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ERNST KALTENBRUNNER: A STUDY
OF AN AUSTRIAN SS AND POLICE LEADER

by
WENDELL ROBERT HOUSTON

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W. Robert Houston

The University of South Alabama
March 13, 1972
Much of twentieth-century European history has been dominated by "totalitarian movements."¹ Preeminent among these movements have been Soviet Communism and German National Socialism. Each of these phenomena has exercised its own fascination for historians of contemporary history, and books have poured off the presses trying to explain, villify, glorify, or just sensationalize them. Particularly

in the case of the Nazi dictatorship, the flood of books, articles, memoirs, apologia, and so on has been immense. This has been partly due to the morbid fascination which this strange regime has exercised through its titanic cruelty, its grotesque vulgarity, its tremendous—if brief—tenure of power; in part, this absorption has resulted from the fact that never before in history have the secret records of a political system been laid as bare as those of Adolf Hitler's regime. Furthermore, virtually everyone who survived the Führer, from Reichsmarschall² Hermann Göring's valet, to high-ranking officials, to victims of the Nazi Terror, to foreign witnesses,³ has written so much

²Throughout this dissertation, the author has adopted the practice of leaving German ranks in the original language, since it seems clear that only confusion results from any attempts to translate them into American equivalents. This is especially true in the case of SS ranks. See Appendix I for a table of approximate equivalents between SS, German police, German army, and United States army ranks.

about a movement that was in existence for a mere two and a half decades and held power for just over twelve years that the student of the epoch is very nearly overwhelmed. However, with rare exceptions, it has only been in the decade of the 1960's that trained professional historians, political scientists, sociologists, and other scholars have begun seriously to dissect the National Socialist regime with all the tools of strict academic scholarship and have started to remove the examination of the Nazi system from the realm of the sensationalistic and to move it into the province of solid, historical perspective.

The purpose of this dissertation is to add another building block to the growing understanding of a phenomenon which dominated so much of the history of the post-1930 era in Europe by writing a biographical study of one of the second-rank leaders of National Socialism: Ernst Kaltenbrunner.4


5Even though Kaltenbrunner was one of the defendants in the trial of the major war criminals at Nuremberg in 1945-1946, very little has been written about him, and in that little he is usually dismissed as a nonentity. Two attempts at a more scholarly and thorough treatment are Eugene Davidson, The Trial of the Germans: An Account of the Twenty-two Defendants before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg (New York: Macmillan, 1966), especially pp. 315-328; and W. Robert Houston, "Ernst Kaltenbrunner at the Summit: A Study of the Last Chief of the Security Police and Security Service" (unpublished M. A. thesis, Rice University, 1966).
The author hopes to attain a number of goals through this biographical study. First, since Kaltenbrunner was a Nazi party member from 1930 on, it is believed that his life story will help one to understand the sort of person who joined the National Socialist party before it came to power. Second, since he was also an SS-police official, and for two years head of the secret police of the entire Nazi state, it is hoped that a study of his background and personality will contribute to a better understanding of the kind of person who undertook such work. Third, since he was an Austrian and deeply involved in the machinations of the Austrian Nazi Party (which until 1938 remained distinct from the one in Germany), this monograph may also throw some light on a much neglected aspect of the National Socialist movement—which, after all, was led by an Austrian. Finally, it is hoped that this work will help to illuminate the broad spectrum of problems surrounding the issue of the existence or non-existence of the so-called "totalitarian personality;" that is, of the sort of human being who becomes a participant in a movement dedicated to the total control of man.

6 Adolf Hitler and Ernst Kaltenbrunner grew up in the same Austrian city—Linz. Indeed, prior to 1932-1933 most of the leading Nazis were from Bavaria and Austria rather than from Prussia.
These then are the goals this dissertation hopes to achieve. The organization by which these ends are to be reached is three-fold. First, Kaltenbrunner will be examined in the context of purely Austrian situations (chapters I and II). Next, his career as head of the entire National Socialist secret police apparatus will be scrutinized (chapters III, IV, and V). Finally, an attempt will be made to draw some general conclusions from the factual material presented in the first two parts (chapter VI). Especially in the final section the author will attempt to answer some of the broad questions posed in this introduction and hopefully thereby make a contribution to the study of totalitarianism in general and of National Socialism in particular.
PART I: KALTENBRUNNER AS AN AUSTRIAN FIGURE, 1903-1943

CHAPTER I: THE PREPARATION FOR POWER, 1903-1930

Ernst Kaltenbrunner was born in the little town of Ried, in the province of Upper Austria, on the fourth of October, 1903.¹ He was the eldest child of Dr. Hugo Kaltenbrunner, a lawyer, and Therese Uduwary Kaltenbrunner.²


²Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 2. They were married in 1902. Ibid. Ernst had at least two younger brothers--Werner and Roland--and perhaps a sister. Interview with a former subordinate and confidant of Kaltenbrunner's, ex-SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Wilhelm Höttl, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. The author wishes to thank Professor Ludwig Jedlicka, of the University of Vienna, for helping to arrange this interview. The names of the brothers were provided by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte of the University of Vienna, which is directed by Dr. Jedlicka. See also Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193.
The Kaltenbrunner family had lived in this region for many generations. Originally they had been scythe and sickle makers, who combined this trade with farming. Ernst's great grandfather, Karl Adam Kaltenbrunner, had broken this pattern by becoming a Habsburg civil servant. Evidently he became a man of some local prominence as a poet in the regional dialect, for even while in prison at Nuremberg Ernst thought it worth mentioning that there was a memorial to his ancestor in the town of Enns.

Ernst's paternal grandfather had also been a man of some local importance as a lawyer, mayor of the town of Efferding, and founder of "the first large...savings bank in the town of Grieskirchen." This gentleman's three children had all "made good" in the context of pre-World War I Austrian middle class (bürgerlich) society. Ernst's father became a lawyer; his brother, a psychiatrist; and his sister, the wife of the director of the provincial

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3 Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 1. This fact was proudly announced in Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193, since this was the native district of the Führer himself.


5 Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 1. He was an employee of Hof-Rechnungskanzlei. Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., pp. 1-2.
archive of Styria.  

Less is known about Ernst's mother's side of the family, save that she was of "modest descent," had been adopted by the Belgian ambassador to Romania, and had spent some twenty-five years of her life in that Balkan state. How she and Hugo Kaltenbrunner came to know one another or how they happened to wed is unknown.

Suffice it to say that Ernst Kaltenbrunner came from a good middle class family. His familial background was thus stable, deeply-rooted in the area around Linz, the upper Austrian provincial capital, and not without a certain local prominence.

Two years after Ernst's birth his father moved to the little market town of Raab and hung out his shingle there. Consequently young Kaltenbrunner grew up in the

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8 Ibid., p. 2.


10 Höttl interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. The conclusion is corroborated by the testimony of one of Ernst's college acquaintances, Dr. Julian Zborowski. Zborowski interview with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968. The author wishes to thank Professor John Haag, of the University of Georgia, for helping to arrange and conduct this interview.

clean air of the country. As he himself put it toward the end of his life, "These first years of my youth were happy for me not only because of the harmony within my parents' household but also because they influenced my entire inner and personal evolution, for they filled me with a great love of nature, interest in farming, and joy in the simple life."\textsuperscript{12} Indeed, after his family moved to Linz in 1918, he used to take the opportunity afforded by holidays to return to the countryside around Raab, where he often worked for local peasants at harvest time.\textsuperscript{13}

From 1909 until 1913 young Kaltenbrunner was enrolled in the elementary school (\textit{Volksschule}) at Raab.\textsuperscript{14} Upon graduation from this school, he was sent by his parents to the public academic high school (\textit{Staatsrealgymnasium}) at Linz, which he attended from 1913 until his graduation in 1921.\textsuperscript{15} Since his parents remained in Raab until 1918, the boy boarded with a certain Mrs. Berta Kalzer, the widow of a lawyer, along with seven other students, until his

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., pp. 2-3. See also \textit{Trial of the Major War Criminals}, Vol. XI, p. 233.

\textsuperscript{13}Kaltenbrunner, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid. See also \textit{Der Grossdeutsche Reichstag}, 1938, p. 270.

\textsuperscript{15}Kaltenbrunner, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 3. See also \textit{Die Deutsche Polizei}, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193.
family came to Linz to live. 16

Two comments seem in order at this point. First, since graduation from a Gymnasium was fundamental to any further academic education in the German-Austrian system of education, it is clear that the Kaltenbrunner family attempted to ensure Ernst of every opportunity to pursue that education. 17 Had they not done so, they would have made it virtually impossible for him to maintain the station in society which had been attained by his father's family, who had been either civil servants or lawyers for three generations.

Second, the Kaltenbrunners were prosperous enough to be able to board Ernst out—though the cost was certainly not tremendous in American terms—so that he could gain such an education. These facts appear to strengthen the picture of the Hugo Kaltenbrunner household as a relatively prosperous, locally prominent, and fundamentally middle class family.

One other facet of Kaltenbrunner's school years in Linz must be mentioned here, since it was to have a considerable importance for the future. While in the Realgymnasium, Ernst became the close friend of a man whose

16 Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, pp. 3-4.

name is far more widely known than his own—though probably undeservedly so: Adolf Eichmann.\footnote{18} Where and how Kaltenbrunner met Eichmann is not entirely clear, but it is evident that they became close friends sometime between 1914 and 1921.\footnote{19}

\footnote{18} With all the ink that has been spilt over Eichmann's life, one would think that there would be an adequate biography of him. There is none. Perhaps the best starting point—though controversial in its interpretations—is Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil (2nd Rev'd. and enlarged ed., New York: Viking, 1964). This work might be supplemented with Moshe Pearlman, The Capture and Trial of Adolf Eichmann (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963). Miss Arendt, as well as others, has made the valid point that Eichmann's importance has been vastly overrated and that his notoriety results largely from the facts of his melodramatic capture and the propagandistic uses to which his trial was put. The relative importance of Eichmann and Kaltenbrunner will be a minor theme in this dissertation.

\footnote{19} Eichmann, who was born in Germany in 1906, moved to Linz in 1914. Gideon Hausner, Justice in Jerusalem (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), p. 27. Hausner was Eichmann's prosecutor in the famous Jerusalem show trial. Kaltenbrunner left Linz to go away to college in 1921. Their friendship is attested to by one of Eichmann's chief subordinates, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dieter Wisliceny, who stated: "According to Eichmann, he met Kaltenbrunner in Linz and they were bosom friends for many years....Their friendship was extremely thorough and close because I [Wisliceny] was present at a short meeting between Eichmann and Kaltenbrunner in 1945. They met in the corridor of Eichmann's office....Kaltenbrunner met him very heartily: he asked about his father's health and about the health of the family in Linz." Affidavit of Dieter Wisliceny (Doc. No. 584), as quoted in Transcript of the Trial in the Case of the Attorney-General of the Government of Israel v. Adolf, the Son of Adolf Karl Eichmann in the District Court of Jerusalem. Criminal Case 40/61 (unedited and unreviewed transcript of the simultaneous translation, Washington, D. C.: Microcard Editions, 1962), p. F 1. See also affidavit of Dieter Wisliceny (affidavit C), Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VIII, p. 610. According to Mr. Simon Wiesenthal, director of the Dokumentationszentrum des Bundes Jüdischer Verfolger des Naziregimes in Vienna, who was instrumental in locating Eichmann, Kaltenbrunner was a witness at Eichmann's wedding. Interview of Mr. Wiesenthal with the author, Vienna, April 4, 1968. This is not illogical, but must await further documentation before being accepted unquestioningly.
It is also known that Ernst was the senior partner in this relationship. He was two years older than Adolf and seems from the first to have considered Eichmann his social inferior. However that may be, the men remained friends for over two decades. It was a friendship which was to have considerable importance in later times.

Thus, by 1921 Ernst Kaltenbrunner had formed one of the more important personal relationships of his lifetime and had graduated from high school. It was now time for him to complete his education by going on to college.

However, by the beginning of the 1920's times had changed considerably, not just on the European stage but also for the Kaltenbrunner family as well. The First World War and its revolutionary aftermath had thoroughly upset the "well-ordered" world of the continental European bourgeoisie, particularly that of the lower middle class, who felt a strong fear of proletarianization (or loss of status) as a consequence of the massive financial and economic disasters following the war. This apprehension was especially strong in Germany and Austria, where it was

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20 Miss Arendt makes this point quite well in Eichmann in Jerusalem, p. 32. The subsequent careers of the two men seem to bear her out, at least circumstantially.

21 Cf. the comments of Wisliceny as noted in the two affidavits cited in ante, p. 11, n. 19. For the importance of their friendship see post, pp. 39-40; 169-170.
coupled with a complex of difficulties resulting from the territorial, political, and social upheaval following on the heels of a lost war.

The political entity in which Ernst had lived his early life— the ancient, stately Habsburg monarchy— was no more. It had shattered on the rocks of military defeat and of well-nigh insoluble internal problems, such as nationality conflicts, the stresses of industrialization, and an archaic governmental structure (the Habsburg empire was a supra-national, dynastic realm which had managed to survive into an epoch of rampant nationalism). The state of which Ernst found himself a citizen in 1921— at first called "German-Austria" and then just Austria— was, to put it bluntly, an

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abortion, with no real raison d'être.  

There were no valid bases, whether historic, ethnic, territorial, or economic, for the continuance of this rump of the old Habsburg dynastic empire. In fact, most of the inhabitants of this country very probably desired union (Anschluss) with the new German republic. After all, the area was overwhelmingly German in culture, tradition, and lifestyle. The differences between people from Linz, in "Austria," and those from Passau, in Bavaria (a part of Germany), were minimal. In fact, it is probably true to say that the "Austrians" and Bavarians had as much or more in common than did the Bavarians and Prussians.

However, the peacemakers at Paris in 1919, despite their proclaimed adherence to the principle of "self-determination of peoples," had no intention of allowing such a fusion to take place. Germany and Austria were the defeated states and their union would have made it appear


24 Ibid., p. 87.

25 Along with Hungary, "German-Austria" was considered as a defeated state on the basis that they were the heirs of the old Habsburg realm. This was an extremely dubious point of view to adopt; it was not applied to Czechoslovakia, for example, which was just as much a legatee of the former empire.
very much as though they had not lost the war at all, for Germany would have been strengthened immeasurably—if merely strategically—by the acquisition of the Cisleithanian region. Therefore both the Treaty of Versailles with Germany (article LXXX) and the Treaty of St. Germain with Austria (article LXXXVIII) forbade the Anschluss without the unanimous consent of the council of the new League of Nations. Considering France's paranoid fear of Germany, such consent was not likely to be forthcoming. As two prominent historians of twentieth-century Europe put it: "Europe insisted on the creation of an independent Austria, an Austria that from the very beginning was financially a liability and politically one of the most disturbing factors in Europe."26

Thus, the first Austrian Republic was launched under somewhat less than auspicious circumstances.27 Indeed, if


one examines the situation more closely, the prospects for an independent Austria were even less encouraging than at first glance. To begin with, the "Austrians" lacked a sense of national identity. They tended to identify themselves either with the Great German Fatherland or with their province—but rarely with that nebulous concept, "Austria."  

Secondly, Austria suffered from a profound dichotomy—a dichotomy often simplified as a conflict of "Blacks" versus "Reds," of Vienna against the other eight provinces. As in all things historical, it is not quite that simple.


There was a conflict between the socialist-dominated city-province of Vienna (the capital) and the other provinces, which were, generally speaking, controlled by the Christian Social Party. However, the Christian Socials and the Socialists were divided among themselves. In addition, there were strong pan-German and agrarian groups further obscuring the political picture.

Thirdly, there were various armed units bearing sundry names but generally going under the generic title of home guards (Heimatschutz), which, somewhat like the German free corps, had sprung up in response to the disorders and border disputes of the early postwar years. These organizations had varied political orientations, were ill-organized in the main, and had weapons. Also, their activities and, indeed, their very existence generated a response on the part of the Socialists, who looked upon them as tools of the predominately conservative and clerical Christian Socials. Needless to say, this situation did not promote a spirit of cooperation between the two major Austrian parties, which drew farther and farther apart. 

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29 A comprehensive history of this movement is badly needed. See, however, Ludwig Jedlicka, "The Austrian Heimwehr," The Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1966), pp. 127-144. See also Whiteside, "Austria," in The European Right, passim.

30 This situation was not helped by the fact that the two most influential leaders of these groups, Monsignor Ignaz Seipel (Christian Social) and Otto Bauer (Socialist), developed a strong antipathy toward one another.
In the fourth place, Austria faced a difficult problem in that she had too many chiefs and not enough Indians, particularly in Vienna; that is, postwar Austria had inherited a large proportion of the bureaucrats and semi-bureaucrats from the defunct empire. The only trouble was that such a small country had not enough work for so many people. What was even worse was that these were the very people who, of they were not employed, could cause the greatest amount of trouble, since they had an education and expectations. Also, in the context of Central Europe, they were the very persons who were most deathly afraid of proletarianization, of becoming a part of the Lumpenproletariat.

