Phases of the Holocaust

In the video Step by Step: Phases of the Holocaust, historian Doris Bergen divides the history of the Holocaust into four phases:

1. **Planning and Propaganda: 1933–1939**
   
   Key events:
   
   - German Jews and other so-called inferior races and people are isolated from the rest of the population.
   - Germany rebuilds military in violation of Treaty of Versailles.
   - German government attacks Jewish property and lives on Kristallnacht.
   - Nazi government prepares German public for war.

2. **Expansion and Violence: September 1939 – June 1941**
   
   Key events:
   
   - World War II begins with German invasion of Poland.
   - Nazi violence expands into Poland and across Europe.
   - Nazis establish ghettos and new concentration camps to imprison millions of Jews.
   - Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing units) murder millions of Jews and other targeted groups in mass shootings in eastern Europe.
   - Germany invades Soviet Union.

3. **Dedication to Mass Killing: 1941–1944**
   
   Key events:
   
   - Decision is made by Hitler and his advisors to annihilate all of the Jews in Europe.
   - Six killing centers are established, where millions of Jews, Sinti and Roma, and other targeted groups are murdered in gas chambers. The most infamous killing center is Auschwitz.

4. **Death Marches: January 1945 – May 1945**
   
   - As Germany is losing the war, and the Soviets are pushing the German military west, killing centers and camps are closed or liberated.
   - Nazis force prisoners from camps to march from eastern Europe toward Germany. Hundreds of thousands die along the way.