

Paying tribute to those who paid the ultimate price

By Stephanie Pendergrass
News Editor

JSU will soon be commemorating an appalling event that took place during World War II. The Jacksonville State University Holocaust Commemoration will take place on April 12 at 7:30 p.m. on the 11th floor of Houston Cole Library.

The Holocaust Commemoration began as a **Wesleyan Foundation** project in 1982. Dr. Steven J. Whitton of the English department began working with the program at this time and has continued to be an active participant in the event. Whitton is the only Jewish faculty member participating in the commemoration and has seen the project grow in attendance from 25 to as many as 250 people.

The committee for the Holocaust

Commemoration consists of Dr. Whitton, Dr. Lemmons, Dr. Cadawallader, Ms. Cain, Ms. Suco and Stephen Brackett acts as SGA representative.

The Holocaust Commemoration will feature many participants. The keynote speaker for the program will be Mr. Henry Stern of Opelika. According to the *Opelika-Auburn News*, Mr. Stern, born Heinz Stern, escaped Germany in 1937 at the age of 5. He, along with his parents, sister, grandmother and an uncle left Hamburg, Germany and sailed to Ellis Island, N.Y., on the "last boat to carry Jews from Germany to other countries before the Second World War."

Stern "graduated from Auburn University and helped found the Hollingsworth, Norman and Stern department store in downtown Opelika." Mr. Stern later went into



Child survivors of Auschwitz, wearing adult-sized prisoner jackets, stand behind a barbed-wire fence. Photo courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

real estate and finally filled the position of executive director of the Opelika Chamber of Commerce, which he retired from in 1987.

Other features for the Holocaust Commemoration include readings

from the English department. "The English department has a Holocaust Education Program entitled, 'Imagining the Holocaust' and win-

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ners from our middle school and high school competition this year, will be reading their selections,” said Whitton. Also “members from the Temple Beth El in Anniston will be asking the Kaddish, the commemorative prayer for anyone who has died.”

Anyone interested is welcomed to the program and admission is free. When asked who the program will try to reach, Whitton said, “Anyone, but especially students who grow up with no knowledge of occurrences like this.” Lemmons believes “those who may not know as much about the Holocaust as they should, and anyone interested in the subject” are definite targets to reach.

The Holocaust Commemoration contains several important aspects. “The opportunity to hear the testimony of a survivor” is most important to Lemmons. Whitton believes the program is significant because “it is the hope that through knowledge and understanding, events like this will not occur again. People who attend can have that personal contact and be able to actually question it.”