Finally, from its very beginning the economic health of the new state was abysmally poor, for the destruction of the Habsburg monarchy and the rapid erection by the new states of East-Central Europe of nationally-inspired tariff barriers cut Austria off from its old markets. Furthermore, the economy was badly unbalanced, since it represented only part of what had long been a much bigger whole. Lastly, the ghastly inflation of the early twenties pushed the fragile Austrian economy to the breaking point—to be saved only by prompt action on the part of the League of Nations (whose help was certainly not free; the League obtained virtual dictatorship over the Austrian financial system for several
Thus, in 1921, when Ernst Kaltenbrunner graduated from high school, his prospects were considerably different from what they had been in 1913, when he finished grade school. The great Habsburg monarchy was gone; in its place was the frail Austrian Republic. In addition, his family came from that group of the lower middle class intelligentsia most fearful of losing their place in society and most heavily hit by the turmoil, particularly the economic dislocation, of the early twenties.

It is therefore entirely understandable that when Ernst went off to the Technische Hochschule (Institute of Technology) at Graz in the autumn of 1921 his original plans were to become a chemist and then emigrate to the Dutch colonies because of the lack of opportunity in his own country.\textsuperscript{32} It is also clear that the family's

\textsuperscript{31}MacDonald, The Republic of Austria, pp. 3-4. For example, in a single month (July-August, 1922), the value of the crown dropped from 110,000 to 336,000 to a pound sterling, while unemployment rose three-fold, from 30,000 to 90,000, and the cost of living went up 124 percent.\textit{Ibid.}, p. 4. All of this was particularly hard on the lower middle class, including professional people.

\textsuperscript{32}Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 4. These plans may have been a bit more vague than Kaltenbrunner indicated in his autobiography. The Nuremberg psychiatrist, Dr. Kelley, noted that Kaltenbrunner seems to have studied without much direction for the first few years in college. Douglas N. Kelley, \textit{22 Cells in Nuremberg: A Psychiatrist Examines the Nazi War Criminals} (New York: Greenberg Publishers, 1947), p. 133. For anyone who has counselled college students this is not an unlikely supposition.
financial situation had worsened, for Ernst had to work his way through school, first as a "coal trimmer" at the Graz railway station, and later as a tutor of Gymnasium students.\textsuperscript{33}

As is usually the case, things got worse instead of better. In the spring of 1923 Hugo Kaltenbrunner became ill, and, at the urging of his mother, Ernst transferred to the law school of the University of Graz, so that he could take over his father's practice in the event of an emergency.\textsuperscript{34}

Still, all these difficulties do not seem to have appreciably dampened Kaltenbrunner's enjoyment of life. He himself wrote that he "came to know the happy side of student life."\textsuperscript{35} A man who knew him fairly well during

\textsuperscript{33}Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 4. He worked the night shift. \textit{Ibid}. See also testimony of Kaltenbrunner, \textit{Trial of the Major War Criminals}, Vol. XI, p. 233. His testimony indicates that he worked as a miner, but his autobiography is explicit in saying that he was a "Kohlentrimmer." In his interview with the author, Dr. Zborowski indicated that part of the family's financial difficulties resulted from the fact that Hugo Kaltenbrunner was forced out of his law firm to make way for the senior partner's son. While there is presently no corroborative evidence for this, in the conditions of the early twenties this seems not at all unlikely. On the whole, it is probably safe to say that the family's decline is attributable to the economic chaos of the period as a whole.

\textsuperscript{34}Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, pp. 4-5. Hugo Kaltenbrunner's illness may have resulted from his war service. Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, \textit{Trial of the Major War Criminals}, Vol. XI, p. 233.

\textsuperscript{35}Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 5.
his college years has indicated that Kaltenbrunner was quite sociable and that he enjoyed drinking and "womanizing" as much as most college students.\footnote{Zborowski interview with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968.} He also appears to have gotten involved with the nationalistic (i.e., Pan-German) dueling fraternities and to have fought duels which resulted in the usual scars.\footnote{Dr. Höttl indicated in an interview with the author on April 21, 1968, that Kaltenbrunner was a member of a nationalist fraternity. Kaltenbrunner himself said that he fought duels, but seemed to intimate that he was not a member of a fraternity. "Ich habe...auch einige Mensuren geflochten, wie dies in Graz auch ausserhalb der Korporationen üblich war," he wrote in his Autobiography, p. 5. Finally, Dr. Kelley states that Kaltenbrunner's facial scars were not the result of dueling but of an automobile accident. Kelley, \textit{22 Cells in Nuremberg}, p. 135. At this point the question is still moot; it depends entirely on whom one chooses to believe. Since Dr. Kelley is very hostile towards Kaltenbrunner, the author is of the opinion that Kaltenbrunner did fight duels, whether or not he was officially a Korpsstudent. Some of the scars may indeed have been the result of an auto crash, for Kaltenbrunner was known to be a terrible driver. See Allen W. Dulles, \textit{The Secret Surrender} (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 134-135.} 

Furthermore, during his years at Graz (1921-1926) Kaltenbrunner became interested in the Balkans and made friends with a group of conservative, royalist Bulgarian students, one of whom was a colonel in the Bulgarian army.\footnote{Kaltenbrunner, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 5. Zborowski interview with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968.} It was also in this circle that he made the
acquaintance of the Nobel-prize-winning chemist, Doctor Fritz Pregl—a friendship which Ernst claimed was maintained until the professor's death in 1930. However that may be, Kaltenbrunner did retain an abiding interest in the southeast European area throughout the remainder of his life—a concern of some importance after he had gained power.

Finally, it was during his years at college that Ernst began to solidify his political beliefs. While he later claimed, probably correctly, that he did not belong to a political party during these years, everyone agrees that he was a Pan-German nationalist. In fact, he was speaker of the Graz University nationalist student union for three semesters in 1924-1925. He may also have had some connection with the Styrian Heimwehr, which grew

Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 5. How close a friendship Ernst had with Dr. Pregl is uncertain, though it should be remembered that Kaltenbrunner started out as a chemistry student and that both men were interested in the Balkans.

See post, pp. 129-130.


Höttl interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968; Zborowski interview with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968.


Zborowski interview with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968. Dr. Zborowski was a member of the Styrian group. Probably Kaltenbrunner was only on the fringes of this organization while at the university.
increasingly radical in the later twenties and finally went over to the National Socialists en masse after its successful Putsch of 1931. Whether this is true or not, by the time Kaltenbrunner was awarded his doctorate of jurisprudence degree in the summer of 1926 it is clear that he had developed strong nationalist tendencies, which grew out of his family's political background, his environmental surroundings in Graz, and his own financial difficulties. Up to this point, he had not carried his


46 Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 5; Der Grossdeutsche Reichstag, 1938, p. 270.

47 His parents were affiliated with the German National People's Party. Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 7. This party was a conservative, Pan-German, nationalist group in the German Republic. (The Kaltenbrunner family's affiliation with this party shows the close connection of Austrian and German affairs in the two decades of the first republic.) It is interesting that the Kaltenbrunnners did not identify with a fundamentally Austrian party such as the Christian Socials.

48 During the 1920's and 1930's Styria was one of the most radical, Pan-German areas in Austria. Even in the 1970's it remains a haven for many ex-Nazis.

49 It appears probable that his financial difficulties could easily be attributed in his mind to the fact that Austria, as created by Allied fiat, offered little room for advancement even for a man with a doctorate. On the other hand, if Austria joined Germany more opportunities for advancement would be available.
political sympathies to the point of affiliating with a political party, but there is little doubt as to where his sympathies lay—and they were not with an independent and democratic Austrian state.

However, the three years following Kaltenbrunner's graduation give little indication that he had any abiding interest in politics.\(^{50}\) He was occupied mainly with the completing of his preparations for becoming a full-fledged lawyer for, as in the United States, the mere possession of a law degree did not make one a lawyer in Austria. On the contrary, one had to serve one year as a law clerk (Referendar)\(^{51}\) and six years as a candidate in a law firm (Rechtanwaltsanwärter)\(^{52}\) before one could be admitted to full-time practice.\(^{53}\) Kaltenbrunner served as a law clerk with the provincial court (Landesgericht) of Upper Austria in Linz from 1926 to 1927.\(^{54}\) Then he spent a year as a candidate lawyer in a law firm in Salzburg.\(^{55}\) Finally, he returned

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\(^{50}\) Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 7.

\(^{51}\) This is the term used in Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193.

\(^{52}\) Ibid.


\(^{54}\) Ibid.

to Linz in 1928 to complete his apprenticeship in his father's office.\textsuperscript{56}

The very paucity of evidence concerning Ernst's political development in these three years seems significant. While he undoubtedly held political opinions during this period, he appears never to have expressed them in any meaningful manner. He seems simply to have gone along in the same old way without making any great commitments and without political affairs making any deep impression on his memory.

Suggestively enough, Kaltenbrunner reentered politics soon after he returned from Salzburg to Linz. In 1929 he joined the Heimwehr movement led by Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Staremburg.\textsuperscript{57} This date is particularly suggestive, because it corresponds with the world-wide economic collapse that began late that year in the United States and rapidly

\textsuperscript{56}\textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{57}Kaltenbrunner, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 7. The perils of translation are at this point abundantly evident. In his \textit{Autobiography} Kaltenbrunner speaks of having been a member of the Heimatschutz-Staremburg from 1929 to 1932. In the official English translation of his testimony before the International Military Tribunal he is quoted as saying he was a member of a "Non-partisan Movement for the Protection of the Austrian Homeland." \textit{Trial of the Major War Criminals}, Vol. XI, p. 233. The French version of his testimony at Nuremberg makes him a supporter of an "Independent movement for a free Austria." \textit{Procès des Grands Criminels de Guerre devant le Tribunal Militaire International} (42 vols., Nuremberg, Germany: International Military Tribunal, 1947), Vol. XI, p. 241. It all makes one wonder what Kaltenbrunner really said.
spread to the economies of Central Europe. The situation in Austria and Germany moved from difficult, to terrible, to chaotic. The breakdown must have appeared especially threatening to a petty bourgeois lawyer like Kaltenbrunner, who could clearly remember the devastating effects that the postwar financial disorder had had upon his family and himself. The none-too-stable fabric of Austrian society was rent by one of the most destructive economic collapses in world history. At such a juncture the Heimwehr certainly must understandably have been attractive to a person in Kaltenbrunner's position, for by 1929 it had
grown large and vociferous, but it was still an amorphous movement with no common bond or program except anti-Marxism, attracting an incongruous mixture of Christian Socialists [sic], conservative monarchists, Grossdeutsche, National Socialists, anti-Semites, bourgeois Jews, big businessmen, artisans, veterans, students, and plain adventurers.  

Certainly the movement—if one may call anything so amorphous and diverse a movement—had large doses of German nationalist and fascist ideas and attitudes diffused throughout it, as one can tell by reading the "Korneuburg Oath" of May 18, 1930.  

Given his past political orientation, Kaltenbrunner was rather naturally drawn toward the

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Heimwehr. During the period of economic and political turmoil which ensued after 1929, the nationalistic and authoritarian aspects of the Heimatschutz should have seemed very attractive to a young lawyer worried about his position in society.

Yet, in spite of this apparent attractiveness, the Heimwehr was to prove uncongenial to Kaltenbrunner because, during the years he was a member (1929-1932), it proved itself incapable of dealing with the problems confronting Austria or of satisfying Kaltenbrunner's personal needs. A political organization may survive and even prosper without a coherent ideology or homogeneous following, as Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy have shown, but only if it has a "charismatic leader" who can mold and

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61 As Professor Whiteside has written, "The men who joined the Heimwehr were chiefly urban middle-class tradesmen, professional men, civil servants, former army officers, small property owners, and rentiers. These were the groups that had been hardest hit by the collapse of the monarchy and had seen their situation deteriorating in the next few years as that of the workers and peasants improved." Whiteside, "Austria," in The European Right, p. 331.

control it. The Heimwehr lacked such a leader. As a consequence, by the early thirties the movement seemed close to disintegration. It appeared to be splintering into fragments—some of which went over to the National Socialists, some of which supported the so-called "Austrofascism" of Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss, and some of which entirely disappeared. Thus Ernst was faced with the problem of where to place his political and personal allegiance.

Basically Kaltenbrunner and those like him were presented with only two options: (1) they could follow Prince Staremberg and that part of the Heimwehr that was supporting

63 On the question of charismatic leadership, see Joseph Nyomarkay, Charisma and Factionalism in the Nazi Party (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1967).


an Austrian authoritarianism; or (2) they could join the increasingly powerful National Socialist movement, which had won a major electoral triumph in the German Reichstag elections of September, 1930. It was not a situation which faced Kaltenbrunner alone. In the early 1930's many citizens of the Austrian Republic had to decide where their allegiance lay. Nor was Ernst's final decision unique, for the road he took was that of many Heimwehr members.  

66 He joined the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP, Nazi) in October, 1930, while still a member of the Heimwehr.  

67 Moreover, not only did he become a party member but he also joined the black-shirted paramilitary elite formation of the NSDAP—


67 Kaltenbrunner's party records, on file at the Berlin Document Center. He received his provisional party card on October 21, 1930, and his membership book on December 31, 1931. Ibid. His party number was 301,490. Kaltenbrunner's party card, available at the Berlin Document Center. See also, Kaltenbrunner's SS personnel records, p. 1; and "Lebenslauf des SS-Obergruppenführers and Generals der Polizei Dr. Ernst Kaltenbrunner," both of which are on file at the Berlin Document Center. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my colleague, Professor A. Taber Green, Jr., of the University of South Alabama, for having obtained microfilm copies of the documents cited in this footnote.
the SS—in August, 1931. 68

Ascertaining why people make certain decisions, such as those Kaltenbrunner made in the early 1930's, is never easy. Human beings, even those whose mental drives seem simplest, are complicated creatures whose motives are often obscure and hidden even from themselves.

Having said that, one is, nevertheless, still faced with the problem of what it was that induced Ernst to join the Nazi Party and the SS. It appears that Kaltenbrunner had several motives for his actions. First, he was a German nationalist and had been one at least since his days at the University of Graz. 69 As such, he desired


69 Höttl interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. On Kaltenbrunner's political activities while in college, see ante, pp. 21-24.
some sort of unification of Austria with Germany, some sort of Anschluss. Just what kind of union he wished in 1930 is difficult to determine, though it is probable that his retrospective comment on the matter is not far from the truth:

My goal was to bring about in Austria a government which would achieve, through appropriately democratic elections expressive of the peoples' intentions, an economically close union with the Reich, and which would allow greater room for Austrian individualism. Vienna ought again to become a crystallization point for the successor states of Old Austria and for the stabilization of their economic necessities, standing in close contact with the Reich.70

The emphasis in this comment on economic matters leads one to the second reason for Kaltenbrunner's decision to join the National Socialists; it might be termed the socio-economic-psychological motive. Certainly the economic position of Kaltenbrunner and his family had declined since his birth—in part due to the impact of the war, in part to the very limited opportunities which presented themselves in the miniscule, isolated state of Austria.71 This economic

70Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 8. "Mein Ziel war, in Österreich eine, der Volksmeinung bei Wahlen entsprechen den demokratische Regierung, die wirtschaftlich engen Anschluss an das Reich zu suchen hätte, herbeizuführen und der österreichischen Individualität weiten Raum zu lassen. Wien sollte wieder Kristallisationspunkt altösterreichischer Nachfolgestaaten werden und zur Stabilisierung wirtschaftlicher Erfordernisse in enger Fühlung mit dem Reich stehen." Ibid. I wish to thank my colleague, Dr. Friedrich Stockmann, of the University of South Alabama, for verifying my translation of this passage.

71In this context, it should not be forgotten that Ernst originally wanted to become a chemist and emigrate to the Dutch colonies because of the lack of opportunity in his native land. Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 4.
decline opened the way to something even more profoundly to be avoided and that was proletarianization—slipping into the ranks of the Lumpenproletariat. Such economic insecurity is deeply frustrating, and the Nazis, as personified in Adolf Hitler, were very adept at playing upon such frustrations and thereby gaining the support of "those who for some reason or other had failed to make a success in their business or occupation, and those who had lost their social status or were in danger of losing it. . . . The masses of the organized [Nazi] party members consisted therefore before 1933 largely of people who were outsiders. . . . thwarted in their ambitions." 72

Kaltenbrunner had another reason to feel frustrated and to seek a position in which he could work out his frustrations. He was not very respected by his associates and acquaintances. Indeed, almost all that has been written about him tends to depict him as a big, dim-witted lummox

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While some of this characterization is the result of retrospective compensation, or of dislike on the part of the persons writing, the theme is too consistent to be ignored. For example, one of Ernst's college acquaintances described him as "a total nothing" (Er war gar nichts). His former subordinate, Dr. Höttl, wrote that he "was well aware that Kaltenbrunner was much too commonplace and in every respect too small-minded a man to go to with grandiose schemes." Höttl has also said that Ernst's father told him that he could not sleep well at night when thinking of his son's taking over his law practice. Furthermore, the Nuremberg psychologist, Dr. G. M. Gilbert, has written that Kaltenbrunner "was a bit of a Lümmel though his measurable ability was a little above average." And the psychiatrist at the

73This term is used in Willi Frischauer, Himmler: The Evil Genius of the Third Reich (New York: Belmont Books, 1962), p. 162. While this book is generally unreliable, this term—or something like it—has been continually applied to Kaltenbrunner by those who knew him.

