counters representing many hundreds of aircraft were on the table. This colossal armada numbered aircraft, stepped up from m to m 14,ft to 23,ft advancing along a Dowding and Park correctly guessed that only London could be the target of such a vast force, and at 11 fighter squadrons were ordered into the air, with 21 units airborne by All available fighters raced towards the capital, with no thought of standing guard over their airfields. The RAF fighters were massively out-numbered by the German escorts, but tore into the enemy with great ferocity. The enemy bombers turned around and were all en route home by , albeit with huge gaps in the neat formations. As the skies above London emptied of aircraft, the fight was taken over by the firemen, who fought the spreading fires with a grim determination. They fought to douse the burning buildings, the wooden-block road surfaces on older streets and even the surface of the River Thames itself where floating liquid sugar ignited , all the while with the warehouses of paint, oil, explosives and ammunition blowing up in terrifying explosions. But it was not just the obviously dangerous materials that exploded - flour and pepper were equally dangerous, and the conflagration threatened to become self-sustaining as the fire sucked in oxygen from the surrounding streets. Burning debris was tossed into the air like straw, setting new fires wherever it landed. The largest was in the Surrey Docks, where the fire was too large to classify, and where it was arbitrarily rated as a appliance fire. At about , the next wave of German bombers began to pour down tons of incendiaries. An enormous pall of smoke hung over the capital, and the fires burned on. The first day cost Fighter Command dear, with the loss of 15 Spitfires and four pilots and 17 Hurricanes with seven pilots. But the Luftwaffe lost 38 aircraft, including 14 Bf s. The balance of attrition was not very different from that suffered during the past weeks, although this changed as the campaign wore on, and the onslaught on London soon became much more costly to the attacker than to the defenders. And the blitz against London lasted long after the Battle ended, bleeding the Luftwaffe white in the process. The attacks continued on 76 consecutive nights, with only a single exception. This was 2 November, when the weather was too poor to allow the German bombers to operate. Perhaps most crucially, the Fighter Command airfields, and the Chain Home stations were given precious respite by the switch in targeting. Even the pilots themselves were rested when not actually in the air over London. Squadrons spent whole days without coming to readiness, and there was even time for newly arrived

pilots to be taken on training and familiarisation sorties -luxuries which would have been unthinkable only days before.

Chapter 6 : Robert Woods Bliss to Royall Tyler, May 1, [2] "Dumbarton Oaks

Fun Facts about the name Merciful. When was the first name Merciful first recorded in the United States? The oldest recorded birth by the Social Security Administration for the name Merciful is Tuesday, April 11th,

