

85 YEARS TO THE NIGHT OF THE BROKEN GLASS

KRISTALLNACHT

THE WIENER LIBRARY FOR
THE STUDY OF THE NAZI
ERA AND THE HOLOCAUST

On the 9th of November 2023, we mark 85 years to the Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass or The November pogrom).

The Kristallnacht occurred between the 9th and the 10th of November 1938, in Germany and in Austria.

On that night, the Nazi party initiated violent riots. Jews were murdered and synagogues, Jewish shops and houses were demolished.¹



The November Pogrom was one of the major anti-Semitic occurrences, which aimed to exclude the Jews from the German economy.

The cause given for these anti-Semitic and violent outbursts was the assassination of the German diplomat Ernst vom Rath by a 17 year old Jewish boy named Herschel Grynszpan, on the 7th of November in Paris.²

Hundreds of synagogues, Jewish shops and homes were burned. The firemen were ordered to prevent the fire from spreading to the other buildings but not to extinguish the fire.

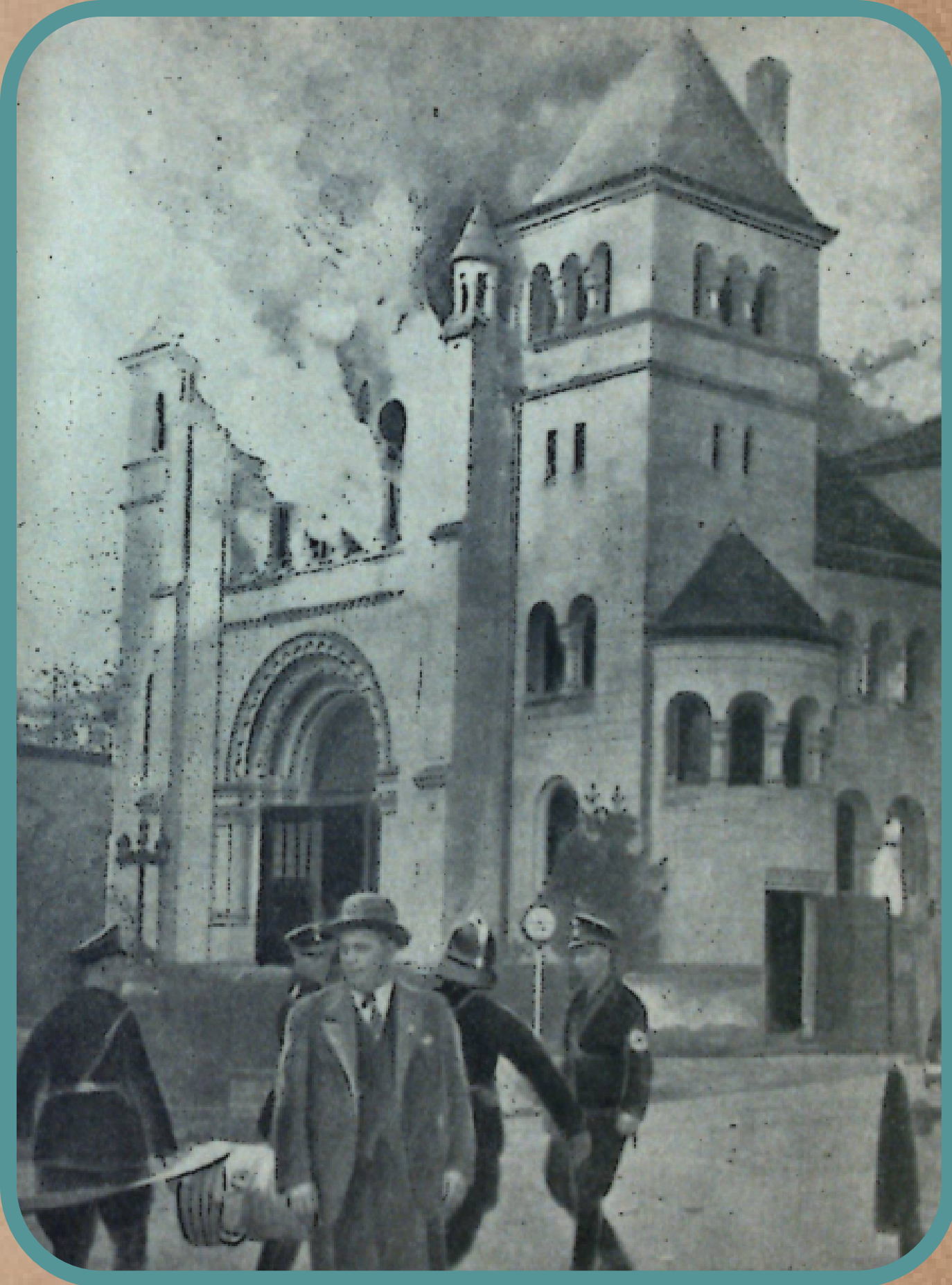
The S.A and the Hitler youth across the nation, smashed the windows of more than 7,500 shops, and looted their merchandize.³