74Zborowski interview with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968.


76Höttl interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968.

77Letter to the author from Dr. G. M. Gilbert, Brooklyn, N. Y., February 27, 1968.
trial of the war criminals, Dr. Kelley, remarked that as a lawyer Kaltenbrunner "was not outstanding."

The consistency with which the theme of Ernst's ineptness runs through the material concerning him makes it appear quite logical that he was aware of what people thought about him—and resented it. This resentment in itself would be good enough reason for his joining the NSDAP and the SS, where Kaltenbrunner might hope to find the status his personality failed to give him in ordinary, every-day life.

Tied in with Kaltenbrunner's socioeconomic and psychological fears was a characteristic of his personality which was to become more evident later in his life, but which was undoubtedly already present in 1930 and which very probably had a bearing on his decision to join the Nazi Party: his inner need both to command and to comply, to dominate and to submit. He was an excellent example of the so-called "authoritarian" character. That is to

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78 Kelley, 22 Cells at Nuremberg, p. 133.

79 See post, pp. 134-150.

say, he "combined a craving for power over others with a longing for submission to an overwhelmingly strong outside authority."\(^{81}\) Kaltenbrunner, like many others in the 1930's, found that outside agency in the person of Adolf Hitler. "Hitler was his god."\(^{82}\) The Führer was "the focal point of fluctuating expectations and the desire for self-surrender and subjection."\(^{83}\) Kaltenbrunner became Hitler's follower after the Heimwehr movement proved a broken reed for him, and he remained his faithful adherent until the Führer also proved a broken reed.\(^{84}\) Then Kaltenbrunner turned back to Catholicism, the faith of his youth.\(^{85}\) He had to have someone or something upon which to lean for support—for he could not stand alone.

Furthermore, while these ideological, socioeconomic, and psychological motivations played a large role in


\(^{82}\) Höttl interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. This type of attitude was typical of many high-ranking National Socialist leaders, such as Joseph Goebbels, Hermann Göring, Hans Frank, etc. Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich*, pp. 298-299. See also Nyomarkay, *Charisma and Factionalism in the Nazi Party*, passim.

\(^{83}\) Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich*, p. 41.

\(^{84}\) See *post*, pp. 182-183.

inducing Kaltenbrunner to join the Nazi movement, it cannot be denied that there was also an element of opportunism in his joining the party as well.\textsuperscript{86} Just before Kaltenbrunner adhered to the party in 1930, the NSDAP had scored a tremendous electoral victory in the German Reichstag elections. It seemed to many that Nazism was the wave of the future\textsuperscript{87} that the party would soon sweep to power in the Reich and then move on to overpower the apparently feeble Austrian state. This ostensibly irresistible movement emerged just as the Heimwehr organization was beginning to splinter into pieces. It is thus easy to see how a man with "a fairly elastic conscience"\textsuperscript{88} might find the appeal of the NSDAP to be rather strong.

Finally, there was in Kaltenbrunner's decision to join the Nazi Party an element of chance. As he himself said, "Everything was contained in a mightier destiny which swept me along with it."\textsuperscript{89} Ernst got caught up in

\textsuperscript{86} Cf. the comments of the man who prosecuted Kaltenbrunner at Nuremberg, Whitney R. Harris, in a letter to the author, St. Louis, Mo., November 4, 1965; and also the remarks of the psychologist, Dr. Gilbert, in a letter to the author, Brooklyn, N. Y., February 27, 1968.


\textsuperscript{88} Höttl, \textit{The Secret Front}, p. 299.

\textsuperscript{89} As quoted in Fest, \textit{The Face of the Third Reich}, p. 304. Note also the surprisingly similar remark of Albert Speer,
a maelstrom which was to propel him to great heights and then to hurl him into the abyss.

Thus it can be seen that Kaltenbrunner's decision to join the National Socialist movement was not the result of any one factor, but, like most such actions, the consequence of a group of interconnected, reënforcing motivations. These influences were a compound of an "almost inextricable tangle of political motives, satisfaction of personal instincts and cold calculation." Due to his strong German nationalism, his social and economic frustrations, his psychological inadequacies, and his opportunism—all interacting with and reënforcing each other—Kaltenbrunner was grist for Hitler's mill. He became a true believer in 1930 and remained one until 1945.

Still, by his twenty-seventh year Ernst had accomplished nothing to justify a full-scale inquiry into his life. He was just a minor European apprentice lawyer in a small provincial city of a minor European state. The first three decades of his existence had been years of preparation for the role he was to play later in both Austrian and German history.

the Reich minister of armaments and war production from 1942 until 1945: "I have the feeling something swooped me off the ground at the time, wrenched me from all my roots, and beamed a host of alien forces upon me." Speer, Inside the Third Reich, p. 33.

90 Fest, The Face of the Third Reich, p. 145.
CHAPTER II

THE CONQUEST AND UTILIZATION OF POWER, 1930-1943

After he joined the National Socialist Party in late 1930 and its elite formation, the SS, some ten months later, Kaltenbrunner's rise in the latter organization was relatively rapid. In September of 1932 he was appointed an SS-Hauptsturmführer\(^1\) and assigned to the staff of SS-Abschnitt VIII,\(^2\) where he served as a legal counsellor.\(^3\) In addition, until 1933 he also acted as a party district speaker.\(^4\) Then in the latter year he was given command

\(^1\)See Appendix I.

\(^2\)An SS-Abschnitt was a major regional subdivision of the SS organization corresponding roughly to an army corps headquarters. Kaltenbrunner's SS Personnel Records, p. 1, on file at the Berlin Document Center.

\(^3\)Rechtsberater. Der Grossdeutsche Reichstag, 1938, p. 270.

\(^4\)Gautredner. See ibid. Such persons were speakers officially recognized as authoritative purveyors of the party program.
of SS-Standarte (regiment) 37 and later of SS-Abschnitt VIII itself. Thus, one can see that if Kaltenbrunner's rise in the SS was something short of meteoric, it was, nonetheless, quite swift. By the mid-1930's he had become a fairly prominent member of the Austrian SS and of the Austrian National Socialist Party.

During these years of the first half of the 1930's the paths of Kaltenbrunner and his old school chum, Adolf Eichmann, crossed once more. Eichmann and his father had gone to attend a Nazi meeting at the invitation of a family friend. While at this gathering Eichmann encountered his old chum, Kaltenbrunner. The latter reportedly took one look at him and said, "'You belong to us!'" Adolf joined the party immediately. Kaltenbrunner's intervention seems to have come at a crucial moment, for Eichmann appears to have been searching for something, anything, to join in order to become part of an organization. He had a choice between the NSDAP and a Masonic group called Schlaraffia. Kaltenbrunner's intervention seems to have given him the final push in the direction

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5Ibid.


7Ibid.
of the Nazi Party. Hence, Kaltenbrunner may be said to have started Eichmann on the path that led to the gallows in Jerusalem.

While Kaltenbrunner's party and SS activities occupied an increasing amount of his time, they by no means constituted his only interests. It was during these years (1930-1935) that he met the woman who was to be his wife: Elizabeth (Lisl) Eder, five years Kaltenbrunner's junior, the daughter of a merchant family in Linz. She and Ernst were married on the fourteenth of January, 1934. Lisl Kaltenbrunner was to bear Ernst three children in the course of their twelve years of

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8 Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, p. 32.

9 Dr. Hötzl in an interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968.

10 She was born on October 10, 1908. Kaltenbrunner's SS Personnel Records, p. 1, on file at the Berlin Document Center.

11 Dr. Hötzl in an interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968; Dr. Zborowski in an interview with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968. Zborowski stated that the Eder family dealt in noodles and were quite small merchants. See also Kaltenbrunner, Autobiography, p. 6.


marriage and was to suffer both from Kaltenbrunner's infidelities and from the exigencies of his political career. That career so far (up to Kaltenbrunner's marriage) had been marked by a steady and relatively rapid rise within the Austrian SS. It had not yet involved any great sacrifices on the part of Kaltenbrunner or his family; however, that was very soon to change.

The political situation in Austria had been worsening throughout the early 1930's.\textsuperscript{14} The economic and financial condition of the state had, under the impact of the Great Depression, gone from bad to worse. This, in turn, had exacerbated the political turmoil within Austria—which was already approaching the boiling point. The country was rapidly reaching a moment of major decision.

Presiding over the affairs of the Austrian state during this period of grave crisis was the tiny peasant politician, Engelbert Dollfuss. Ever since taking office in mid-May 1932, he had been faced with one crisis after another as the foundering republic encountered a whole series of external and internal emergencies. The economy was crumbling, the people divided into increasingly hostile factions, the state tottering. Further complicating the situation was the fact that the National Socialists had come to power in Germany in late January, 1933, having

\textsuperscript{14} On this period in Austrian history, see the works cited in Chapter I, n. 66.
as one of their main goals the intention of "re-uniting" Austria with the German Reich. 15

In attempting to preserve the independence and integrity of the Austrian state, however, the Austrian chancellor was faced with major difficulties. Many Austrians openly or secretly desired the union of Austria with Germany, while many of those opposed to the Anschluss were also against democratic, parliamentary government as well. Dollfuss was thus driven increasingly in the direction of authoritarianism. 16 This meant in essence that a deep chasm opened between Dollfuss and the socialists (who supported democracy but not necessarily the Austrian state). It also meant that the Austrian chancellor relied more and more on the support of Heimwehr leaders, such as Emil Fey and Prince Staremburg who opposed democracy but supported the state. Dollfuss' dilemma also meant that he was increasingly forced to rely upon the aid of the Fascist dictator of Italy, Benito Mussolini, who had his own reasons for supporting Austrian independence from Nazi Germany. In short, the chancellor was more and more caught in a web that prevented him from carrying out his Christian ideas

15 Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf. Translated by Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), p. 3, given a very concise statement of the Nazi aims in regard to Austria.

16 For a sympathetic view of Dollfuss' aims, see Brook-Shepherd, Dollfuss, pp. 169-178.
as he should have liked. The upshot of all this maneuvering was that in early 1933 Dollfuss suspended parliamentary government. A few months later, in June, the Austrian National Socialist Party was dissolved and banned. Suddenly it became dangerous to be a Nazi.

It was at this point that Austrian political events began to impinge directly upon Kaltenbrunner, for shortly after his marriage (in January, 1934) he was arrested for his National Socialist activities and confined, along with other prominent Nazi leaders, in a concentration camp at Kaisersteinbruch. He was to remain incarcerated there for some four and a half months. During the time of his imprisonment he made himself unpleasant to his warders by instigating and leading a hunger strike, which eventually forced the Dollfuss regime to release nearly five hundred prisoners.

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17 One might say that parliamentary government committed suicide and Dollfuss simply performed the last rites. On March 4, 1933, all three presiding officers of parliament resigned, leaving that body leaderless. Dollfuss then acted to suspend parliament indefinitely. See Brook-Shepherd, Dollfuss, pp. 97-99.


19 Der Grossdeutsche Reichstag, 1938, p. 270.

Meanwhile, during the time Kaltenbrunner was imprisoned, political events in Austria moved with great rapidity. In early February the socialists were crushed by brute force—an action which was to have far-reaching consequences, not the least of which was the permanent alienation from the regime of the overwhelming bulk of the working class. The following month the Austrian government signed the Rome Protocols with Hungary and Italy, thereby moving Austria further in the direction of becoming an Italian vassal state. This state of affairs was not at all what Dollfuss would have liked, but he was being pressured by forces far beyond his power to resist. In April Dollfuss's government promulgated a new "Christian corporatist" constitution for Austria. This document was based essentially upon the ideals of the papal encyclicals Rerum novarum and Quadragesimo anno, as well as upon anachronistic, pseudomedieval corporate thought, all mixed up with fascist and semi-fascist ideas. Probably no one connected with the regime was wholly satisfied with the new constitution which never came fully into force.\(^{22}\)

\(^{21}\)See Brook-Shepherd, Dollfuss, pp. 122-147.

\(^{22}\)For a good discussion of the governmental system set up by Dollfuss, see R. John Rath, "Authoritarian Austria," in Native Fascism in the Successor States, 1918-1945, ed. by Peter F. Sugar (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, Inc., 1971), pp. 25-43. This article also deals concisely with the bases of the authoritarian state as set up in 1934.
It was into this highly charged atmosphere that Kaltenbrunner emerged from his imprisonment in the summer of 1934. Unbeknownst to him, a plot was afoot which was to poison the Austrian political scene even further. This was the attempt, on the part of a group of Austrian Nazis with the support of some German party officials, to overthrow the Dollfuss regime through a violent Putsch.\(^{23}\) The effort failed in its main purpose, for, although Chancellor Dollfuss was brutally murdered, the Austrian government reacted swiftly and crushed the revolt. In this action it was supported by Mussolini, who rushed troops to the Brenner frontier in order to protect Austria against Nazi aggression. All the National Socialists had succeeded in doing was to bring about the replacement of the astute and resolute Engelbert Dollfuss with the irresolute and vacillating Kurt von Schuschnigg—\(\)an effect that was to have major consequences over the following several years.

Kaltenbrunner's role in this revolt is clear. He had none. As he himself said when testifying at the Nuremberg

\(^{23}\) On the Putsch in general, see Brook-Shepherd, \textit{Dollfuss}, pp. 231-272; Gehl, \textit{Austria, Germany, and the Anschluss}, pp. 96-98; and Höhne, \textit{The Order of the Death's Head}, pp. 267-274. See also the National Socialist documents on the revolt: Historische Kommission des Reichsführers SS, \textit{Der Erhebung der Österreichischen Nationalsozialisten im Juli 1934} (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1965).
war crimes trial: "I was in no way implicated in the attempted revolt of July, 1934." There is no reason to doubt his word. He was not arrested in the wake of the Attentat; nor did he ever claim, even during the years 1938-1945, when such a role would have won him plaudits, that he had had any part to play in this revolt.

Indeed, Kaltenbrunner's non-involvement in the 1934 Putsch was to have important consequences for him from 1934 to 1938. Immediately following the Attentat it got him involved in the attempt of the Schuschnigg government to come to some sort of agreement with the so-called "moderates" within the Austrian National Socialist Party. In the fall of 1934 Chancellor Schuschnigg and a committee of these alleged "moderates" began a series of talks which lasted for several months. The "moderates" were led by Anton Reinthaller and Franz Langoth, and included Kaltenbrunner. Within this so-called Reinthaller pacification


26 Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Trial of the Major War Criminals, Vol. XI, p. 234. See also Langoth's memoirs, Kampf um Österreich (Wels, Austria: Verlag "Welsermühl," 1951), passim.

action (Befriedungsaktion Reinthaller) the Schuschnigg government, in Kaltenbrunner's words, "demanded that certain men should maintain connections with the then forbidden movement. With the knowledge and consent of the Government and the proper police departments" Kaltenbrunner "took up the connection with the SS." 29

In addition to attempting to build a bridge between the Nazi Party and the state, the "moderates" also tried to provide aid for the needy families of arrested or condemned National Socialists. 30 The Austrian government tolerated, indeed sanctioned, these activities as a means of lessening tension following the Putsch. 31

However, in the end, the gap between the authoritarianism of the Austrian regime and the total commitment of even the more moderate National Socialist proved too wide to bridge and the talks collapsed. 32 For Kaltenbrunner, these discussions and their failure had three major results. First,

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31 Ibid.

32 Whiteside, "Austria," in The European Right, p. 351.
they mark his maiden appearance on the political scene as an important member of the illegal Nazi organization. Second, they indicate (for the first time) where he stood in the increasingly bitter internecine quarrels within the Austrian National Socialist Party: he was on the side of the so-called "moderates," where he was to remain throughout the balance of the life of independent Austria. Third, the collapse of these discussions resulted in Kaltenbrunner being rearrested.