Would China Really Invade Taiwan? The naval staff had produced a study in November of the problems such an operation might pose. It identified two preconditions, air and naval superiority, and the Germans in had neither. The German Army produced a staff memorandum a few weeks after the Navy recommended a landing in East Anglia. Both these were far from plans. The Kriegsmarine was poorly equipped for such an undertaking. It had no landing craft purposely built for such an operation. The Kriegsmarine had suffered heavily in the Norway Campaign. All it had available was one heavy cruiser, the Hipper, three light cruisers, and nine destroyers. All other major warships had been damaged or were not yet commissioned. The British fleet was overwhelmingly powerful. The Kriegsmarine might be able to flank the invasion sea lanes across the English Channel with mines and attack the Royal Navy from the air, but German naval commanders were not confident. Landing , Soldiers in Three Days General Alfred Jodl, chief of operations of the Armed Forces High Command, admitted that the operation would be difficult but felt it was possible to carry it out successfully if the landings were made on the south coast of England. The German Wehrmacht wanted to land on a broad front stretching from Ramsgate to the west of the Isle of Wight. The first wave would be some 90,000 men landing in three main areas. By the third day it wanted 250,000 men ashore. Heavy fighting was expected in southern England. Field Marshal Walter von Brauchitsch, nominal commander of the German Army, felt the operation would be relatively easy and concluded in a month. However, the German naval staff had grave misgivings, favoring an invasion in spring. They argued that the Kriegsmarine was far too weak. The weather in the English Channel was unpredictable and presented great hazards for the invasion fleet, which was not designed for such a task. With the Wehrmacht wanting to land at dawn, the periods of August 20 to August 26 or September 19 to September 26 had the most suitable tide tables. The Kriegsmarine would not be ready by August, and in September it was approaching the time of year for bad weather. The Kriegsmarine expected to lose 10 percent of its lift capacity due to accidents and breakdowns before the Royal Navy and RAF put in an appearance. The German air fleets failed to gain air superiority over the sea lanes and landing areas and could not prevent the RAF bombing the assembling invasion barges. However, in September they did come close to winning some measure of air superiority over Kent and Sussex. About the same time, the Kriegsmarine had assembled 2,000 barges from the Rhine River and Holland, all of which, although modified, still had poor seagoing characteristics. Nearly all tugs of more than 1,000 tons were withdrawn from German harbors to tow barges. The Kriegsmarine also assembled 1,000 motor boats and transport ships. By September 21, British air and naval attacks had sunk 67 craft and damaged in harbor. By mid-September the Luftwaffe had still failed to attack units of the British fleet. Sea Lion was put off from September 15 to September 17. But on the September 17, Hitler postponed Sea Lion indefinitely. What went unrecognized at the time was that this had more to do with a failure of combined operations. And the German Kriegsmarine had been decimated by the Royal Navy in that campaign. The success of the German blitzkrieg against the French Army in May and June brought Britain to face the possibility of a German invasion. The chiefs of staff met to address the possibility. With Operation Dynamo, the Dunkirk evacuation, beginning there was little they could do other than recommending the Home Army should be brought to a high state of alert and beach defenses should be given priority. In the face of German air power, evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force was successful. In the United Kingdom there were only 80 heavy tanks, and they were obsolete. There were light tanks armed only with machine guns. There were only 10,000 rifles to equip the 100,000 men of the Home Guard, although 75,000 Ross rifles were on their way from Canada. The British Army had little chance of stopping the Germans if they had managed to get a large force ashore in June or July. However, as in previous invasion threats the main defense would devolve onto the Royal Navy and now the RAF. But German indecision and a need to redeploy and refit the Luftwaffe gave Britain a decisive respite. By September Britain had built up its armored forces to nearly medium and cruiser tanks. Coast defenses were much improved. Strong reinforcements had arrived

from Canada. The Defense of Britain: No longer could the Navy alone deny the sea to an invader as in when Catholic Spain attempted to invade England by sea and in and when Napoleonic France attempted the same thing. The Royal Navy hoped by the use of bombardment and mines to attack the invasion fleet before it even left its ports. If such attacks were not decisive, it would attack the invasion flotillas as it arrived off the English coast. The Luftwaffe would be stretched to the limit. As the invasion beaches were not known, the Royal Navy needed to cover an area from the Wash to Newhaven. It had the strength to carry out that mission. The main forces to be used were destroyers and light craft, with close support of cruisers. It was agreed that the battleships should only come south if German invasion transports were escorted by heavier German ships. Admiral Sir Charles Forbes, C-in-C for the British Home Fleet, argued that so many ships should not be pulled away from the very real German threat to the convoy routes. Forbes kept his battleships, but many of his cruisers and destroyers were dispersed in ports around the southern and eastern coasts. Forbes was proved right with so many ships committed to static roles. Losses among the convoys began to mount. The RAF also had a vital role in defeating an invasion. Bomber Command would attack shipping as soon as it began to assemble. Once the invasion began, Fighter Command would move to the offensive against troop-carrying aircraft and supply air cover to the Royal Navy attacks on enemy shipping. Coastal Command would support the Navy as well and join Bomber Command in attacking shipping. Gradually the emphasis and reserves shifted toward southeastern England. Here the sea crossing was the shortest and the beaches would be within German fighter protection. The End of Operation Sea Lion: Tide and light conditions would favor the enemy between September 8 and 10. The Royal Navy put all its small craft and cruisers on immediate notice and stopped all boiler cleaning. Unfortunately, a lot of recipients did not know its meaning. Some Home Guard units assumed it meant the invasion had started and rang church bells, which was an agreed warning of invasion, and blocked roads. Soon, however, the crisis began to wane. The prize of air superiority rapidly slipped away. On September 14, Hitler postponed the invasion until September 17 due to Luftwaffe losses. Then, on September 17, it was postponed again. On September 20, the Germans began to disperse the invasion barges, of which some 10 percent had already been sunk or damaged by the RAF and the Royal Navy. Rather, it was turned east toward Russia. A panel of generals, admirals, and air marshals umpired the war game. Any disputes over exact losses were settled by cutting cards. Admiralty weather records were made available, which proved the situation would have been favorable to an invasion between September 19 and September