The Night of Broken Glass got his name due to all the shattered glass from the Jewish shops, synagogues and homes.⁴

2 Walter Laqueur and Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, The Holocaust Encyclopedia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 386.

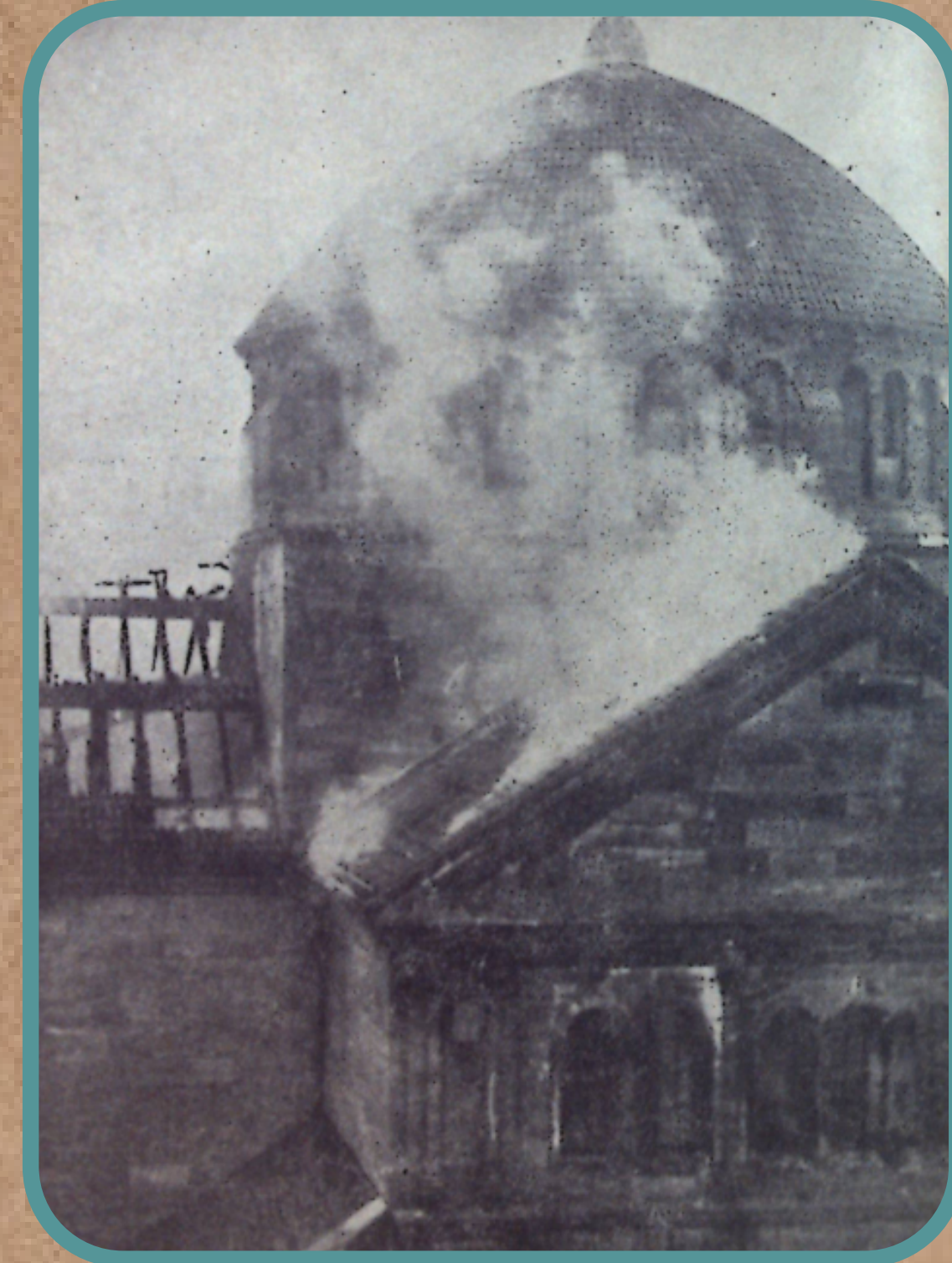
3 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