In May, 1935, Kaltenbrunner was arrested and charged with suspicion of high treason, because of his connections and discussions with the illegal SS and other Nazi organizations. He was arraigned before the military tribunal at Wels, Upper Austria, but after some ten months of confinement the charge of high treason was dropped, since the government itself had sanctioned the relations for which he had been brought to trial. He was charged instead with, and convicted of, conspiracy (G-heimbündelei)

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and received a six months' sentence of imprisonment\(^{36}\) which was commuted to the time already served.\(^{37}\)

In the meantime, in the spring of 1935, the Schuschnigg regime had deprived Kaltenbrunner of his right to practice his profession.\(^{38}\) This deprivation was to have important consequences for him, for it meant that just at the beginning of his career\(^{39}\) he was thrown out of work on account of his political convictions. Nothing could have been more carefully calculated to alienate him more completely from the Austrian government or to throw him more fully into the arms of the National Socialists than this action of the Schuschnigg regime. During the remaining years of the Schuschnigg government Kaltenbrunner and his family were forced to live with his wife's parents while he eked out a living buying and selling stamps.\(^{40}\) Needless to say, this

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39 He had become a partner in his father's law firm in 1933. Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, p. 34.

uncomfortable situation did not serve to soften his feelings toward the regime; it may very well have had the opposite effect.

Thus, Kaltenbrunner had every reason to detest the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg system for what it had done to him. It had imprisoned him twice; it had cut off his livelihood; it had forced him to live with his in-laws (never a very pleasant situation). The surprising thing is not that he remained a Nazi, dedicated to the replacement of the Schuschnigg regime by a government that would bring about some sort of closer relationship with Hitler's Germany, but rather that he did not join the radical wing of the party.

Since 1934 the Austrian National Socialist movement had been rent with cleavages between the radicals, led by Captain Josef Leopold, who advocated a revolutionary solution to the "Austrian Question," and the moderates, led by such men as Anton Reinthaller (and increasingly supported by such crypto-Nazis as Artur Seyss-Inquart and Edmund von Glaise-Horstenau), who advocated an evolutionary, "legalist" approach to Austrian affairs. Indeed, one historian of the period has gone so far as to indicate that a good deal of the interest in Austrian history in the years from 1936 to 1938 lies in the conflict between these rival factions within the Nazi movement for control of the party and in
the relationship between these groups and the Austrian government. 41

In fact, much the same comment can be made regarding Kaltenbrunner's career from the time of his release from prison in early 1936 until the collapse of the Schuschnigg government in early 1938. In other words, Kaltenbrunner's political career is intimately connected with the internecine party struggles and the consequences of these conflicts for the relationship between the Austrian National Socialist Party and the Austrian state. This was particularly true in Kaltenbrunner's case, for he had been appointed head of the entire Austrian SS in January, 1937. 42 Since he

41 Whiteside, "Austria," in The European Right, p. 355.

42 Völkischer Beobachter, Vienna edition, July 2, 1938. There is some confusion as to precisely when Kaltenbrunner was named head of the Austrian SS. Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193, says that it was in the spring of 1935. Wilhelm Höttl consistently maintains that it was in the autumn of 1936 (and for Höttl to be consistent is very rare). Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, p. 40; "Deposition of Wilhelm Höttl," Nuremberg, October 10, 1945 (Doc. No. PS-1746B on deposit at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich), p. 8; interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. January, 1937, was chosen as the most likely date since Kaltenbrunner was promoted SS-Oberführer on April 20, 1937. Kaltenbrunner's SS Personnel Records, p. 1, on file at the Berlin Document Center. It is possible that the appointment was made in the autumn of 1936 and not made official until the following January. The unsupported date of 1935 must be rejected--at least until further new evidence is found.
had joined the SS only as recently as 1931, this appointment amounted to a fairly rapid climb to power. Why was he appointed to the post? The answer seems not to lie in Kaltenbrunner's ability, for it appears that no one had any great faith in his cleverness or ingenuity. Rather, it seems to have been a case of being in the right place at the right time. This fortuitousness is a theme which runs throughout Kaltenbrunner's career. He had an uncanny knack of falling into things. That is to say, at certain key points in his career, through no actions on his part, he was in just the right spot for a promotion. It may be a bit historically unscientific, but about all one can say is that he was simply lucky.

In 1936-1937 he was well placed for a promotion. It seems that in the preceding year the Schuschnigg government had jailed most of the Austrian SS leadership after catching them in one of their perennial conspiracies against the regime. As a result of these arrests, Kaltenbrunner suddenly found himself the highest-ranking leader of the Austrian SS who was not either in jail, in exile, or in the grave. Soon thereafter the Reichsführer SS

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43 Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, p. 40; Höttl deposition, Nuremberg, October 10, 1945, Doc. No. PS-1746E, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich; interview of Dr. Zborowski with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968.

44 Interview of Dr. Zborowski with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968; Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, p. 40.
appointed him head of the Austrian SS.\textsuperscript{45} Thus, Kaltenbrunner rose to prominence through a fluke. A very fleeting constellation of factors had conspired to place him in a pivotal position in the incessant conflicts within the Austrian NSDAP, for though the SS was small it was also disciplined and dedicated. Therefore, Kaltenbrunner became the leader of an important segment of the National Socialist apparatus in Austria at a crucial period.

The latter half of 1936 and early 1937 was a critical time in Austrian politics. The conflicts between the Nazi radicals and moderates and their relationships with the Austrian government entered a very important stage, which was signalized by the conclusion of the German-Austrian Agreement of July 11, 1936.\textsuperscript{46} This treaty was an attempt on the part of the legalists in Germany, the moderate Austrian National Socialists, and the Schuschnigg government to come to some sort of modus vivendi. Under the terms of the agreement, the Austrian government freed

\textsuperscript{45}Höttl deposition, Nuremberg, October 10, 1945, Doc. No. PS-1746B, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

some 17,000 persons imprisoned for their National Socialist leanings, dropped the proceedings against some 12,000 others, and agreed to admit a representative of the so-called "national opposition"\textsuperscript{47} to the government. On its part, the German government undertook to respect Austrian independence.\textsuperscript{48}

This treaty was welcomed by the moderate Nazis, as well as by the "national opposition," as a major step toward bringing Austria into a closer relationship with the Reich. The National Socialist radicals, however, looked upon it as a cover under which to pursue their own, more violent, goals.

Kaltenbrunner's role in this maneuvering is clear. He strongly supported the moderates and used his influence as head of the SS to hold down the extremists within the party. Indeed, within the party\textsuperscript{49} he was known as the

\textsuperscript{47}This group was composed of right-wing political leaders who were outside the Austrian authoritarian system but who were not officially Nazis. It was supported by the moderate wing of the Austrian National Socialists.

\textsuperscript{48}Gehl, Austria, Germany, and the Anschluss, pp. 144-145. Austria also undertook to concert its foreign policy with that of Germany. Ibid., p. 144. For a solid discussion of the consequences of the treaty, see ibid., pp. 143-153. See also Kurt von Schuschnigg, The Brutal Takeover: The ex-Chancellor's Account of the Anschluss of Austria by Hitler, Translated by Richard Barry (New York: Atheneum, 1971), pp. 138-150, for the former Chancellor's view of the agreement.

\textsuperscript{49}Testimony of Seyss-Inquart, Procès des Grands Criminels, Vol. XVI, p. 86.
"policeman of July 11." 50 During the months between the July agreement and the Anschluss Kaltenbrunner moved closer and closer to Seyss-Inquart's position on political questions. He himself said that "in 1937 and 1938 I attempted to come into close personal contact with Seyss-Inquart...and I completely adopted his political conceptions." 51

Kaltenbrunner's political orientation is all the more important in view of the fact that he was later known as a hard-line radical. 52 There was nothing in his actions during the first thirty years of his life to indicate that he was anything like a "radical." On the contrary, there is every evidence that, at least until the Anschluss, Kaltenbrunner pursued a policy of moderation and gradualism. This moderation can clearly be seen in his relationship with Artur Seyss-Inquart—the man who by 1938 was the embodiment of the so-called "national opposition" as well as the cynosure of many of the less radical National Socialists. Kaltenbrunner attempted to draw as close to Seyss-Inquart as was possible, and he was

50 Ibid.


52 See post, pp. 159-161.
successful in doing just that. As Dr. Höttl put it, Kaltenbrunner was in good with Seyss-Inquart even though they were not friends. 53

This relationship was to stand Kaltenbrunner in good stead in the years 1937 and 1938, as can be seen from an incident that occurred early in the former year. On March 14, 1937, Kaltenbrunner wrote a letter to Seyss-Inquart indicating that he (Kaltenbrunner) was in danger of being arrested for his Nazi activities. He solicited Seyss-Inquart's help to prevent this action. 54 Seyss-Inquart promptly wrote a letter to his friend and associate in the "national opposition," Federal Minister Edmund von Glaise-Horstenau, forwarding Kaltenbrunner's plea and requesting the minister's aid in getting the SS chief off the hook, because, as he wrote, "He backs our position and performs useful service." 55 The intervention

53 Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968; Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, p. 40.

54 Letter of Kaltenbrunner to Artur Seyss-Inquart, Linz, March 14, 1937. This letter is in the Österreichische Verwaltungsarchiv in Vienna. It was kindly placed at my disposal by Dr. Wolfgang Rosar, a student of Professor Ludwig Jedlicka.

55 Letter from Artur Seyss-Inquart to Edmund von Glaise-Horstenau, Vienna, March 16, 1937. This letter is also in the Österreichische Verwaltungsarchiv in Vienna and was made available to me by Dr. Rosar.
by Seyss-Inquart and von Claise-Horstenaub was evidently successful, for Kaltenbrunner was not arrested even though he continued to pursue his illegal, indeed treasonable, activities as head of the Austrian SS.

All in all, Kaltenbrunner's position by the beginning of 1938 was that of a moderately important, second-rank figure within the Austrian National Socialist movement. What raised him above the ordinary was his close relationship with Seyss-Inquart and his control over the Austrian SS, which gave him considerable leverage in the midst of the "desperate" rivalries which characterized the Austrian political scene as the year 1938 opened. 56

The year 1938 was to be a very important one both for the Austrian state and for Ernst Kaltenbrunner. Both were to experience major changes before that fateful year was gone. The starting point for these major changes was February 12, when Chancellor Schuschnigg journeyed to Berchtesgaden to confer with Chancellor Hitler. The ensuing meeting was a major disaster for the Austrian regime. Hitler staged one of his most unbridled displays of his

temper that day. He browbeat Schuschnigg without mercy. 57

The Austrian chancellor, a quiet unassuming man, with strong
German nationalist feelings, was thoroughly nonplussed by
Hitler's tirades and ended up by knuckling under to the
Fuhrer's demands. The result was that when Schuschnigg
went home he was virtually a broken man and Austria had
become in essence a German protectorate. 58

In the long run, perhaps the most important concession
that the Austrian chancellor had agreed to was the appoint-
ment of Seyss-Inquart as the Austrian minister of the
interior and of security. It was an appointment fraught
with danger for the Schuschnigg regime, since Kaltenbrunner's
protector, one of the leaders of the "national opposition,"
was now in charge of the Austrian security forces. The
month following the signing of the Berchtesgaden agreement
saw growing tension in Austria, for many of the Austrian
Nazis, especially the so-called "radicals," looked upon

57 Kurt von Schuschnigg, Austrian Requiem. Translated
by Franz von Hildebrand (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons,
1946), pp. 11-26; Schuschnigg, The Brutal Takeover, pp. 189-
200.

58 See Gehl, Austria, Germany, and the Anschluss, pp. 170-
175; Christopher Thorne, The Approach of War, 1938-1939;
In The Making of the 20th Century series (New York: St.
The Origins of the Second World War (2nd ed., New York:
Fawcett World Library, 1965), pp. 139-140.
the accord as an invitation to subvert the Schuschnigg regime. Increasingly the Austrian chancellor became convinced that an insurrection was being planned by these radical elements. To thwart the plans of this group as well as the designs of the more moderate elements of the Nazi Party and the "national opposition"--who desired an Anschluss through peaceful processes--Chancellor Schuschnigg resolved to call a plebiscite which would, he hoped, indicate the overwhelming support of the Austrian people for the continued independence of the Austrian state. Of course, the way the question was put ("for a free and German, independent and social, Christian and united Austria! For peace and work and the equality of all who acknowledge their faith in our people and Fatherland!" and the way the balloting was to be held mitigated against an unfavorable vote--just as Hitler's own plebiscites were slanted. The calling of this plebiscite proved to be a fatal error on Schuschnigg's part, for the Führer reacted in a most uncompromising manner. Hitler determined to crush the Austrian chancellor and settle the "Austrian Question" once and for all.

59 Schuschnigg, The Brutal Takeover, pp. 252-253; Schuschnigg, Austrian Requiem, pp. 36-37.

60 Gehl, Austria, Germany, and the Anschluss, p. 184.
Schuschnigg's defiance of Germany and Hitler's reaction to that defiance set the stage for the long-debated and long-awaited Anschluss with Germany. Kaltenbrunner played a small but significant role in the events of the week between the Austrian chancellor's announcement of the proposed plebiscite (on March 9) and the appearance of the Führer in Vienna, signalizing the annexation of the so-called Ostmark by Germany (on March 13). That role consisted of two parts. The first was his contribution to the decisive events of March 11; the second was the part he played in the government set up to replace the Schuschnigg regime.

On March 11, Hitler and his close associate Field Marshal Hermann Göring set out to break the Austrian

61 This monograph is not concerned with the broader question of the Anschluss itself but will be confined to Kaltenbrunner's part therein. For full details on the events of this momentus week, see Gordon Brook-Shepherd, The Anschluss (Philadelphia, Pa.: J. B. Lippincott, 1963), passim; and Dieter Wagner and Herhard Tomkowitz, Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer: The Nazi Annexation of Austria, 1938. Translated by Geoffrey Strahan (London: Longman, 1971), passim.

62 Göring was commander-in-chief of the German air force, head of the Four Year Plan Office (and hence czar of the German economy), the president of the Reichstag, etc. In 1938 he was the second most important man in the Nazi regime. He was a ruthless and efficient executor of Hitler's ideas and not the sort of man to whom the Pan-German, retiring, vacillating Schuschnigg was likely to stand up.
government. Using the telephone, Göring delivered a series of ultimatums to the Schuschnigg regime from Berlin. At first he demanded the modification of the terms and methods of the plebiscite. When that was granted, he pressed further and demanded the suspension of the vote entirely. When Schuschnigg granted that demand, the field marshal ordered the Austrian chancellor to resign so that he might be succeeded by a leader of the "national opposition," Seyss-Inquart. The Austrian leader agreed to this demand as well.

Meanwhile, Kaltenbrunner, who had been hiding out at the home of a lady friend, ordered his 500 to 700 available SS men, in conjunction with some 6,000 troopers.

63 Wagner and Tomkowitz, Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer, p. 77. Kaltenbrunner had the reputation of being a gay blade, with a girl in every city. Ibid. This reputation is quite consistent with his later behavior.

64 There is some confusion as to the exact number. In a speech he delivered in 1942, Friedrich Rainer put the number at 500. Speech of Rainer, Doc. No. 4005-PS, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 711. In a newspaper article in 1939, the same person put the number at 700. Article by Rainer, Doc. No. 4004-PS, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 693. Rainer was a high Austrian party official before the Anschluss and later Gauleiter of Salzburg and then of Carinthia. Peter Hüttenberger, Die Gauleiter: Studie zum Wandel des Machgefüges in der NSDAP. In Schriftenreihe der Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte, No. 19 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1969), pp. 222-223. It seems logical to assume that the exact number was unknown but probably lay somewhere between these two figures.
of Hans Lukesch's SA, to take control of the government quarter of Vienna. Of these men, some 40 had a very special task. These SS troopers, led by Kaltenbrunner's adjutant, Felix Rinner, were ordered to take control of the federal chancellory in order to make certain that the Austrian government was overthrown. This special unit of the 89 SS regiment (Standarte) entered the chancellory building about 10 P. M. and effectively made plain the Nazi presence, though, as it turned out, their presence there had little noticeable effect.

While Kaltenbrunner and his men were carrying out these actions, Göring's coup by telephone succeeded—Seyss-Inquart became head of the new Austrian government and German troops entered Austria. It was at this point that Seyss-Inquart's political naïveté became abundantly clear. He evidently believed that Hitler would allow him to remain head of an autonomous Austrian government in

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65 Article by Rainer, Doc. No. 4004-PS, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, p. 693.

66 Ibid. See also Wagner and Tomkowitz, Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer, pp. 152-153.

67 Wagner and Tomkowitz, Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer, p. 152.

68 This is evident from the fact that participants rarely mention their presence.
close association with the Reich. In accordance with this belief, he had retained Dr. Michael Skubl, a professional police official, as a state secretary for security, rather than replacing him with a National Socialist such as Kaltenbrunner. As for the latter, the new chancellor intended to give him a subordinate post in the police because "he had shown himself always very loyal to me."70

However, Seyss-Inquart's plans were not precisely what the German National Socialists had in mind, as was quickly made apparent when the Reichsführer SS, Heinrich Himmler, arrived at Vienna's Aspern airport at 3:00 A. M. on March 12.71 Himmler was met by a delegation of Austrians, including Kaltenbrunner and State Secretary Skubl. The former, dressed in knickerbockers, sports coat, and bow tie,72 rather grandiloquently declared that the "SS is in formation awaiting further orders."73 Himmler,


71 Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193. See also Wagner and Tomkowitz, Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer, p. 175.