Chapter 7 : September, - FDR: Day by Day

The success of the German blitzkrieg against the French Army in May and June brought Britain to face the possibility of a German invasion. gave Britain a decisive respite. By September.

Alexander asked Parliament for "many more ships and great numbers of men" to fight "the Battle of the Atlantic", which he compared to the Battle of France, fought the previous summer. Instead, the London Naval Treaty required submarines to abide by "cruiser rules", which demanded they surface, search [15] and place ship crews in "a place of safety" for which lifeboats did not qualify, except under particular circumstances [16] before sinking them, unless the ship in question showed "persistent refusal to stop. Instead, German naval strategy relied on commerce raiding using capital ships, armed merchant cruisers, submarines and aircraft. Many German warships were already at sea when war was declared, including most of the available U-boats and the "pocket battleships" Panzerschiffe Deutschland and Admiral Graf Spee which had sortied into the Atlantic in August. These ships immediately attacked British and French shipping. Much of the early German anti-shipping activity involved minelaying by destroyers, aircraft and U-boats off British ports. Admiral Graf Spee shortly after her scuttling. With the outbreak of war, the British and French immediately began a blockade of Germany, although this had little immediate effect on German industry. The Royal Navy quickly introduced a convoy system for the protection of trade that gradually extended out from the British Isles, eventually reaching as far as Panama, Bombay and Singapore. Convoys allowed the Royal Navy to concentrate its escorts near the one place the U-boats were guaranteed to be found, the convoys. Each convoy consisted of between 30 and 70 mostly unarmed merchant ships. The Royal Navy formed anti-submarine hunting groups based on aircraft carriers to patrol the shipping lanes in the Western Approaches and hunt for German U-boats. This strategy was deeply flawed because a U-boat, with its tiny silhouette, was always likely to spot the surface warships and submerge long before it was sighted. The carrier aircraft were little help; although they could spot submarines on the surface, at this stage of the war they had no adequate weapons to attack them, and any submarine found by an aircraft was long gone by the time surface warships arrived. The hunting group strategy proved a disaster within days. U was forced to surface and scuttle by the escorting destroyers, becoming the first U-boat loss of the war. Escort destroyers hunting for U-boats continued to be a prominent, but misguided, technique of British anti-submarine strategy for the first year of the war. U-boats nearly always proved elusive, and the convoys, denuded of cover, were put at even greater risk. These hunting groups had no success until Admiral Graf Spee was caught off the mouth of the River Plate between Argentina and Uruguay by an inferior British force. After suffering damage in the subsequent action, she took shelter in neutral Montevideo harbour and was scuttled on 17 December. After this initial burst of activity, the Atlantic campaign quieted down. That level of deployment could not be sustained; the boats needed to return to harbour to refuel, re-arm, re-stock supplies, and refit. The harsh winter of 1940, which froze over many of the Baltic ports, seriously hampered the German offensive by trapping several new U-boats in the ice. Although the narrow fjords gave U-boats little room for manoeuvre, the concentration of British warships, troopships and supply ships provided countless opportunities for the U-boats to attack. Time and again, U-boat captains tracked British targets and fired, only to watch the ships sail on unharmed as the torpedoes exploded prematurely due to the influence pistol, or hit and failed to explode because of a faulty contact pistol, or ran beneath the target without exploding due to the influence feature or depth control not working correctly. As the news spread through the U-boat fleet, it began to undermine morale. These problems were solved by about March, making the torpedo a formidable weapon. Upon sighting a target, they would come together to attack en masse and overwhelm any escorting warships. While escorts chased individual submarines, the rest of the "pack" would be able to attack the merchant ships with impunity. This was in stark contrast to the traditional view of submarine deployment up until then, in which the submarine was seen as a lone ambusher, waiting outside an enemy port to attack ships entering and leaving. There had also been naval theorists who held submarines should be attached to a fleet and used like destroyers; this had been tried by the Germans at Jutland with poor results, since underwater communications were in their infancy. Interwar exercises had

