

Reinhard Heydrich at a Fencing Competition with the Berlin SS Fencing Team (1939)

Abstract

The former navy lieutenant Reinhard Heydrich (1904–1942) joined the NSDAP and the SS in 1931. As Himmler’s closest collaborator, he played an important role in transforming the SS into the Nazi dictatorship’s most powerful instrument. From 1939 on, he headed the SS’s central office, the Reich Security Main Office [*Reichssicherheitshauptamt* or RSHA], under whose umbrella he brought all the authorities of the Security Police (Sipo) and the Security Service (SD). In 1941, he took over the coordination of the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question” and led the discussion on this matter at the Wannsee Conference of January 20, 1942. He was fatally wounded in May 1942 during an attack by Czech resistance fighters. The genocide carried out in Poland under the code name “Operation Reinhardt,” originally named after Fritz Reinhardt, a state secretary in the finance ministry, was henceforth associated with Reinhard Heydrich.

The picture shows Heydrich at a fencing competition. He had been an avid fencer during his service in the navy (until his dishonorable discharge).

Source



Source: Reinhard Heydrich as a member of the SS fencing team at a fencing competition in Berlin, 1939. Photo: Benno Wundshammer.

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