72 Wagner and Tomkowitz, Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer, p. 175.

however, was not interested in the motley group of civilians who constituted his honor guard; he was much more concerned with the presence of Dr. Skubl. He was appalled that the long-time Austrian police official, whose loyalty to the Austrian regime was well-known, was still head of the police. Skubl was also unhappy with the arrangement. As a result, the next morning Skubl asked Seyss-Inquart to be allowed to resign. His request was granted.

That same day (March 13) Hitler, after his tumultuous reception in Linz, the city of his childhood (and Kaltenbrunner's), definitely decided to annex Austria to the Reich. Thus ended Seyss-Inquart's dream of an "independent" Austria. That same day Kaltenbrunner received his reward for his loyal service. He was sworn in as state secretary for security in place of Dr. Skubl.

\[74\] Wagner and Tomkowitz, *Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer*, p. 175.

\[75\] Who was there to meet Himmler in the Reichsführer's capacity as chief of the German police.


day before (March 12) he had been promoted SS-Brigadeführer and appointed chief of SS-Oberabschnitt Österreich. Thus, he was placed in charge of all the SS and security forces in the newly annexed territory.

His position was further strengthened later in the year by his promotion to SS-Gruppenführer and his appointment as higher SS and police leader (Höherer SS und Polizeiführer) in defense district (Wehrkreis) XVII, which included Vienna, Lower Austria, and Upper Austria. The

78 Kaltenbrunner's SS Personnel Records, p. 1, on file at the Berlin Document Center; Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193. SS-Oberabschnitt Österreich was later retitled SS-Oberabschnitt Donau in accordance with the Nazi policy of doing away with the name Österreich entirely. See affidavit of Fritz Mundhenke (a Nazi official), Doc. No. 3842-PS, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 778.

79 Kaltenbrunner's SS Personnel Records, p. 1, on file at the Berlin Document Center; Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193. He was promoted SS-Gruppenführer on September 9, 1938. Kaltenbrunner's SS Personnel Records, p. 1. When he was appointed higher SS and police leader is not entirely clear. He claimed it was July, 1941. Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Trial of the Major War Criminals, Vol. XI, p. 237. However, a letter from Kaltenbrunner to the chief of the order police, SS-Obergruppenführer Kurt Daluge, dated Vienna, November 5, 1938, has a letterhead saying Der Führer des SS-Oberabschnittes Donau und Höherere SS und Polizeiführer SS-Gruppenführer Dr. Kaltenbrunner (this letter is on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte of the University of Vienna); so he held that office at least by that time. He was also "elected" to the Great German Reichstag in April, 1938. Der Grossdeutsche Reichstag, 1938, p. 270. In April, 1941, he was promoted Generalleutnant der Polizei. Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 10 (May 15, 1943), p. 193.
higher SS and police leaders were Himmler's personal representatives, whose duty it was to control the various SS and police departments that made up the Reichsführer's growing empire. However, within the pre-war Reich, which included Austria, their powers were somewhat restricted by competition with the central authorities, such as the Reich security main office, the main office order police, and so on. Consequently, Kaltenbrunner's position was actually not so powerful in fact as it appeared in theory.  

Still, as state secretary, higher SS and police leader, and head of SS-Oberabschnitt Donau, he was a man of some considerable prominence and power.  

In his new position of eminence and authority, SS-Brigadeführer Kaltenbrunner had several pressing problems which may be subsumed under three heads: enemies of the people, Jews, and the plebiscite. First, he was responsible for eliminating those persons within Austria who were, or

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80 On this question, and on the whole matter of the higher SS and police leaders, see Hans Buchheim, "Die Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer," Vierteljahrshfte für Zeitgeschichte, Vol. XI, No. 4 (October, 1963), pp. 362-391.

81 Kaltenbrunner's position as state secretary was abolished when the Austrian government was dissolved in early 1940. See his "Report to the Reich Ministry of the Interior," of March 31, 1940, on file at the Berlin Document Center. See also Karl R. Stadler, Austria. In Nations of the Modern World series (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1971), p. 182.
who were thought to be, opposed to the new regime. Some 76,000 people were arrested in Vienna alone in the days following the Anschluss.\footnote{Alan Bullock, \textit{Hitler: A Study in Tyranny} (completely rev'd ed., New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 434, citing figures given by Seyss-Inquart's defence counsel at the Nuremberg trial.} Among these was Kaltenbrunner's predecessor as state secretary, Dr. Skubl, who was placed under house arrest on March 13 and some ten days later deported to Kassel.\footnote{Testimony of Skubl, 28th sitting, April 10, 1947, in \textit{Der Hochverratprozess gegen Dr. Guido Schmidt vor dem Wiener Volksgericht: Die Gerichtlichen Protokolle mit Zeugenaussagen, unveröffentlichten Dokumenten sämtlichen Geheimbriefen und Geheimakten} (Vienna: Druck und Verlag der Österreichischen Staatsdruckerei, 1947), p. 327. Incidentally, Kaltenbrunner had not known Schmidt prior to the Anschluss. Interrogation of Kaltenbrunner, as quoted in \textit{Der Hochverratprozess gegen Dr. Guido Schmidt}, p. 336.} Also placed in custody was former Chancellor Schuschnigg, who was poorly treated by his captors,\footnote{See Schuschnigg, \textit{Austrian Requiem}, pp. 58-92.} though not by Kaltenbrunner. The latter even visited the former chancellor on July 1, 1938, and was kind enough to bring Schuschnigg's wife to see him.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 78.} There was still a good deal of the Austrian in Kaltenbrunner.

The second problem facing the new state secretary was that of dealing with the Jews, of whom there were some
185,246 in Austria--some 169,978 of them in Vienna alone. To the Nazis the existence in Austria of this large group of Jews was one of the less desirable aspects of the Anschluss, for the National Socialist authorities were determined to make the Reich free of Jews (Judenrein). This being the case, they set to work with a will to force the Jews to emigrate. In charge of this program was Kaltenbrunner's old friend and now the Reich security main office's resident Jewish expert, SS-Hauptsturmführer Adolf Eichmann. It should be emphasized that Kaltenbrunner was not directly responsible for carrying out the anti-Jewish measures of the new regime, though, both as state secretary and as higher SS and police leader, he was cognizant of the measures that were taken and ultimately responsible for them.

Whatever his ultimate responsibility for such actions, they were effective, for by May, 1939, there were only 121,238 Jews and part Jews left in Austria--

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87 See, for example, "Report of the Police Vice-President in Vienna to the Reich Commissioner for the Reintegration of Austria with the Reich," Vienna, November 21, 1938, Doc. No. 2237-PS, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.
a decline of about 64,000 in little over a year. It was a record of which the Nazis were proud. It was also a preview of Kaltenbrunner's later work as head of the Reich security main office.

The third major activity of the state secretary in 1938 concerned the plebiscite to be held on April 10. It was Kaltenbrunner's responsibility to see that the apparent enthusiasm of the Austrian people was channeled into more tangible directions; that is, he and his personnel were in charge of seeing to it that the plebiscite was a success. The object was achieved; the vote was an overwhelming 99.73 per cent in favor of the Anschluss. While it is probable that even in a free election a clear majority would have approved the Anschluss,\(^8^8\) it is certain that

\(^8^8\)Just as they would have approved Schuschnigg's proposal of the month before. Plebiscites are notoriously easy to weight in the direction the government wishes them to go, even without overt coercion. There is still a good deal of discussion as to just how many Austrians really wanted the Anschluss with Hitler's Germany. It is doubtful if a final answer will ever be found. Schuschnigg himself says that to "some extent everyone was elated and everyone accepted...simply because no one could avoid hearing the noises off and feeling their effects." Schuschnigg, The Brutal Takeover, p. 330. And Walter Laqueur has commented that the "99 per cent vote in favor of the Anschluss was probably not faked very much." Walter Laqueur, Review of The Brutal Takeover in the New York Times Book Review, September 12, 1971, p. 6. (I owe the latter reference to my colleague, Professor William A. Speck, of the University of South Alabama.) Perhaps the best thing that can be said is that many Austrians accepted the situation and none were willing to take up arms against it.
without the coercive measures applied by the police and
the SS the vote would not have been anywhere near as
large as it was. 89

With the completion of these three major tasks, the
first phase of Kaltenbrunner's enjoyment of the perquisites
of power drew to a close. The next stage in his life,
which lasted from early 1939 until early 1943, was
essentially a period of marking time. He performed duties
that were for the most part routine, as compared to his
activities during the period of the middle 1930's or of
the immediate post-Anschluss era. As Wilhelm Höttl
remarked: "Kaltenbrunner led a very humdrum life in
Vienna." 90  As higher SS and police leader, his tasks
were largely routine, and he was only marginally connected
with the tremendous events that shook the world during
these momentous years.

Of course, his duties were not quite so humdrum or
innocuous as he himself claimed at Nuremberg, where he
maintained that the "State Police and the Criminal Police
as well as the Security Service in Austria were directed

89 Kaltenbrunner had a personal stake in this election,
since it was not only a plebiscite on the Anschluss
question but also an election to the Reichstag, and he
was a candidate. Needless to say, he was elected.

centrally from Berlin and were completely removed from his control. "My activity as Higher SS and Police Leader in Austria—unlike the activity of the same men in the Reich—was therefore limited merely to the task of representing or leading the General SS."91 This was a patent falsehood, to say the least. Rivalry between the higher SS and police leaders and the central authorities was certainly common, but the former still had a good deal of power, and it was German policy not to treat Austria any differently than the Old Reich in any way.

Indeed, several incidents show that Kaltenbrunner had more power than he later admitted to having. For example, there is the case of a man named Arthur Nedbal. In early 1938, prior to the Anschluss, Kaltenbrunner purchased a new bicycle from this man, who ran a bicycle shop. Kaltenbrunner did not pay the 400 schillings that the machine cost; so Mr. Nedbal brought suit against him, and received judgment against Kaltenbrunner,92 who then paid up.

91 Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Trial of the Major War Criminals, Vol. XI, p. 237. The General SS was the branch of the SS consisting of the regular part-time SS men as opposed to the SS security service, the police, the armed (Waffen) SS, or the concentration camp personnel. If he were in charge only of that, he was relatively innocent of major crimes.

92 Kaltenbrunner was in deep financial difficulty in 1938. In fact, Himmler had to bail him out with some 2,000 RM from special funds. He also told Kaltenbrunner that his life style was beyond his means and he should mend his
Immediately after the Anschluss, Nedbal was arrested as an "enemy of National Socialism" and was confined in a Gestapo prison for some two months. He then was released and in the following year he joined the army. He was discharged two years later because he was half Jewish. So far, he was not doing too badly. Then he made a terrible mistake. On November 13, 1942, he went to have supper at a Vienna restaurant where Kaltenbrunner had a permanent table (Stammgast). The higher SS and police leader saw Nedbal and rushed out to call the Gestapo. Ten minutes later the unfortunate Mr. Nedbal was arrested on Kaltenbrunner's personal order. He spent the next two months in solitary confinement, was released, and then, on March 18, 1943, was again taken into custody by Kaltenbrunner's personal command. After three months in a Gestapo jail, he was sent to the extermination camp at Auschwitz, again at the higher SS and police leader's order. All in all, it was an expensive 400 schillings from Mr. Nedbal's point of view.

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93 This entire incident is based on the deposition of Arthur Nedbal, Vienna, March 3, 1946 (Doc. No. 3946-PS), which is on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (Ref No. OCLXXXVIII-29).
Another example of Kaltenbrunner's power in these years from 1939 to 1943 involved a former Styrian security director under the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg regime: General of Federal Gendarmerie vol Zelburg, who was incarcerated in a concentration camp where one was supposed to answer roll call by giving one's block number and personal number. Von Zelburg kept answering by saying General der Österreichischen Bundesgendarmerie. The higher SS and police leader heard of this and had the general released because of his courage, saying, "One can learn deportment from this man." Still another incident in these years serves to show Kaltenbrunner's authority as higher SS and police leader. This involved the future president of the Second Austrian Republic, General Theodor Körner. The latter had been working in the Austrian War Archives, when, in 1942, Kaltenbrunner personally ordered him excluded from them.

However, Kaltenbrunner was not solely concerned with police and security questions during his tenure as higher SS and police leader in Vienna; he had other interests.

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94 Interview of Dr. Zborowski with the author, Graz, April 9, 1968.


as well. These included a political intelligence apparatus encompassing much of southeastern Europe. As Kaltenbrunner had had an abiding interest in the Balkan area, particularly Bulgaria, since his college days, his desire to undertake some sort of action in that sphere is understandable. Also, given the labyrinthine construction of the National Socialist regime, it is not at all surprising that a regional SS and police leader would undertake what is to all appearances a function of the central government's intelligence community.

Later, Kaltenbrunner explained his "dabbling" in intelligence work thusly:

I did that [set up an intelligence network] because, in the first place, I regretted that the Reich did not make use of at least the political and economic resources, of all the resources which Austria could have put at the disposal of the Reich, and because the Reich with unequalled shortsightedness did not fall back upon Austria's significant mission as an intermediary with the Southeast.97

Even though this comment is a retrospective one, made when Kaltenbrunner was trying to avoid the gallows, it is consistent enough with other statements made by him to have the ring of at least partial truth. It seems clear that Kaltenbrunner had some sort of attachment to the

97Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Trial of the Major War Criminals, Vol. XI, p. 237. See also his comments on his reason for wanting the Anschluss, ante, p. 31.
concept of Austria as a functioning entity, albeit within the Great German Reich. This conclusion is further reinforced by his constant and unwavering support of Seyss-Inquart during the trials and tribulations of the 1930's, for the latter, up to the very day of the Anschluss, had dreams of an autonomous Austria, though certainly one closely associated with Germany. Indeed, Kaltenbrunner's whole political development pointed in this same direction. Even though he was to reach the summit of power, he was never to lose sight dream.\textsuperscript{98}

As a corollary to his dabbling in intelligence work in southeastern Europe, Kaltenbrunner was also involved in the subversion of the Slovakian region of Czechoslovakia in 1938-1939, though only marginally.\textsuperscript{99} Moreover, he had some dealings with the SS formations among the

\textsuperscript{98}See post, pp. 163-165.

German populations of South Moravia (another part of the sorely beset Czechoslovak state). 100

In short, although Dr. Höttl is undoubtedly correct in maintaining that Kaltenbrunner's years as higher SS and police leader were "humdrum," it can still be said that he was not totally disassociated from the problems and prospects of power. By 1943 he was a moderately successful, reasonably powerful, fairly important regional satrap of Heinrich Himmler's vast and growing SS-police empire. Yet, it appears evident that he had not shown any particular qualifications for the post to which he was to be appointed in January, 1943; that of chief of the security police and security service—a position which made him the second most powerful man in the Nazi security apparatus.

Kaltenbrunner's climb to prominence and power had not been an easy one. He had been jailed for his beliefs; he had been deprived of the right to practice his profession, and had thereby been reduced to near-poverty; and he had been harassed and badgered by the powers that

100 See letter of Kaltenbrunner to Reichsminister Dr. Hans Lammers (the head of the Reich Chancellery), Vienna, February 23, 1939 (Doc. No. NG-1438), which is on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine in Paris (Ref. No. CCXCIV-12).
were. Even so, through all of this trouble he had remained a member of the moderate wing of the Austrian National Socialist Party, taking his cues from the "national opposition" leader, Artur Seyss-Inquart. His steadfastness was coupled with his very real belief in some sort of Austrian mission. This does not mean that he was not dedicated to the Anschluss idea, but rather that he felt some attachment to the very concept of "Austria." This dedication to an Austrian idea was to remain true right up until the end of his life. 101

In the end, luck had played a major role in Kaltenbrunner's career, as it does in the careers of most persons. He had not been involved in the plot leading to the July 25, 1934, putsch. Hence, he was not eliminated in the repression that followed it. By 1937, he was the sole remaining high-ranking Austrian SS leader who had not been killed, imprisoned, or exiled, and so became the head of the Austrian SS by default of any challengers for the post. His tenure of this position led directly to his appointment as state secretary for security in the last Austrian government 102 and later as higher SS and

101 See Post, pp. 163-165.

102 He was on good terms with both Himmler and the SS-police authorities and with Seyss-Inquart. His was an altogether enviable position.
police leader. Thus, by 1943 Kaltenbrunner had risen from total obscurity to a powerful and prestigious position among the third-rank leaders of the National Socialist regime. He was now on the verge of the summit of power. This summit he reached in January of 1943.
PART II
KALTENBRUNNER AS A GERMAN FIGURE, 1943-1946

CHAPTER III
AT THE SUMMIT OF POWER, 1943-1945

I: CHIEF OF THE SECURITY POLICE
AND SECURITY SERVICE

On the thirtieth of January, 1943 (the tenth anniversary of the Nazi regime), the Führer, upon the recommendation of the Reichsführer SS, appointed Ernst Kaltenbrunner chief of the security police and security service of the Reich.¹ Through this action, Kaltenbrunner was removed from the relatively narrow Austrian milieu in which he had lived for the first thirty-nine years of his life to the far wider stage of Germany and German-occupied Europe. He was whisked from the humdrum life

¹Die Deutsche Polizei, No. 4 (February 15, 1943), p. 65. He was promoted to SS-Obergruppenführer und General der polizei on June 23, 1943. Kaltenbrunner's SS Personnel Records, p. 1, on file at the Berlin Document Center.
of a provincial satrap of the SS-police empire to the seats of power.