4 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum



The Synagogue in Baden Baden

A Synagogue in Berlin



The Synagogue in Fasanenstrasse

The pictures are from:

Baldwin, Stanley Baldwin, and Noel Baker. Les minorites raciales, religieuses et politiques : debats de la Chambre des communes, le 21 novembre 1938. Paris: F. Sorlot, 1939.

After the pogrom, the Nazi government made an announcement that the Jews are the ones to blame for the violent riots, thus they will have to pay the tremendous fine of billion Reichsmark.

Moreover, the Reich forbade the German insurance companies to help the Jews who were also forced to clean all the debris off the streets.⁵



Ruins in Berlin



⁵ [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#)

The pictures are from:

[Baldwin, Stanley Baldwin, and Noel Baker. Les minorites raciales, religieuses et politiques : debats de la Chambre des communes, le 21 novembre 1938. Paris: F. Sorlot, 1939.](#)

Shops in Berlin after the pogrom



The pictures are from:

Baldwin, Stanley Baldwin, and Noel Baker. Les minorites raciales, religieuses et politiques : debats de la Chambre des communes, le 21 novembre 1938. Paris: F. Sorlot, 1939.



ARTICLES FROM NOVEMBER 1938 ON THE POGROM

FROM THE WIENER ARCHIVE
PRESS CUTTINGS COLLECTION

An article from
The Daily Telegraph,
November 15th 1938

JEWISH GRAVES
DESECRATED
VIENNA RIOTING GOES ON
From Our Own Correspondent

VIENNA Monday.

Havoc has been wreaked on the large Jewish section of the central cemetery, which is about four miles from the centre of Vienna. Grave ornaments have been destroyed the graves themselves desecrated and the Jewish temple partially destroyed.

Now that it has been announced that all damage to Jewish property must be repaired by the Jewish owners at their own risk rioters take advantage of this savage irony and are continuing to smash windows of Jewish flats which have so far escaped injury.

Workmen are demolishing what remains of the synagogue in the 10th District of Vienna which was blown up on Thursday, to make way for a block of dwellings for approved Nazi tenants. This is to be erected at once.

The remains of the synagogue in the 11th District are also being demolished.

An article from The News Chronicle,
November 23th 1938
The denial of Goebbels upon harming
the Jews

Eye-Witness

IMMEDIATELY following the anti-Jewish pogroms which broke over Germany on November 10, Dr. Goebbels called the representatives of the foreign Press together in Berlin and told them that hardly a Jew had been harmed.

