

## Hermann Göring names Heinrich Himmler Deputy Chief and “Inspector of the Prussian Political Police” (April 20, 1934)

### Abstract

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Under the leadership of Heinrich Himmler, the SS [*Schutzstaffel*] developed into the regime's most effective instrument of power and terror within a period of only a few years. Himmler had been appointed head of the SS back in 1929. At the time, it was a relatively unimportant bodyguard unit for Hitler, but Himmler proceeded to transform it into a racial-ideological elite organization. Until 1934, the SS was subordinate to the SA. After the Nazi takeover, Himmler initially served as police president of Munich. He soon gained control of Bavaria's political police and combined these forces with the SS to persecute political opponents. When the conflict between the SA and the Nazi leadership threatened to escalate in 1934, Hermann Göring appointed Himmler deputy chief and “Inspector of the Prussian Political Police” (i.e., the Gestapo). Thus, Himmler was in a position to centralize the whole political police apparatus under his direction. He played a leading role in the planning and execution of “Operation Hummingbird,” which saw the liquidation of the SA leadership on June 30, 1934. Hitler rewarded the SS for its service by making it an “independent organization within the framework of the NSDAP.” It was thus freed from the control of state and party authorities.

### Source

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Source: Hermann Göring (right), head of the Secret State Police Office, appoints Heinrich Himmler as his deputy. Unknown photographer.

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