proven the idea faulty. The Japanese also adhered to the idea of a fleet submarine, following the doctrine of Mahan, and never used their submarines either for close blockade or convoy interdiction. The submarine was still looked upon by much of the naval world as "dishonourable", compared to the prestige attached to capital ships. This was true in the Kriegsmarine as well; Raeder successfully lobbied for the money to be spent on capital ships instead. The Royal Navy, like most, had not considered anti-submarine warfare as a tactical subject during the 1910s and 1920s. Although destroyers also carried depth charges, it was expected these ships would be used in fleet actions rather than coastal patrol, so they were not extensively trained in their use. The British, however, ignored the fact that arming merchantmen, as Britain did from the start of the war, removed them from the protection of the "cruiser rules", [19] and the fact that anti-submarine trials with ASDIC had been conducted in ideal conditions. Britain lost its biggest ally. In 1940, the French Navy was the fourth largest in the world. Only a handful of French ships joined the Free French Forces and fought against Germany, though these were later joined by a few Canadian-built corvettes. With the French fleet removed from the campaign, the Royal Navy was stretched even further. The U-boats gained direct access to the Atlantic. Since the English Channel was relatively shallow, and was partially blocked with minefields by mid-1940, U-boats were ordered not to negotiate it and instead travel around the British Isles to reach the most profitable hunting grounds. This greatly improved the situation for U-boats in the Atlantic, enabling them to attack convoys further west and letting them spend longer time on patrol, doubling the effective size of the U-boat force. The Germans later built huge fortified concrete submarine pens for the U-boats in the French Atlantic bases, which were impervious to Allied bombing until mid-1942 when the Tallboy bomb became available. From early July, U-boats returned to the new French bases when they had completed their Atlantic patrols. British destroyers were diverted from the Atlantic. Many older destroyers were withdrawn from convoy routes to support the Norwegian campaign in April and May and then diverted to the English Channel to support the withdrawal from Dunkirk. By the summer of 1940, Britain faced a serious threat of invasion. Many destroyers were held in the Channel, ready to repel a German invasion. So at the very time the number of U-boats on patrol in the Atlantic began to increase, the number of escorts available for the convoys was greatly reduced. After the German occupation of Denmark and Norway, Britain occupied Iceland and the Faroe Islands, establishing bases there and preventing a German takeover. It was in these circumstances that Winston Churchill, who had become Prime Minister on 10 May 1940, first wrote to President Franklin Roosevelt to request the loan of fifty obsolescent US Navy destroyers. This eventually led to the "Destroyers for Bases Agreement" effectively a sale but portrayed as a loan for political reasons, which operated in exchange for year leases on certain British bases in Newfoundland, Bermuda and the West Indies, a financially advantageous bargain for the United States but militarily beneficial for Britain, since it effectively freed up British military assets to return to Europe. Kennedy believed that Britain and its allies might actually lose. The first of these destroyers were only taken over by their British and Canadian crews in September, and all needed to be rearmed and fitted with ASDIC. It was to be many months before these ships contributed to the campaign. First Happy Time a U-boat shells a merchant ship which has remained afloat after being torpedoed. The early U-boat operations from the French bases were spectacularly successful. U-boat crews became heroes in Germany. From June until October 1940, over 100 Allied ships were sunk: The Germans had a handful of very long-range Focke-Wulf Fw Condor aircraft based at Bordeaux and Stavanger, which were used for reconnaissance. Due to ongoing friction between the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine, the primary source of convoy sightings was the U-boats themselves. The best source proved to be the codebreakers of B-Dienst. In response, the British applied the techniques of operations research to the problem and came up with some counter-intuitive solutions for protecting convoys. They realised that the area of a convoy increased by the square of its perimeter, meaning the same number of ships, using the same number of escorts, was better protected in one convoy than in two. A large convoy was as difficult to locate as a small one. Moreover, reduced frequency also reduced the chances of detection, as fewer large convoys could carry the same amount of cargo, while large convoys take longer to assemble. Therefore, a few large convoys with apparently few escorts were safer than many small convoys with a higher ratio of escorts to merchantmen. Instead of attacking the Allied convoys singly, U-boats were directed to work in wolf packs Rudel coordinated by radio. The boats spread out into a long patrol line that bisected the path of the