Today, we print an eye-witness account of what happened at one concentration camp on November 11 to 62 of the Jews rounded up in the pogrom. After Black Guards had indulged in an orgy of sadistic violence, 12 Jews lay dead and 50 unconscious.

What may have happened in other concentration camps, we do not know, but by this massacre alone the Nazi Jew-baiters stand convicted not merely of arson and destruction but of disgusting butchery.

CHAPEL BURNT DOWN

It now becomes clear that less care was taken in the provinces to conceal the official condonation of the recent acts of anti-Semitic violence than was the case in Berlin. In some places the private flats of Jews were broken up before the eyes of the owners by Black Guards in uniform.

In Hanover, not only was the synagogue in the old town destroyed by fire, but a special expedition was made to the Jewish cemetery outside the city. The beautiful funeral chapel, which was built only a few years ago, was burnt down.

Conversations in Berlin and in the provinces show that the great mass of decent-thinking Germans are astounded and disgusted at the manner in which the wave of anti-Semitic hooliganism has been carried through.

Four or five times Aryan Germans, who are politically by no means opposed to the Nazi régime, have said to me: "For the first time in my life I am ashamed to be a German!"

Conservative Germans in Berlin were particularly disgusted by the sight of German soldiers in uniform taking part in the looting of the fashionable Dobrin Café on Thursday afternoon. The soldiers speared cakes with their bayonets and waved them round their heads.

An article from the Daily Telegraph

November 15th 1938

The burning of synagogues and Jewish homes

An article from the Daily Express
November 15th 1938
Goebbels: "Poor Jew is doing well"

DR. JOSEPH GOEBBELS, German Propaganda Minister, worried by the anger that countless Germans are feeling at the anti-Jewish measures, tonight ordered the Nazi Press to tell their readers that the Jews are not being ill-treated.

The result was the publication of articles claiming that Germany's 700,000 Jews could now live satisfactorily among themselves, with their own cultural and social institutions.

But the Angriff, newspaper of Dr. Goebbels, could not resist keeping up the barrage with the remark, "Things are still going very well with the 'poor Jew.' Yes, without doubt, for the present the yare going far too well."

The Angriff continues: "As a result of the healthy feeling of the German nation there is, of course, only one solution for the Jewish question in Germany, that is 'Out with the Jews!'"

"The 180,000 Jews who, since we came to power, have left Germany in realisation of the situation are meant to represent only the beginning of the great clean-up."

£8 LIMIT

To prevent Jews escaping across the frontiers with their capital a special order was today given to all German banks under which they are allowed to pay to Jews sums up to £8 6s. only.

Violent anti-Jewish rioting continued today in Danzig. Having already burned the Jewish synagogues and wrecked their shops, Nazis are now imprisoning the Jews in their own homes.

They are forcing cement into the keyholes and locks of the doors, and are barricading the doors and windows from the outside with heavy planks.

Inside the Jews are sitting, shivering, listening to the hammer blows being driven home. Only a few, with tremendous efforts, have dared to break down their own doors. Gaping crowds watch and shout: "Jew, Jew, out, out!" as they do so.

The Nazi State today completed action to "secure" from Germany's Jews the £83,000,000 fine imposed on them for the murder of Herr vom Rath, German diplomat, in Paris.

The Jews must find another £80,000,000 to repair damage to their property caused by Nazi rioters.

In Berlin alone the cost is estimated at £1,100,000. To guarantee that the money to cover the fine and the restoration of the damage will be raised, Nazi officials today earmarked Jewish stock and share certificates, bank deposits and currency and property.

Jews, told to find immediate ways

of raising the cash, started this morning to throw their stocks and shares on to the market. The millions of pounds' worth of stock thrown on Berlin's Stock Exchange caused a slump with losses up to five per cent.

Another decree to drive Jews from German life was introduced today. Jews are no longer admitted to German universities. An official statement said: "German students can no longer be expected to sit at the German universities with Jews."