The post to which Kaltenbrunner was appointed—that of chief of the security police (Sicherheitspolizei) and the security service (Sicherheitsdienst--SD)\(^2\)—was one of tremendous potential power, for the person who held this position controlled the Reich security main office (Reichs-sicherheitshauptamt),\(^3\) and through it the secret state police (Gestapo), the criminal police (Kripo), the security service (SD), various administrative departments, and the mobile killing units (Einsatzgruppen) operating in the eastern occupied territories.\(^4\) Furthermore, the chief of the security police and security service was the supervisor of the Jewish affairs section of the Gestapo, section IVB 4, 

\(^2\)The abbreviation SD was constantly used at the time and in all subsequent literature.

\(^3\)The chief of the security police and security service was at the same time head of the Reich security main office. The former title was used in external communications, while the latter was used only internally. See Höhne, The Order of the Death's Head, p. 256. The Reich security main office was a very anomalous organization since it was both a state organ and a main office of the SS leadership. See Appendix III.

headed by Kaltenbrunner's old chum, Adolf Eichmann.

All in all, the position to which Kaltenbrunner had been named was one of great power and prestige. It had been built into such a powerful complex by the only other man who ever held the job, SS-Obergruppenführer and General der Polizei Reinhard Heydrich. This ex-naval officer had joined the SS in 1931, had become head of the SD soon thereafter, and had, by the time of his death at the hands of Czech partisans, made himself the Reichsführer's grey eminence. Heydrich was everything the head of the SS was not--brilliant, athletic, handsome, talented. It was widely thought at the time, and is still believed by many today, that Himmler's rise to power in the years after 1933 was largely due to the efforts of Heydrich. However that may be, there is some indication that Himmler had come to fear and envy his able subordinate. Indeed, the Reichsführer seems to have been somewhat less than griefstricken when Heydrich was killed in early June, 1942. It would also appear to be indicative of the way matters lay between the two men that Himmler waited over six months before appointing

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5 There is no good biography of Heydrich; however, for a summary of his career and character, see Höhne, The Order of the Death's Head, pp. 161-172; and Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel, Himmler (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), pp. 28, 38-39, 78-79, and 84-85.
a successor to Heydrich and then made the appointment only after it had become clear that he himself could not handle the job along with his other myriad responsibilities. Furthermore, before naming a new man to the post, the Reichsführer carefully emasculated it by removing personnel and economic matters from its purview. This then was the situation when Kaltenbrunner was called to Berlin to take over the Reich security main office.

Why was Kaltenbrunner chosen? On the face of it, this appointment does not seem logical. If Himmler wished to have another Heydrich—that is, a brilliant planner and organizer—then Kaltenbrunner was very clearly not his man. The Viennese higher SS and police leader was not noted for his brilliance. Rather, he was thought of by many as something of a lout. If Himmler wished to have an able and experienced police administrator, then Kaltenbrunner was not the logical choice. He had given no evidence during his years of power in Vienna of being more than a mediocre administrator. He certainly was not what one could call a professional police official. If the Reichsführer desired a moderately able office manager who would conscientiously carry out his instructions, then Kaltenbrunner was incontestably not the man to choose. He was not what

6 Höhne, *The Order of the Death's Head*, p. 553.
one thinks of as a solid civil servant; rather, he strikes one as being a somewhat frivolous and almost irresponsible type—a man known as a gay blade, whom Himmler had already once bailed out of financial difficulties.\(^7\) Indeed, it is hard not to agree with Dr. Höttl when he said that "of all the candidates for the post [of head of the Reich Security Main Office], Kaltenbrunner was without exception the least suitable."\(^8\)

If one will grant that Heinrich Himmler, whatever his other failings—and they were many—was not totally unbalanced, why did he pick Kaltenbrunner from his Viennese backwater to take over one of the most potentially powerful posts in the Reich? The ultimate answer would seem to lie in something which was touched upon previously: Himmler had come slowly to fear and distrust the increasingly powerful and independent Heydrich. If there was one thing that the Reichsführer did not want, it was another overly brilliant head of the security police and security service. This desire to avoid an overmighty subordinate immediately excluded from consideration the two young SD chiefs Otto

\(^7\)See ante, p. 71, n. 92.

Ohlendorf and Walther Schellenberg. Conversely, Himmler did not want an experienced and able police official, who might also become a rival. This reason, in turn, excluded Artur Nebe and Heinrich Müller from consideration.

From the Reichsführer's point of view, Kaltenbrunner seemed a perfect choice. He was not brilliant. He was not a top-notch administrator. He was not a professional policeman. He was, moreover, an outsider, a provincial, brought into the central leadership. He was, in short, "a second-rater selected by Himmler...solely in order to ensure that there should not be another Heydrich." 

9 Ohlendorf headed office III of the Reich security main office and was also an official of the economics ministry. He had two earned doctorates and was both handsome and brilliant. Schellenberg was the head of office VI and was disliked by the Reichsführer, whom he treated like a wayward school child. See Felix Kersten, The Kersten Memoirs, 1940-1945. Translated by C. Fitzgibbon and J. Oliver (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1957), pp. 209-210 and 215-216. Schellenberg, however, had the confidence of Himmler. See Walther Schellenberg, The Schellenberg Memoirs. Translated and ed. by Louis Hagen (London: Andre Deutsch, 1959), passim. For the Reich security main office's constituent parts, see Appendix II.

10 Nebe was chief of office V, the criminal police, and was executed after the July 20, 1944, plot. See Hans Bernd Gisevius, Wo ist Nebe? Erinnerungen an Hitlers Reichskriminaldirektor (Zürich: Droemer, 1966), passim. Müller was head of office IV, the Gestapo, and disappeared at the end of World War II. On the Reich security main office's constituent parts, see Appendix II.

11 Hönne, The Order of the Death's Head, p. 553. This statement sums up the consensus of opinion. Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. This was corroborated by Dr. Zboroski in my interview with him, Graz, April 9, 1968. See also Manvell and Fraenkel, Himmler, p. 156; and Reitlinger, The SS, p. 237.
Furthermore, Kaltenbrunner was indebted to the Reichsführer both for his appointment in Vienna and for having bailed him out of financial trouble in 1938. All in all, given his basic criteria, Himmler appeared to have made the perfect choice for the position of chief of the security police. Kaltenbrunner seemed to be a man who could fill a very important post without becoming a threat to Himmler's own position within the regime. As in his earlier career, Kaltenbrunner appeared to be in the right place at the right time.

The new chief of the security police's duties and activities were many and varied and belie his later claims at the Nuremberg trial that he was only the head of an intelligence-gathering apparatus and not actually the functioning chief of the Reich security main office. Indeed, at his trial he insisted that he had been named chief of the security police for the sole purpose of creating and organizing a more efficient intelligence-gathering apparatus.12 He persistently maintained that he had had nothing to do with, had in fact generally not known about, the various "executive" duties of the office which he headed. Or, as he put it: "Nominally I was the Chief of the Reich Security

Main Office. As such I considered the Intelligence Service my proper sphere... In State Police and Criminal Police matters things were often done... in the name of the Chief of the Reich Security Main Office, that is, in my name, without my knowing of or seeing these orders when they were issued."13 The greater part of this statement is unmitigated poppycock,14 though there is some truth in the latter part of it. Certainly, for the first few months of his tenure of his new office, Kaltenbrunner felt his power circumscribed. His immediate subordinates, particularly Schellenberg, reported directly to Himmler without even bothering to inform the chief of the security police of what they were doing.15 Indeed, Kaltenbrunner complained bitterly to his old friend, Otto Skorzeny, that he was being ignored and bypassed.16

13 Ibid., p. 241.

14 Note especially the Eidesstattliche Erklärung of Walther Schellenberg, Nuremberg, November 7, 1945, Doc. No. 2939-PS, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

15 Höhne, The Order of the Death's Head, p. 553.

However, the chief of the security police's isolation and impotence was not to last. He very quickly became involved deeply in the activities of his office. One of his first executive tasks upon taking up his new office was to deal with the so-called "White Rose Affair." 17 A group of students and professors at the University of Munich had put out a series of anti-Nazi leaflets called the "White Rose Letters." This activity in itself would have been annoying to a totalitarian regime such as that of the National Socialists. What made it even more unsettling was the fact that Gauleiter Paul Giesler had been shouted down while making a salacious speech to the students of the University of Munich. The combination of these two events brought swift retaliation from the Reich authorities. Kaltenbrunner was dispatched to Munich to take personal charge of the suppression of these anti-state activities. 18


The results were rapid and predictable. On February 18, 1943, the first of the White Rose group were arrested. Four days later its leader, Hans Scholl, and his sister, Sophie, were executed. The other members of the group followed. Thus ended this pathetic and inspiring affair--pathetic in that it accomplished nothing save the deaths of some very brave and very idealistic people; inspiring in that it showed that even after ten years of National Socialist indoctrination there were still young people in Germany who saw the Nazi regime for what it was and were willing to risk their lives fighting it.

It was while Kaltenbrunner was in Munich handling the White Rose Affair that he had his first meeting with the head of an organization which was to concern him greatly throughout the first year of his tenure as chief of the Reich security main office: Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, the chief of the armed forces intelligence branch (the Abwehr). Their first personal confrontation was held in the Hotel Regina in Munich the same day that the

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Scholls were executed. Canaris and the Abwehr were of great interest to Kaltenbrunner for two closely connected reasons. First, he himself was very much interested in matters of espionage and counter-espionage, as he was to point out so often at the Nuremberg trial. Second, the Reich security main office had an intelligence section (office VI under Schellenberg) which was in direct competition with Canaris' organization. Thus, the chief of the security police had every reason to feel that the Admiral was his competitor and opponent. This attitude was not unique to Kaltenbrunner either. The SS-police empire and the armed forces viewed each other with suspicion and envy. This suspicion and envy was particularly evident as between Schellenberg's SD-Ausland (office VI of the Reich security main office) and Canaris' armed forces intelligence branch. What made this situation even touchier was the fact that the Abwehr was a hotbed of anti-Nazi conspiracies.

The year between Kaltenbrunner's meeting with Canaris at the Hotel Regina and the final victory of the Reich security main office over the Abwehr was to see constant bickering and maneuvering between Kaltenbrunner's organization and that of the admiral. In this conflict the Abwehr consistently lost ground. On February 18, 1944, Canaris was removed from his post and the Abwehr was taken over
by Kaltenbrunner's Reich security main office\textsuperscript{21} as a separate section (Amt Militär) under the command of Schellenberg. Canaris was named chief of the office for commercial and economic warfare.\textsuperscript{22} Kaltenbrunner and his associates had won a major victory over the forces of traditionalism and normality. From this time onward, the chief of the security police and security service was truly to be involved in intelligence matters, as he had always wished to be.

However, Kaltenbrunner was not, as he later claimed, concerned solely with intelligence matters. His executive role can be discerned clearly in the case of the French general, Maurice Mesny.\textsuperscript{23} General Mesny has little claim

\textsuperscript{21}Reitlinger, \textit{The SS}, p. 306. See also the orders affecting this change in National Archives Microcopy T-78, Roll 497, Frames 6485648-6485665 and 6485671-6485676.

\textsuperscript{22}Reitlinger, \textit{The SS}, p. 306.

\textsuperscript{23}For general accounts of this affair, see Robert M. W. Kempner, "Murder by Government," \textit{The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology}, Vol. XXXVIII (1947-1948), pp. 235-238; Szymon Datner, \textit{Crimes Against POWs: Responsibility of the Wehrmacht} (Warsaw: Zachodnia Agencja Prasowa, 1964), pp. 115-121; and Whitney R. Harris, \textit{Tyranny on Trial: The Evidence at Nuremberg} (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1954), pp. 273-275. The last book is by the man who prosecuted Kaltenbrunner at the Nuremberg trial. Leaving aside the questions of the morality and legality of the Nuremberg trial, the evidence in the Mesny matter is so overwhelming that any court in the world would have hanged Kaltenbrunner on the basis of it.
to fame. He was just one of many French general officers in German custody in the latter part of 1944. It was simply his misfortune to become the object of one of the Führer's rages. During the last part of 1944 a German general was shot after having been captured by French resistance forces. When he heard about this incident, Hitler exclaimed: "Well, that's an impossibility! We can't put up with a German general being shot to death." He ordered that "a French general--any general--in German custody should be murdered. Kaltenbrunner was given the assignment.

Throughout November and December of 1944 the plan to murder an unsuspecting French general was mooted in the highest circles of the German government. On the eighteenth of November, Horst Wagner, the head of the German foreign office bureau charged with liaison with the SS and police, wrote a report to the foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, detailing the current state of the planning.

\[24\] "Vernehmung des Dr. Kaltenbrunner vom 12. September 1946 durch Mr. Selcke," Vol. II, Part I, p. 12, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich (Ref. no. ZS-673 [1844/56]). See also Harris, Tyranny on Trial, p. 273.


\[26\] Harris, Tyranny on Trial, p. 273.

\[27\] Ibid.
The plan, as outlined by Wagner, revolved around the fact that arrangements had already been made to move some 75 officers from Camp Königstein to another place of detention. The first to be moved would be five or six French generals. En route, one of these men, a General Deboisse, would be shot "while attempting to escape." 28

On the thirtieth of December, 1944, Kaltenbrunner sent a letter to Reichsführer SS Himmler discussing the project and detailing the various methods by which General Deboisse might be killed. These methods included such expedients as introducing exhaust gases from the car transporting the general into the passenger compartment in order to asphyxiate him, poisoning his food or drink, and so forth. 29

By the first month of 1945 the project had not reached completion; so it was decided that it might be better to change the victim in case there had been a security leak. Thus it was that Maurice Mesny became the focus of this very elaborate plot. 30

28 Vortragsnotiz from Horst Wagner, Berlin, November 18, 1944, with Anlage. Doc. No. NG-037, on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine (Ref. No. CXX-7).


30 Harris, Tyranny on Trial, p. 275.
On January 18, 1945, six French general officers at Camp Königstein were informed that the next day, the nineteenth, they would be transferred to another, unnamed, prisoner-of-war camp. They were to travel two to a car, with Generals Mesny and Vauthier in the last auto to depart. On the morning of the nineteenth, the first car left on time, but the other transports were delayed. Finally, at 7:00 A.M., General Mesny left in the second auto—alone. The orders transferring the man who was to have ridden with him had been cancelled during the night. The third and final car left an hour later. The four generals in the first and third autos arrived at the maximum security prisoner-of-war camp at Colditz around noon. General Mesny never got there.31 He had been shot while "attempting to escape" when the car had stopped in order for its occupants to relieve themselves—or so read the official report. Thus, the Führer's thirst for revenge was slaked through the death of a French general.

As one can see, Kaltenbrunner's role in this project was clear and straightforward. He had been ordered to engineer the murder of a French general officer, and this is precisely what he did. The only puzzling thing about the whole affair is the manner in which it was carried

31 Ibid.
out. If the murder was supposed to frighten the French into not killing any more German officers, then why was it done so deviously? One can only surmise that the whole affair was carried out simply to assuage Hitler's anger and to fulfill his desire for revenge.

Of course, Kaltenbrunner disclaimed any part in the Mesny incident at the Nuremberg trial. He asserted that he had not even been in Berlin when the infamous letter of the Thirtieth of December detailing various possible methods of murdering a French general had been sent to the Reichsführer.\textsuperscript{32} Whether he was actually in the capital at that time or not, he was certainly responsible for the dispatch of the letter and for the Reich security main office's participation in the plot.