Allied convoy routes. Once in position, the crew studied the horizon through binoculars looking for masts or smoke, or used hydrophones to pick up propeller noises. When one boat sighted a convoy, it would report the sighting to U-boat headquarters, shadowing and continuing to report as needed until other boats arrived, typically at night. Instead of being faced by single submarines, the convoy escorts then had to cope with groups of up to half a dozen U-boats attacking simultaneously. The most daring commanders, such as Kretschmer, penetrated the escort screen and attacked from within the columns of merchantmen. The escort vessels, which were too few in number and often lacking in endurance, had no answer to multiple submarines attacking on the surface at night as their ASDIC only worked well against underwater targets. Early British marine radar, working in the metric bands, lacked target discrimination and range. Moreover, corvettes were too slow to catch a surfaced U-boat. Pack tactics were first used successfully in September and October, to devastating effect, in a series of convoy battles. The loss of a quarter of the convoy without any loss to the U-boats, despite very strong escort two destroyers, four corvettes, three trawlers, and a minesweeper demonstrated the effectiveness of the German tactics against the inadequate British anti-submarine methods. Nor were the U-boats the only threat. The Condors also bombed convoys that were beyond land-based fighter cover and thus defenceless. These aircraft were few in number, however, and directly under Luftwaffe control; in addition, the pilots had little specialised training for anti-shipping warfare, limiting their effectiveness. Italian submarines in the Atlantic[edit] The Germans received help from their allies. The Italian submarines had been designed to operate in a different way than U-boats, and they had a number of flaws that needed to be corrected for example huge conning towers, slow speed when surfaced, lack of modern torpedo fire control, which meant that they were ill-suited for convoy attacks, and performed better when hunting down isolated merchantmen on distant seas, taking advantage of their superior range and living standards. They were unable to co-operate in wolf pack tactics or even reliably report contacts or weather conditions and their area of operation was moved away from those of the Germans.

Chapter 8 : Aktion T4 - Wikipedia

Chinese Nationalist Army By Kretaner July 28, July 28, Allies, Armed Forces, Armies The seizure of Mukden on 19 September marked the beginning of overt Japanese aggression against China, and from there was open war.

