# Chapter 3.2 How were Jews affected by the creation of ‘Greater Germany’?

**Resource sheet 3.2.1 ‘Why might historians describe *Kristallnacht* as a turning point?’**

**Source extracts:**

‘In the early hours of the morning they sort of broke the front door down and started to smash the place up…We had two lots: one lot just concentrated on smashing things up and left, but then the second lot arrived. We had three elderly ladies who were living on the first floor with us. One was dragged out and beaten up, for no reason except she probably got in the way or something. And I was knocked about and ended up in the cellar which was where the kitchens were…I went upstairs and found my father dying, dead. I tried as far as I could to give artificial respiration, but I don’t think I was very good at it and in any case it was too late for that…I was absolutely in shock. I couldn’t understand how this situation had arisen…uncalled for violence against a people they didn’t know.”

Rudi Bamber, a German Jew living in Nuremberg in 1938. The next morning local non-Jewish Germans threw stones at the family home.

Quoted in Rees, L. (2005) ‘The Nazis: A Warning from History’

‘The reaction of ordinary Germans to Kristallnacht varied. Many were shocked, disgusted or stunned by the violence and destruction. Often the extent of the material damage was criticised. Sometimes people felt ashamed that a cultured nation could stoop to this. Sometimes expressions of human sympathy, albeit muted, could be heard. Most people, however, appear to have approved of ridding Germany of Jews. The Jews were friendless.’

Rees, L. (2005) ‘The Nazis: A Warning from History’

‘Only once during the twelve years of the Third Reich was the German people directly confronted with the full savagery of the anti-Jewish terror…Increasingly from November 1938 the Jews were forced to emigrate or to retire wholly into isolation on the fringes of society. Either way, Germans saw less and less of Jews. The dehumanization ad social isolation of Jews after the November pogrom could, therefore, only increase the extent of indifference of the German people towards the fate of the Jews, an indifference which had been but momentarily disturbed by the atrocities of ‘Crystal Night’.

Kershaw, I. (2008) ‘Hitler, the Germans and the Final Solution’