

from the west while Soviet Allied forces advanced from the east. The Allies allowed the Soviet army to enter the city of Berlin first.

On April 12, 1945, Franklin Delano Roosevelt died of a brain hemorrhage at his vacation home in Warm Springs, Georgia. Vice-President Harry S. Truman became president of the United States. By then, Allied troops were within reach of Hitler, but to avoid capture, he killed himself on April 30, 1945.

On May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered. This was called **V-E Day**, for Victory in Europe. Truman and his advisors then turned their attention to ending the war in the Pacific.

## Liberating the Concentration Camps

As Allied forces moved further into Germany and German-occupied territory, they found something ghastly. Part of Hitler's plan was to "purify" the German race by removing all Jews from Europe. Hitler also wanted to eliminate homosexuals, gypsies, and people with physical abnormalities or mental conditions. His method—"The Final Solution"—was to imprison them in **concentration camps** and then kill them.

Allied forces liberated a number of concentration camps. Buchenwald, Dachau, and Auschwitz were some of the more infamous camps. By the end of the war, over 6 million Jews had died in the Nazi concentration camps. It is estimated that a total of 11 million people were killed or died from starvation and mistreatment in the camps over approximately 6 years. This atrocity has become known as the Holocaust.

### Vocabulary

**holocaust:** a great destruction that results in extensive loss of lives

▼ Young prisoners interned at the concentration camp at Dachau cheer their liberators, the 42nd Division of the U.S. Army.