The killings took place from September until the end of the war in ; from , to , [a] people were killed at extermination centres in psychiatric hospitals in Germany and Austria, occupied Poland and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia now the Czech Republic. The number of victims was originally recorded as 70, but this number has been increased by the discovery of victims listed in the archives of former East Germany. Several reasons have been suggested for the programme, including eugenics, compassion, reducing suffering, racial hygiene, economy and pressure on the welfare budget. Physicians in German and Austrian asylums continued many of the practices of Aktion T4 until the defeat of Germany in , in spite of its official cessation. The technology and personnel developed were instrumental in implementing the Holocaust. The programme was authorized by Hitler but the killings have since come to be viewed as murders in Germany. The number of people killed was about , in Germany and Austria, with about , victims in other European countries. Canada, Denmark, Switzerland and the US had passed laws enabling coerced sterilisation. Studies conducted in the s ranked Germany as a country that was unusually reluctant to introduce sterilisation legislation. Sterilisation was also legalised for chronic alcoholism and other forms of social deviance. The law was administered by the Interior Ministry under Wilhelm Frick through special Hereditary Health Courts *Erbgesundheitsgerichte* , which examined the inmates of nursing homes, asylums, prisons, aged-care homes and special schools, to select those to be sterilised. It is estimated that , people were sterilised under this law between and The eugenic sterilization of persons diagnosed with and viewed as predisposed to schizophrenia was advocated by Eugen Bleuler, who presumed racial deterioration because of mental and physical cripples in his *Textbook of Psychiatry*, The more severely burdened should not propagate themselves If we do nothing but make mental and physical cripples capable of propagating themselves, and the healthy stocks have to limit the number of their children because so much has to be done for the maintenance of others, if natural selection is generally suppressed, then unless we will get new measures our race must rapidly deteriorate. Within the Nazi administration, the idea of including in the program people with physical disabilities had to be expressed carefully, given that one of the most powerful figures of the regime, Joseph Goebbels, had a deformed right leg. Karl Brandt, personal doctor to Hitler and Hans Lammers, the head of the Reich Chancellery, testified after the war that Hitler had told them as early as when the sterilisation law was passed that he favoured the killing of the incurably ill but recognised that public opinion would not accept this. Hitler instructed Brandt to proceed in the same manner in all similar cases. On 18 August , three weeks after the killing of the boy, the Reich Committee for the Scientific Registering of Hereditary and Congenital Illnesses was established. It was to register sick children or newborns identified as defective. The secret killing of infants began in and increased after the war started; by more than 5, children had been killed. Hitler was in favour of killing those whom he judged to be *lebensunwertes Leben* Life unworthy of life. This issue, according to the Nazi regime, assumed new urgency in wartime. After the invasion of Poland, Hermann Pfannmüller said *Fr mich ist die Vorstellung untragbar, dass beste, blühende Jugend an der Front ihr Leben lassen muss, damit verblichene Asoziale und unverantwortliche Antisoziale ein gesichertes Dasein haben.* It is unbearable to me that the flower of our youth must lose their lives at the front, while that feeble-minded and asocial element can have a secure existence in the asylum. Pfannmüller advocated killing by a gradual decrease of food, which he believed was more merciful than poison injections. The German eugenics movement had an extreme wing even before the Nazis came to power. The advocacy of eugenics in Germany gained ground after , when the Depression was used to excuse cuts in funding to state mental hospitals, creating squalor and overcrowding. Many German eugenicists were nationalists and antisemites, who embraced the Nazi regime with enthusiasm. Many were appointed to positions in the Health Ministry and German research institutes. Their ideas were gradually adopted by the majority of the German medical profession, from which Jewish and communist doctors were soon purged. During the s the Nazi Party had carried out a campaign of propaganda in favour of euthanasia.