Nor did his involvement in murder end with the Mesny affair, as can clearly be seen in an incident reported by Walther Schellenberg. During a working luncheon of Reich security main office bureau chiefs in the summer of 1944, Heinrich Müller, the head of the Gestapo, asked Kaltenbrunner what should be done with some 25 French prostitutes who were in the hospital with syphilis. It seems that they were taking up valuable hospital beds which were needed.

urgently for other patients. Kaltenbrunner's reply was brief and to the point: "Shoot them." 33

Another instance of the involvement of the chief of the security police and security service with small-scale murder concerns a group of fifteen American military personnel, all in uniform, who were parachuted into German-occupied Slovakia at the beginning of 1945. They were rounded up almost immediately and sent to Mauthausen concentration camp (which was located very near to Kaltenbrunner's home town of Linz). Once at Mauthausen, they were all executed on Kaltenbrunner's own orders. 34

These three incidents (the Mesny affair, the murder of the French prostitutes, and the execution of the American parachutists) suffice to show that between 1943 and 1945 Kaltenbrunner was deeply involved in some of the less pleasant aspects of the Nazi Reich. Whether it was the murder of one French general, fifteen American paratroopers, or twenty-five French prostitutes, Kaltenbrunner was quite willing and, in point of fact, eager to carry out his "duties." No amount of post hoc dissimulation on his


part at his trial was able to conceal Kaltenbrunner's role in these and other crimes.

Of course, it should be kept in mind that the head of the Reich security main office did not restrict himself to such minor matters as those involving one, fifteen, or twenty-five persons. He was also deeply embroiled in the calculated destruction of far greater numbers of people. The subject of Kaltenbrunner's participation in "mass murder" might best be summarized under three heads:
(1) orders from him or for his administration; (2) dealings with the concentration and extermination camps; and (3) connections with various other killing operations. The first of these headings may in turn be examined by studying three wide-ranging undertakings: the so-called "commando order," the "bullet decree," and the "terror-flyer instruction," all of which involved direct violations of the Geneva Convention governing the treatment of prisoners of war by either sanctioning or ordaining the killing of such prisoners.

In point of time the first of the above edicts was the so-called "commando order," which had originally been issued on October 18, 1942\textsuperscript{35} (before Kaltenbrunner became chief of the security police), in response to the repeated raids by Allied special force units on the coast of

occupied western Europe, particularly their attacks upon St. Nazaire and Dieppe. The Führer's edict provided for the extermination, in one way or another, of all Allied commando personnel, even though they were in uniform and quite clearly combatants under the terms of the Geneva Convention. Although Kaltenbrunner had had no part in the issuance of the original decree, he was instrumental in mid-1944 in reinforcing it.\(^{36}\) It should also be noted that the Reich security main office had the responsibility for carrying out this order.\(^{37}\) In short, Kaltenbrunner was in charge of murdering combatants who supposedly were protected by the "rules of war."

The second major order violating the rights of captured Allied military personnel was the so-called "bullet decree" (Kugel Erlass) of March 4, 1944, which was promulgated by Kaltenbrunner himself in his capacity of chief of the security police and security service. It provided that certain categories of prisoners of war, including all escaped Soviet prisoners, all disruptive Soviet prisoner-of-war camp inmates, Polish prisoners who committed sabotage, and prisoners of war (excluding Americans and Britons)


\(^{37}\) See the decree as quoted in Crankshaw, Gestapo, p. 220.
who were singled out by the armed forces high command, were to be sent to Mauthausen concentration camp to be shot.\textsuperscript{38}

The final decree involving Kaltenbrunner in the murder of Allied military personnel, which was issued by him on April 5, 1944, might best be called the "terror-flyer instruction," for it ordered that Allied airmen who parachuted into German-occupied territory were to be treated as terrorists; i.e. they were to be handcuffed and shot if they resisted capture or if they had civilian clothing under their uniforms; or they were to be turned over to the local populace for lynch justice.\textsuperscript{39} As the order put it:

\begin{quote}
In agreement with the Reichsführer SS I have brought about and directed all higher police officers that all Germans shall go unpunished who in future participate in the persecution and annihilation of enemy aircrews who parachute down.\textsuperscript{40}
\end{quote}

Or, as Kaltenbrunner remarked to Heinrich Müller at a conference of Reich security main office bureau chiefs:

"All offices of the SD and the security police are to be

\textsuperscript{38}Statement of the prosecution in which the original order was cited, Procès des Grands Criminels, Vol. IV, pp. 300-301; Crankshaw, Gestapo, p. 219.

\textsuperscript{39}Harris, Tyranny on Trial, pp. 235-236.

\textsuperscript{40}As quoted in an affidavit of Bertus Gerdus (an NSDAP official), Doc. No. 3462-PS, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 162.
informed that pogroms of the populace against English and American terror-fliers were not to be interfered with; on the contrary, this hostile mood is to be fostered.\textsuperscript{41}

The decree of April 5, 1944, was further amplified and defined during a conference held on June 6, 1944, and attended by Reichsmarschall Göring, Reichsführer SS Himmler, Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, and Kaltenbrunner.\textsuperscript{42}

This high-level conference reviewed the entire question of the so-called terror-flyer instruction and came to the following conclusion: "Lynch law would have to be the rule."\textsuperscript{43} Later on the same day the chief of the security police met with the deputy chief of the operations staff of the armed forces high command, General Walter Warlimont, to iron out the details of these reprisals against Allied airmen. The two men reached an amicable agreement on how such matters were to be handled.\textsuperscript{44}


\textsuperscript{42} Harris, \textit{Tyranny on Trial}, p. 236. Vortragsnotiz of General der Artillerie Walter Warlimont, the deputy chief of the armed forces high command's operations staff, dated June 6, 1944, Doc. No. 735-PS, \textit{Trial of the Major War Criminals}, Vol. XXXI, pp. 276-279.

\textsuperscript{43} As quoted in Harris, \textit{Tyranny on Trial}, p. 237.

\textsuperscript{44} Vortragsnotiz of Warlimont, June 6, 1944, Doc. No. 735-PS, \textit{Trial of the Major War Criminals}, Vol. XXXI, pp. 276-279.
Thus, through Kaltenbrunner's instruction of April 5, 1944, and through the agreements reached at the two conferences held on June 6, lynch law was legalized in the Reich. Allied air crews, who were supposedly protected by the rules of warfare, were placed in jeopardy of being murdered by a people whose anger had been inflamed by heavy Allied air raids and Nazi propaganda. Indeed, on several occasions, the local populace did lynch Allied fliers with impunity.\(^{45}\)

Therefore, it is evident that Kaltenbrunner was deeply involved in violations of the Geneva Convention protecting prisoners of war and thereby was responsible for the deaths of large numbers of Allied prisoners. However, such killings were not his only connection with murder on a grand scale. He was also responsible for sending thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of persons to their deaths in the concentration and extermination camps of the Nazi regime. It should be made very clear at the outset that the head of the Reich security main office was not in direct control of these institutions. The camps were the concern of the inspectorate of concentration camps, which after 1942 constituted division D (\textit{Amtsgruppe D})

\(^{45}\text{Harris, \textit{Tyranny on Trial}, p. 236.}\)
of the economic and administrative main office of the SS leadership. This organization, headed by SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl, was a coordinate authority with the Reich security main office and hence Kaltenbrunner had no direct control over its activities. However, he and Pohl did cooperate in carrying out their respective functions. From the point of view of the chief of the security police, these functions revolved around the commitment of persons and groups of people to the camps. In addition, the head of the Reich security main office was empowered to order inmates executed. In other words Kaltenbrunner's relationship to the killings in the various camps was essentially an indirect one, except in those cases where he himself ordered an inmate executed.

However, he had a more "intimate relationship" with at least one concentration camp: Mauthausen, which was located near his home town of Linz. Indeed, Kaltenbrunner, when chief of the security police, liked to boast about how

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46 See Höhne, The Order of the Death’s Head, p. 389; and Hilberg, The Destruction of the European Jews, pp. 557 and 559-560. See also Appendix II.

important he had been in the creation and growth of Mauthausen. As Schellenberg put it:

[In] 1944, towards the end of an Amtschef [office chief's] conference, upon Kaltenbrunner's return from an official trip to Vienna and Linz, he, Kaltenbrunner, told of his visits to the concentration camp Mauthausen and of his friend [Franz] Ziereis who was commandant of that camp. Kaltenbrunner reported with pride that he had virtually himself, as higher SS and police leader in Vienna built up that camp.\textsuperscript{48}

Of course, at the Nuremberg trial the former chief of the Reich security main office sang a far different tune. There he claimed that he had never been in a concentration camp in his life.\textsuperscript{49} Unfortunately for him, this statement was something less than the truth, for the evidence amply indicates that he paid at least one and probably more visits to Mauthausen. In fact, a picture taken during one of these visits clearly shows Himmler, Kaltenbrunner, and Ziereis standing together in the midst of the camp, while Commandant Ziereis showed his two distinguished guests the camp facilities.\textsuperscript{50}


\textsuperscript{49} Whitney R. Harris to the author, St. Louis, Mo., April 12, 1968.

\textsuperscript{50} This picture has been reproduced in Heinz Huber and Artur Müller (eds.), Das Dritte Reich: seine Geschichte in Texten, Bildern und Dokumenten (2 vols., Munich: Verlag Kurt Desch, 1964), Vol. II: Der Zusammenbruch der Macht, p. 518.
The telling evidence of the above photograph is supported by the statement of Johann Kanduth, a Mauthausen inmate, that he saw Kaltenbrunner there during 1942 or 1943. Indeed, he stated that he saw the chief of the security police laughing as he inspected the gas chambers. In addition, Kanduth reported that Kaltenbrunner witnessed demonstrations of three types of execution methods—hanging, shooting, and gassing in which live subjects were used.51 Lest one think the testimony of a camp inmate suspect, it should be added that Mr. Kanduth's evidence is supported by the depositions of the Mauthausen adjutant, Adolf Zutter,52 a camp guard,53 a police functionary at the camp,54 and another inmate.55 Kaltenbrunner


52 Sworn statement of Adolf Zutter, Linz, August 2, 1945, Doc. No. L-51, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

53 Translation of an affidavit of Alois Hoellriegel, Nuremberg, November 7, 1945, on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (Ref. No. XVIII).


55 Deposition of Karl Reif, Lübeck, May 29, 1946, Doc. No. 4032-PS, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.
visited Mauthausen, inspected its facilities, knew its functions and methods, and may indeed, as higher SS and police leader, have helped to bring about its construction and development.

Concentration and extermination camps and violations of the Geneva Convention were not, however, Kaltenbrunner's only connection with human destruction on a large scale. He was also involved in such activities in his dealings with the problem of the Warsaw ghetto and through his connection with the mobile killing units known as Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos (special action groups or special action commandos). In the first of these instances (that involving the Warsaw ghetto), Kaltenbrunner was again involved in the destruction of human life on a grand scale. In April, 1943, the Jews of the ghetto in Warsaw rose in armed rebellion against their oppressors in an attempt to avoid piecemeal destruction. 56 According to the SS-police officer in charge of suppressing the revolt, SS-Brigadeführer Jürgen Stroop, the chief of the security police told him that "all basic orders to the Security Police must come from him' [Kaltenbrunner] in Berlin." 57 Stroop also commented: "All executions were

56 On the ghetto battle, see Hilberg, The Destruction of the European Jews, pp. 323-327.

ordered by the Reich Security Main Office, Kaltenbrunner.\textsuperscript{58} In short, the chief of the security police directed the putting down of the uprising from his Berlin office.

It was also from his office in the Reich capital that Kaltenbrunner directed the activities of the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos. These units were paramilitary groups first conceived as early as 1938 for the purpose of clearing occupied territory of all sorts of undesirables—commissars, communists, political, social, economic, and racial enemies of all varieties. By the time Kaltenbrunner came to Berlin the Einsatzgruppen had already killed a large number of such "undesirables," particularly in Poland and Russia. Due to the exigencies of war, by 1943 their area of operations had shrunk considerably, but they were still functioning in those regions and territories remaining under the control of the German authorities. As chief of the security police, Kaltenbrunner was in direct control of these units.\textsuperscript{59} Of course, at the Nuremberg trial, he denied that he had had any such control over these formations. In fact, he claimed that he had not

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{59}See organization chart of the Reich security main office and the Einsatzgruppen, Trials of War Criminals before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals (15 vols., Nuremberg: Nuremberg Military Tribunals\textsuperscript{n.d.}, Vol. IV, p. 90.
known of their existence until 1943, and that when he learned of them he protested against them to no avail. These assertions, like much of Kaltenbrunner's testimony, were false. He was aware of the existence of the Einsatzgruppen as early as 1942, if not before. It is extremely doubtful and totally unlikely that he protested against their activities in any way, shape, or form.

In spite of his disclaimers at Nuremberg, it is obvious that the chief of the security police was deeply involved in the National Socialist regime's program of mass murder. Kaltenbrunner issued decrees which violated the Geneva Convention protecting prisoners of war and military personnel. He sent people to concentration and extermination camps knowing full well what those places were like, and he ordered persons executed in those camps. He was proud of the role he had played in the creation and growth of Mauthausen, and he was responsible for the direction of the Einsatz units and for the suppression of the revolt of the Warsaw ghetto. In short, he was a mass murderer.

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60 Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Trial of the Major War Criminals, Vol. XI, p. 246.

61 See the distribution chart of Einsatzgruppen reports showing that they went to Kaltenbrunner as higher SS and police leader. Doc. No. 3876-PS, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Supplement A, pp. 617 and 621.
Nowhere is Kaltenbrunner's involvement in mass destruction clearer than in regard to his role in the "final solution of the Jewish question." The term, "final solution," was of course a euphemism employed by the Nazi regime to camouflage their plans to destroy the entire Jewish population of Europe. As chief of the security police and security service after 1943, Kaltenbrunner was intimately involved in all aspects of this program from the most banal to the most heinous. As an example of the former kind of activity one can adduce a proposed anti-Semitic congress which was scheduled to meet in the Polish city of Cracow (the seat of the so-called Government General) in late 1944. The purpose of the meeting was to show the solidarity of the anti-Semites of the world. Kaltenbrunner was invited to be a delegate to the congress. Unfortunately for the National Socialists, the gathering had to be called off because


the Soviet armies were about to overrun Cracow. This incident shows very clearly the kind of cloud-cuckoo-land in which the Nazi leadership, even the most powerful, operated. They were planning anti-Semitic congresses while the Allied and Russian armies closed in on Germany. In this respect, Kaltenbrunner was no different than his peers within the National Socialist hierarchy.

Still, however much the chief of the security police and his compeers may have been living in a dream world, they were powerful men whose actions very often had momentous consequences for large groups of people. One such group was the Jews of Denmark. From the time of its conquest in 1940 until the latter part of 1943 Denmark had been handled by the Germans with kid gloves. It was the "model protectorate," with the king and the royal Danish government ostensibly in charge of the state under German "supervision." As a result of this policy of restraint, the authorities assigned to the final solution of the Jewish problem had not been able to do anything with the nearly 8,000 Danish and stateless Jews in that country.65

64 Josef Wulf, Martin Bormann--Hitlers Schatten (Gütersloh, Germany: Sigbert Mohn Verlag, 1962), pp. 93-95.

65 Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, p. 173. For an account of the entire Danish operation, see ibid., pp. 171-175; Reitlinger, The Final Solution, pp. 370-376; and Harold Flender, Rescue in Denmark (New York: Macfadden-Bartell, 1964), passim.
Following a series of disturbances in the late summer of 1943, however, the Nazi authorities determined to make the Germanic territory of Denmark Jew-free. Acting upon orders of the Reichsführer SS, Kaltenbrunner personally ordered the Jews in Denmark rounded up and carted off to concentration camps.\textsuperscript{66} Up to this point the German action was no different from many others they had undertaken before. However, Denmark proved to be a very hard place for a Jew-hunter to operate. The Danes were warned of the coming action and immediately proceeded to hide the Jews. As a consequence, less than 500 of the approximately 8,000 Jews in Denmark were captured by Kaltenbrunner's minions. The remainder were either spirited off to neutral Sweden or else stayed in hiding in the country until the end of the war.\textsuperscript{67}

As a consequence of this failure to capture the Danish Jews, the National Socialist authorities were placed in a very awkward position. They had been made fools of by a singularly unimposing nation and they did not appreciate it in the least. As a result, a high-level conference was held in late December, 1943, attended by the Führer, the


chief of the armed forces high command, the head of the armed forces high command's operations staff, Hitler's military adjutant, the Reich plenipotentiary for Denmark, the Reichsführer SS, and the chief of the security police (Kaltenbrunner), among others. At this meeting Hitler decided to instigate reprisals against the Danes for their resistance and gave Kaltenbrunner's agency the job of carrying them out.  

They were singularly unsuccessful in breaking the Danish spirit.

The Danes were not the only people to suffer harsher manifestations of German power as the war moved toward its end. The Hungarians also felt the lash of Nazi dominance. Hungary had been a German ally up until the beginning of the year 1944 and as such had been able to protect its Jewish population from the worst effects of the policy of final solution. This protection, however, does not imply that the state of the Hungarian Jews was particularly enviable, for anti-Semitism was rampant in this kingdom without a king. Still, the Jewish population of Hungary was not being exterminated as was the case with most of the Jewry of Nazi-dominated Europe. In the words of

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68 Harris, *Tyranny on Trial*, p. 217.

