

## Rauff, Walther

(1906-1984), Nazi official. Rauff had his future set out for him as a professional naval officer, until a nasty divorce ruined his chances for career advancement and caused him to leave the navy in December 1937. At that point, he was accepted into the Security Service (SD), the SS intelligence service, which was under the command of Reinhard Heydrich. Eventually, Rauff became the head of the technical affairs section of the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA). In this position, he was responsible for equipping and issuing about 20 gas vans, in which some 200,000 people were exterminated.

In late 1942 Rauff went to Tunis where he led an *Einsatzgruppe* unit for the SD. In September 1943 he became the district SS and police leader in northern Italy, after German forces occupied that area.

After the war ended, Rauff was detained in a prisoner of war camp. He escaped in December 1946 and hid in a monastery in Rome for a year and a half. He then managed to travel abroad, finally settling down in Chile. In 1963 West Germany tried to convince the Chilean authorities to send Rauff back to Europe, but they refused. Rauff died in 1984 in Santiago, Chile.