The National Socialist Racial and Political Office NSRPA produced leaflets, posters and short films to be shown in cinemas, pointing out to Germans the cost of maintaining asylums for the incurably ill and insane. In mid Hitler authorized the creation of the Reich Committee for the Scientific Registering of Serious Hereditary and Congenital Illnesses Reichsausschuss zur wissenschaftlichen Erfassung erb- und anlagebedingter schwerer Leiden, headed by Dr. Brandt and Bouhler were authorized to approve applications to kill children in relevant circumstances, though Bouhler left the details to subordinates such as Brack and SA-Oberführer Werner Blankenburg. Extermination centres were established at six existing psychiatric hospitals: One thousand children under the age of 17 were killed at the institutions Am Spiegelgrund and Gugging in Austria. They played a crucial role in developments leading to the Holocaust. The reports were assessed by a panel of medical experts, of whom three were required to give their approval before a child could be killed. Post mortem examinations apparently helped to ease the consciences of many of those involved, giving them the feeling that there was a genuine medical purpose to the killings. The most notorious of these institutions in Austria was Am Spiegelgrund, where from 1939 to 1940, children were killed by lethal injection, gas poisoning and physical abuse. When the Second World War began in September 1939, less rigorous standards of assessment and a quicker approval process were adopted. Older children and adolescents were included and the conditions covered came to include various borderline or limited impairments in children of different ages, culminating in the killing of those designated as juvenile delinquents. More pressure was placed on parents to agree to their children being sent away. Many parents suspected what was happening, especially when it became apparent that institutions for children with disabilities were being systematically cleared of their charges and refused consent. By 1940, more than 5,000 children had been killed. Army troops had occupied the town. This meeting agreed to arrange a national register of all institutionalised people with mental illnesses or physical disabilities. The first adults with disabilities to be killed en masse by the Nazi regime were Poles. The region was incorporated into Germany and earmarked for resettlement by Volksdeutsche following the German conquest of Poland. Similar measures were taken in other areas of Poland destined for incorporation into Germany. The first experiments with the gassing of patients were conducted in October 1941 at Fort VII in Posen occupied Poznań, where hundreds of prisoners were killed by means of carbon monoxide poisoning, in an improvised gas chamber developed by Dr Albert Widmann, chief chemist of the German Criminal Police Kripo. In December 1941, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler witnessed one of these gassings, ensuring that this invention would later be put to much wider uses. The idea of killing adult mental patients soon spread from occupied Poland to adjoining areas of Germany, probably because Nazi Party and SS officers in these areas were most familiar with what was happening in Poland. These were also the areas where Germans wounded from the Polish campaign were expected to be accommodated, which created a demand for hospital space. The Gauleiter of Pomerania, Franz Schwede-Coburg, sent 1,000 patients from five Pomeranian hospitals to undisclosed locations in occupied Poland, where they were shot. More than 8,000 Germans were killed in this initial wave of killings carried out on the orders of local officials, although Himmler certainly knew and approved of them. Hitler bypassed Conti, the Health Minister and his department, who might have raised questions about the legality of the programme and entrusted it to Bouhler and Brandt. Brandt are entrusted with the responsibility of extending the authority of physicians, to be designated by name, so that patients who, after a most critical diagnosis, on the basis of human judgment [menschlichem Ermessen], are considered incurable, can be granted mercy death [Gnadentod]. The officials selected the doctors who were to carry out the operational part of the programme; based on political reliability as long-term Nazis, professional reputation and sympathy for radical eugenics. The list included physicians who had proved their worth in the child-killing programme, such as Unger, Heinze and Hermann Pfannmüller. Heyde became the operational leader of the programme, succeeded later by Nitsche. When some institutions refused to co-operate, teams of T4 doctors or Nazi medical students visited and compiled the lists, sometimes in a haphazard and ideologically motivated way. During 1941, all Jewish patients were removed from institutions and killed. The experts were required to make their judgements on the reports, not medical histories or examinations. Sometimes they dealt with hundreds of reports at a time. The first gassings in Germany proper took place in January 1940 at the Brandenburg Euthanasia Centre. Once the efficacy of the method was confirmed, it became

