

Kaltenbrunner, Ernst

(1903--1946), Nazi functionary. Born in Austria, Kaltenbrunner joined both the Nazi Party and the SS in 1932. In 1934 and 1935 Kaltenbrunner was imprisoned in Austria for high treason; he then went on to head the SS in that country from 1935 to 1938.

After the Anschluss---the annexing of Austria by Germany in March 1938---Kaltenbrunner was appointed undersecretary of state for public security in Austria. In that capacity, Kaltenbrunner supervised Adolf Eichmann's Central Office for Jewish Emigration (*Zentralstelle fuer Juedische Auswanderung*) in Vienna. By April 1939, Kaltenbrunner had helped force tens of thousands of Jews to leave Austria. As an SS-Gruppenfuehrer, Kaltenbrunner was deeply involved in the Euthanasia Program.

After Reinhard Heydrich was assassinated in mid-1942, Kaltenbrunner succeeded him as chief of the Reich Security Main Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, RSHA). Along with SS chief Heinrich Himmler, Kaltenbrunner was one of the major initiators and organizers of Aktion Reinhard---the systematic extermination of the Jews in the *Generalgouvernement* in Poland.

Despite Kaltenbrunner's attempt to maintain a low profile, and his behavior at the Nuremberg Trials, where he claimed no knowledge of the Nazis' plan to kill all the Jews in Europe, Kaltenbrunner was sentenced to death, and hanged in October 1946.