The Daily Express Political Correspondent writes:—

It is understood that Whitehall is in contact with other Governments including the United States, with a view to settling a large number of Jews in sparsely-populated territories.

Definite areas are being discussed and the Governments concerned will be asked to give facilities, including the provision of land.

The British Government will, it is believed, be prepared, if necessary, to give financial aid for the transport and settlement of many thousands of families.

Testimony of
Rosten P.
about the pogrom

P. II. d

Nr. 52

(Rosten, P.)

BUCHENWALD

In the following pages I shall describe, in the whole, only my personal experiences, what I have seen with my eyes or have heard with my ears. Should I mention events I have been told by other people I would make it quite clear.

In the night of November 9th to 10th 1938 - the night following the mysterious death of one of the German Secretaries to the German Embassy in Paris, shot at by a young Jew - at Breslau, the town where I lived, like in all the other towns in the whole of Germany the biggest Jewish Synagogue, a large building in the middle of the town, was set on fire by the SS and all Jewish shops were destroyed. In the morning I got the news by phone from my sister and went to see with my own eyes what I couldn't believe. It was really true: the large building, situated next to the Police H.Q. was ablaze and walking home I saw the shattered windows in Jewish shops. I met many of the Gestapo lorries, giving the special hooting signal of the Gestapo, loaded with Jews who were brought to the Police H.Q. I went home to carry on with my practice. Very soon friends of ours whose husbands had been arrested by the SS called on us telling how it happened and asking advice. The whole day long I got news that acquaintances of ours had been taken to the Police, even a boy of 16. Jews walking in the streets were arrested; it was clear that the Gestapo was rounding up the whole male Jewish population, it was a real pogrom. From 11 o'clock in the morning my phone did not work, and I was awaiting the SS during the whole day. But not before 6 o'clock next morning 3 SS-men came to fetch me and to bring me to the next Police Station. I was the first man arrested in our district on this day (November 11th). About 6 men in plain clothes were sitting in one room there with long lists, apparently checking the list of the Jews in that district, who had to be arrested. Every few minutes one or more newcomers arrived, all Jews or of Jewish origin, very many of them, of course, acquaintances of mine. None of us knew what happened to the men arrested the day before. I was rather sure that they were kept still at Police H.Q. In the middle of the morning we were brought by a lorry there, where we had to remain the whole day in a courtyard standing without any possibility of sitting down. Till the late afternoon more Jews arrived. From time to time we

ACT OF COURAGE

THE SAVING OF THE SYNAGOGUE IN WÖRLITZ ON NOVEMBER 10TH, 1938



ACT OF COURAGE- THE SAVING OF THE SYNAGOGUE IN WÖRLITZ ON NOVEMBER 10TH, 1938

This summary is based on an article in the Jüdische Allgemeine, from November 1st, 2011.

The little synagogue in Wörlitz had been built by Duke Leopold the III in 1789/90 and gifted to the local Jewish community of 140 members.

The German comedian Dieter Hallervorden recounts the story of what his grandfather Hans, a garden inspector in the royal park of Wörlitz, did on November 10th, 1938.

Hans had just returned from a long and exhausting trip and wished to go to sleep. Since he was a dutiful person, he did his nightly round in “his” park. What he discovered left him with an uneasy feeling. It was 11 pm and the light was still on in the synagogue. He went to investigate and found two suspicious looking men inside. He immediately understood what they were up to – the day before, the synagogue in Dessau had been burned down during the pogrom. Preparations have already been made: wood pieces were on the floor and gasoline containers stood ready for use.

Hallervorden shouted at them and tried to force them out. A brave woman from the neighborhood came to his help. Together, they managed to chase them away and the synagogue remained unharmed. For the rest of the night, Hans stayed in the synagogue to guard the place.

Two weeks later, due to pressure by the Nazis, he was fired from his position.

THE SYNAGOGUE IN WÖRLITZ TODAY