standardised, and instituted at a number of centres across Germany under the supervision of Widmann, Becker, and Christian Wirth a Kripo officer who later played a prominent role in the extermination of the Jews as commandant of newly built death camps in occupied Poland. The same facilities were also used to kill mentally sound prisoners transferred from concentration camps in Germany, Austria and occupied parts of Poland. Condemned patients were transferred from their institutions to newly built centres in the T4 Charitable Ambulance buses, called the Community Patients Transports Service. They were run by teams of SS men wearing white coats, to give it an air of medical care. To prevent the families and doctors of the patients from tracing them, the patients were often first sent to transit centres in major hospitals, where they were supposedly assessed. They were moved again to special treatment Sonderbehandlung centres. Families were sent letters explaining that owing to wartime regulations, it was not possible for them to visit relatives in these centres. Most of these patients were killed within 24 hours of arriving at the centres, and their bodies cremated. For every person killed, a death certificate was prepared, giving a false but plausible cause of death. This was sent to the family along with an urn of ashes random ashes, since the victims were cremated en masse. The preparation of thousands of falsified death certificates took up most of the working day of the doctors who operated the centres. During 1940, the centres at Brandenburg, Grafeneck and Hartheim killed nearly 10,000 people each, while another 6,000 were killed at Sonnenstein. In all, about 35,000 people were killed in T4 operations that year. Operations at Brandenburg and Grafeneck were wound up at the end of the year, partly because the areas they served had been cleared and partly because of public opposition. In 1941, however, the centres at Bernburg and Sonnenstein increased their operations, while Hartheim where Wirth and Franz Stangl were successively commandants continued as before. As a result, another 35,000 people were killed before August 1941, when the T4 programme was officially shut down by Hitler. Even after that date, however, the centres continued to be used to kill concentration camp inmates: Stangl gave Sereny a detailed account of the operations of the T4 programme based on his time as commandant of the killing facility at the Hartheim institute. He described how the inmates of various asylums were removed and transported by bus to Hartheim. Some were in no mental state to know what was happening to them, but many were perfectly sane, and for them various forms of deception were used. They were told they were at a special clinic where they would receive improved treatment, and were given a brief medical examination on arrival. They were induced to enter what appeared to be a shower block, where they were gassed with carbon monoxide the ruse was also used at extermination camps. The SS functionaries and hospital staff associated with Aktion T4 in the German Reich were paid from the central office at Tiergartenstrasse 4 in Berlin from the spring of 1941. The SS and police from SS-Sonderkommando Lange responsible for murdering the majority of patients in the annexed territories of Poland since October 1939, took their salaries from the normal police fund, supervised by the administration of the newly formed Wartheland district; the programme in Germany and occupied Poland was overseen by Heinrich Himmler. Before 1941, it was believed that 70,000 persons were murdered in the euthanasia programme, but the German Federal Archives reported that research in the archives of former East Germany indicated that the number of victims in Germany and Austria from 1939 to 1941 was about 20,000 persons and that another 50,000 persons were victims in other European countries. In Polish psychiatric hospitals no one was left behind. Killings were inflicted using gas-vans, sealed army bunkers and machine guns; families were not informed about the murdered relatives and the empty wards were handed over to the SS. After the official end of the euthanasia programme in 1941, most of the personnel and high-ranking officials, as well as gassing technology and the techniques used to deceive victims, were transferred under the jurisdiction of the national medical division of the Reich Interior Ministry. Further gassing experiments with the use of mobile gas chambers Einsatzwagen were conducted at Soldau concentration camp by Herbert Lange following Operation Barbarossa. Lange was appointed commander of the Chemno extermination camp in December 1941. After the Wannsee conference, implementation of gassing technology was accelerated by Heydrich. Beginning in the spring of 1942, three killing factories were built secretly in east-central Poland. In January 1942, Brack commissioned a paper from Professor of Moral Theology at the University of Paderborn, Joseph Mayer, on the likely reactions of the churches in the event of a state euthanasia programme being instituted. Mayer a longstanding euthanasia advocate reported that the churches would not oppose such a programme if it was seen to be in the national interest.

Chapter 9 : The War Over Britain Battle of Britain - 7 September

The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest continuous military campaign in World War II, running from to the defeat of Germany in , and was a major part of the Naval history of World War II.