

Handout 2.7: The story of the St Louis



Jewish people on board the St Louis

On 13 May 1939, the St Louis sailed from Hamburg to the United States, via Cuba, with 937 Jews on board. Their landing documents issued by the Cuban authorities were revoked. A huge anti-Jewish rally was held in Havana, and five days later, the ship was ordered out of Cuban waters. The St Louis sailed so close to Florida that the passengers could see the lights of Miami, but the American State Department refused to allow them to land. The St Louis was forced to return to Europe, where a large number of the passengers ultimately perished in the Holocaust.