

## Reinhard Heydrich (1904 - 1942)

Head of the Security Police and Security Service (SD)  
Deputy Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia



From 1938, Heydrich was a key figure in the expulsion and extermination of the European Jews. Since the annexation of Austria, the Security Service had excelled in organizing forced emigration. Following the November Pogrom of 1938, Heydrich had 26,000 Jews in Germany arrested and imprisoned in concentration camps. When war broke out on September 1, 1939, Heydrich ordered the ghettoization of all Jews and the establishment of Councils of Elders in all Jewish communities in Poland. After the attack on the Soviet Union he initially ordered the "Special Units" (*Einsatzgruppen*) to execute Communist functionaries and Jews old enough to serve in the military. The "Special Units" soon got the order to begin their systematic mass murder of the entire Jewish population within the occupied territory of the Soviet Union. After receiving on July 31, 1941, a memorandum, signed by Göring, which authorized him to carry out the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question," Heydrich made plans for the extermination of 11 million European Jews.

Born in Halle on the Saale, the son of a composer and director of a Conservatoire. Attended a Catholic high school. Freecorps fighter in 1920. Joined the German Navy in 1922 and was dishonorably discharged as a first naval lieutenant in 1931 because of a broken marriage promise. Joined the Nazi Party and the SS in 1931. In July 1932, Himmler entrusted him with the organization and leadership of the Security Service (SD). Head of the Bavarian Political Police in April 1933, and Head of the Secret State Police Office in Berlin in 1934. In June 1936, he became Head of the Security Police, and in September 1939 of the Reich Security Main Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt* – RSHA). On May 27, 1942, Czech resistance fighters in Prague made an assassination attempt on him which led to his death on June 4, 1942.

Foto: Ullstein Bilderdienst, Berlin

© House of the Wannsee Conference, Berlin