69 See Flender, *Rescue in Denmark*, pp. 165-209.

70 For the fullest account of the fate of Hungarian Jewry, see Hilbert, *The Destruction of the European*
Professor Raul Hilberg,

Truly, the Hungarian Jews were living on an island. But the island was not one surrounded by water; it was a land-island enclosed and protected only by a political boundary. The Jews depended on that boundary for their survival, and the Germans had to break the barrier down. In March, 1944, the Hungarian frontiers began to crumble. The Germans overran the country, and catastrophe overtook the Jews.\footnote{Hilberg, The Destruction of the European Jews, p. 509.}

In order to make sure that the Hungarian Jewish catastrophe was total, the chief of the security police himself went to Hungary at the end of March, 1944,\footnote{Report of Edmund Veessenmayer (Reich plenipotentiary in Hungary) to Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, Budapest, April 2, 1944, Doc. No. 118, in Randolph L. Braham (ed.), The Destruction of Hungarian Jewry: A Documentary Account (2 vols., New York: Pro Arte for the World Federation of Hungarian Jews, 1963), Vol. I, p. 310.} to set up the machinery to carry out the final solution in the shortest possible time, since the forces of the Red Army were already closing in on that country. In order to accomplish this task, Kaltenbrunner first of all forced the Hungarian government to employ as state secretaries...
in the Hungarian interior ministry two rabid anti-Semites (László Engre and László Baky), both of whom were willing, indeed enthusiastic, collaborators with the German authorities.\footnote{Braham, The Destruction of Hungarian Jewry, Vol. I, pp. xvi-xvii.} Next, the head of the Reich security main office obtained the appointment of SS-Obergruppenführer Otto Winkelmann, a man he could trust, as higher SS and police leader in Hungary.\footnote{Affidavit of Kurt Becher (SS officer), Doc. No. 438, ibid., Vol. II, p. 896.} Finally, and perhaps most important of all, Kaltenbrunner ordered the head of his Jewish affairs bureau (bureau IVB 4), SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, to go to Budapest with his entire staff to oversee the final solution directly.\footnote{Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, p. 140.} Eichmann could take virtually his entire staff because there were no other places left to hunt for Jews.

Unfortunately, things did not work out as smoothly as Kaltenbrunner had hoped. In the first place, the lines of command on the German side were, in typical Nazi fashion, something less than clear. There were at least five competing German authorities in Hungary concerned directly or indirectly with the destruction of the Jews. The most important of these competing authorities were: (1) the
Reich plenipotentiary, Dr. Edmund Veessenmeyer; (2) the higher SS and police leader, SS-Obergruppenführer Otto Winkelmann; (3) the Reich security main office bureau chief, SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann; (4) the German military command; and (5) the Reichsführer SS's personal representative, SS-Standartenführer Kurt Becher. All of these men or organizations had some role in the final solution and none of them were particularly inclined to cooperate with the others. In the second place, not all the Magyar authorities were in favor of the extreme measures undertaken by the Germans in collaboration with such men as Endre and Baky. Consequently, the final solution of the Jewish question in Hungary was not typified by the smooth efficiency that the chief of the security police had sought to achieve when he personally intervened in the affair.

Still, in the last analysis, the Jews of Hungary gained little from the confusion and cross-purposes in the German and Hungarian higher leadership. Some 180,000 to 200,000 (out of approximately 400,000) were deported, and the majority of these perished.\(^7\) Many Jews died in a particularly brutal manner because of the chief of the security police's direct intervention. Eichmann proposed

\(^7\)Reitlinger, The Final Solution, p. 542.
to the head of the Reich security main office that the Jews be marched out of Hungary, supposedly because Allied air raids had torn up the railroad tracks. Kaltenbrunner accepted this suggestion and ordered the march—a march which few of the unfortunate Jews survived.77

Meanwhile, Kaltenbrunner had been making plans to use some of the Jews deported from Hungary. On June 7, 1944, the Mayor of Vienna, SS-Brigadeführer Karl Blaschke, requested the assignment of workers to essential war industries in the Vienna area. In response to this request, Kaltenbrunner informed Blaschke, on June 30, that four transports, containing approximately 12,000 Jews, would arrive in Vienna from Hungary within the "next few days."
The chief of the security police continued:

According to previous experience it is estimated that 30% of the transport will consist of Jews able to work (approx. 3,600 in this case) who can be utilized for the work in question....Women unable to work and children of these Jews are kept in readiness for special action..., and therefore one day will be removed again, have to stay in the guarded camp....

I hope that these transports will be of help to you in carrying out these urgent work details of yours.78


Thus were the Hungarian Jews utilized by the head of Reich security main office for the German war effort. Of course, the sword of "special action"—a euphemism for extermination—continued to hang over their heads, even though they were saved from immediate elimination.

It is perhaps interesting to note that after the war Kaltenbrunner did not recall having dispatched this callous letter to Mayor Blaschke. Indeed, he claimed it was sent by office IV (the Gestapo) without his knowledge.\textsuperscript{79} It is clear that Kaltenbrunner was not willing to face the consequences of his wartime actions.

Of course, Kaltenbrunner maintained throughout his trial that he had had nothing to do with the executive functions of the Reich security main office; he was simply in charge of intelligence operations.\textsuperscript{80} There is a certain amount of truth in this statement, for, as chief of the security police, Kaltenbrunner was in charge of the SS-

\textsuperscript{79}Vernehmung des Dr. Kaltenbrunner durch Mr. Selcke vom 16. September 1946, Vol. I, Part 1, p. 15, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich (Ref. No. ZS-673 [1844/56]).

\textsuperscript{80}This is a plea that runs like a red stain through all of Kaltenbrunner's postwar testimony. See testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Trial of the Major War Criminals, Vol. XI, pp. 235-241, for a succinct statement of the defense.
police intelligence departments, and he often took a close interest in their activities. His participation in intelligence matters can be seen, for example, in the affair of the duce, Benito Mussolini. In late July, 1943, the Duce was dismissed from his offices and spirited off into imprisonment. When the Führer learned of the arrest of Mussolini—his friend, fellow dictator, and exemplar—, he was very agitated and angry.\textsuperscript{81} Hitler immediately ordered his intelligence agencies to find and free the Duce. At this point Kaltenbrunner recommended that his old friend, Otto Skorzeny, would be just the man to liberate the former Italian leader.\textsuperscript{82} Hitler accepted the suggestion of the chief of the security police with alacrity.

The Germans eventually found the former duce under guard in a hotel in the Grand Sasso mountains. In a daring airborne assault, Skorzeny and his men freed Mussolini and flew him off to Germany.\textsuperscript{83} The Führer was very

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\textsuperscript{82} Höttl, \textit{Hitler's Paper Weapon}, p. 67.
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pleased and, as a result of Kaltenbrunner's role in finding and rescuing the Duce, awarded the chief of the security police one of the Reich's highest decorations, the German Cross in Silver. As the recommendation for the award put it: "Without his work and his achievement, the freeing of the Duce would have been impossible." While this assertion may have overstated the case, for all Kaltenbrunner appears to have done was to direct the SD intelligence network and to recommend Skorzeny as a potential rescuer; yet, it does indicate that the Führer thought that the chief of the security police was a success in the game of intelligence. It also shows that Kaltenbrunner was growing in the Führer's esteem.

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84 Vorschlagsliste No. 6 of the Reichsführer SS (photocopy in the possession of the author).

85 Ibid. Kaltenbrunner had already been awarded the War Merit Cross with Swords, 2nd Class, on March 11, 1943, and the 1st Class on January 30, 1943. Ibid. The German Cross in Silver was presented to him on October 22, 1943. Ibid. He also possessed the Knight's Cross of the War Merit Cross with Swords (December 9, 1944). Befehlsblatt des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD, Berlin, December 9, 1944, Edition A, Vol. V, No. 51, p. 361, Doc. No. 2770-PS, on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (Ref. No. CCLXXIX-28). Finally, he had the Gold Party Badge and was an honorary bearer of the Blood Order. Summary of Kaltenbrunner's career prepared by Alfred Balbin of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte of the University of Vienna, to whom the author expresses his appreciation. See also, Procès des Grands Criminels, Vol. IV, p. 296.
Another less successful instance of the head of the Reich security main office's dabbling in intelligence matters involved the strange case of Operation Cicero. Cicero was the code name of a German spy in Turkey. He was, in fact, Elyesa Bazna, the valet of the British ambassador to Ankara, who had obtained access to his master's safe and was willing to sell the highly important state secrets to be found there to the Germans. These were extremely important documents which could have affected the course of the entire war. Unfortunately for the Germans, Operation Cicero rapidly degenerated into a bitter interdepartmental battle between the Reich security main office and the foreign ministry. This dispute revolved around the question of who was responsible for controlling Cicero, who was to determine if the documents were genuine, and who was to pay the spy, if he were paid. The whole

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86 On operation Cicero, see the memoirs of Elyesa Bazna (Cicero), I was Cicero (London: Andre Deutsch, 1962); those of L. C. Moyzisch (Cicero's German contact), Operation Cicero. Translated by Constantine Fitzgibbon and Heinrich Fraenkel, with a postscript by Franz von Papen (the German ambassador to Turkey at the time) (New York: Pyramid Books, 1958); and those of Schellenberg, The Schellenberg Memoirs, pp. 388-397. All these works are to be taken with a grain of salt.

87 See especially Moyzisch, Operation Cicero, pp. 65-81, for a description of this internal conflict. See also Aufzeichnung of Horst Wagner concerning a meeting held with Kaltenbrunner at Berlin, June 28, 1944, Doc. No. NG-3011, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.
situation was further exacerbated by the fact that Kaltenbrunner disliked Von Ribbentrop and that the feeling was reciprocated. As a result of these interdepartmental and interpersonal antipathies priceless intelligence data lay unused and uncared for in the vaults of Berlin. In the end the Cicero materials proved of absolutely no use to the Germans. Even Bazna made nothing out of the deal, since he was paid in counterfeit pound notes. All in all, Operation Cicero was both a perfect example of how important matters were handled in the Third Reich and of Kaltenbrunner's ineptness as a spy master.

However, it should be made clear that although Kaltenbrunner was concerned with intelligence matters, such concerns by no means occupied the bulk of his time. Contrary to his testimony at the Nuremberg trial, he was deeply involved in the executive functions of his post as chief of the security police. Kaltenbrunner's role as a policeman is quite evident in his actions during the

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90 Ibid.

91 On the topic of counterfeiting, see Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, passim.
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July 20, 1944 putsch against the Nazi regime. This putsch attempt was the end result of the growing disillusionment and despair of a group of men and women who had come to see the Hitler government as criminal and as a disaster for Germany. On the twentieth of July, 1944, the driving force of the resistance, Colonel Count Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg, a severely wounded and highly idealistic officer, placed a bomb in Hitler's conference building. The explosive went off but, for reasons which are still obscure, failed to kill or even to harm the

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Führer seriously. Meanwhile, the conspirators had already launched an attempt to seize the government. However, without the driving force of Stauffenberg, who was en route by air from Hitler's headquarters (still believing he had killed the Führer), the conspiracy moved with something less than dispatch and authority. Although power was seized in some outlying areas, such as Paris and Vienna, the men in Berlin failed to carry through the Attentat with the determination that was called for under the circumstances. As the result of a combination of factors—inaction, indecision, the determination of Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels, and the failure to kill the Führer—the conspiracy began to collapse.

But as the putsch ran its course, where was the chief of the security police who, by virtue of his position, should have been in the midst of the efforts to stop the Attentat? According to the best evidence available, immediately after the reports of the explosion at Rastenburg (the Führer's headquarters), the head of the Reich security main office was ordered to fly there with an

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investigating commission from the criminal police. 96 This he evidently did, returning to Berlin sometime in the evening of the twentieth. Upon his return, he was ordered by the Reichsführer SS to take charge of the suppression of the revolt, with his old friend, Otto Skorzeny, as his deputy. 97 Skorzeny was pulled off the Berlin-Vienna express and rushed to the army headquarters in the Bendlerstrasse, where he found Kaltenbrunner with a group of SS-police officers. 98 This group was joined

96 Höttl, The Secret Front, p. 53; Kramarz, Stauffenberg, p. 207. See also Kurt Zentner, Illustrierte Geschichte des Dritten Reiches (Munich: Sudwest Verlag, 1965), p. 555. However, Manvell and Fraenkel state in The Men Who Tried to Kill Hitler, pp. 194-195: "It is usually assumed that Himmler ordered Kaltenbrunner to come to Rastenburg in person. Whether he did so initially or not, it can fairly be assumed that Kaltenbrunner remained in Berlin." The deciding factor here seems to be the fact that Kaltenbrunner was not reported to be in Berlin until late in the evening, by which time he could have flown to and from Rastenburg. If he was in Berlin during the day, he must have been well-nigh invisible.


very shortly by the minister for armaments and war production, Albert Speer.\textsuperscript{99} By this time (the late evening), the revolt had virtually collapsed under the impact of the Führer's broadcast to the German people and Goebbels' determination not to give in to pressure. Indeed, Generaloberst Friedrich Fromm, the commander in chief of the replacement army (the home army), whose own role in the Attentat had been somewhat equivocal, had already begun summary executions of the leading plotters. After having Stauffenberg and other leading conspirators shot, Fromm went across the street and reported what he had done to the head of the Reich security main office.\textsuperscript{100} Finishing his report General Fromm told Kaltenbrunner that he was going home to his apartment and could be reached there.\textsuperscript{101} After he left, the chief of the security police proceeded to stop the summary executions before any more valuable witnesses were lost.\textsuperscript{102} Ironically enough, Fromm's actions failed to save his own life, for he was later executed for not having stopped the putsch sooner.

\textsuperscript{99}Speer, \textit{Inside the Third Reich}, p. 387.

\textsuperscript{100}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 387-388.

\textsuperscript{101}Skorzeny, \textit{Skorzeny's Secret Missions}, p. 160.

\textsuperscript{102}Bramstead, \textit{Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda}, 341-342.
The next day (the 21st) Kaltenbrunner began systematically to round up and question anyone who was remotely connected with the abortive revolt. These arrests and the questioning that followed them were both carried through with much thoroughness and considerable brutality. Of those directly involved in the plot, some 200 were executed,\textsuperscript{103} often in the most brutal manner possible. Thousands of others were arrested, confined, and tortured. No one was above suspicion—not even luminaries such as Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, who was forced to take poison (as an alternative to public trial and disgrace), and Reich Minister Albert Speer, one of the Führer's closest associates and advisers,\textsuperscript{104} who managed to escape incarceration or worse and retained his post to the end.

Kaltenbrunner's reward for his part in suppressing the revolt was increased esteem in the eyes of the Führer. Henceforth, he often took part in Hitler's daily briefings, something he had not normally done before the putsch.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{103}Zeller, \textit{The Flame of Freedom}, p. 380.

\textsuperscript{104}Speer, \textit{Inside the Third Reich}, pp. 391-392.

\textsuperscript{105}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 423-424; testimony of Schellenberg, Doc. No. NG-4718, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich; and Vernehmung des Ernst Kaltenbrunner durch Mr. Selcke, Vol. I, Part I, p. 22, also on file at the Institut [Ref. No. ZS-673 (1844/56)].
Furthermore, the chief of the security police sent the Führer detailed reports on his investigations through Hitler's private secretary, Martin Bormann, thus making himself even more indispensable to the Führer.\footnote{These reports have been published under the title *Spiegelbild einer Verschwörung: die Kaltenbrunner Berichte an Bormann und Hitler über das Attentat vom 20. Juli 1944. Geheime Dokumente aus dem ehemaligen Reichssicherheitsamt*. Herausgegeben vom Archiv Peter für historische und zeitgeschichtliche Dokumentation (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1961)}

All in all, by late 1944 Kaltenbrunner had become one of the more important leaders of the Third Reich, deeply involved in small- and large-scale murder, intelligence matters, and the protection of the regime. His position was far removed from the sort of post he described himself as having when he was on trial at Nuremberg. His power was great; his duties were multifarious and wide-ranging.

The extensiveness and broadness of his activities can be shown by describing some of his actions during his years as head of the Reich security main office. For example, he was very much concerned about "protecting German blood." This concern can be seen in a speech that he made to a group of party officials in 1944. He said:

Germany must take care that the eastern peoples and a major part of the Balkan and Danube States be compelled to die out through sterilization and annihilation of the leadership classes of these nations. However, in order to assure leadership by the German
people and at the same time increase the German population, all German women married or unmarried up to the age of thirty-five must be compelled if they do not already have four children to produce at least four children by acceptable pure racial German men. It does not matter whether such men are married. Families which already possess children must furnish their men for this action.\textsuperscript{107}

How such "protection of German blood" was carried out in practice can be seen in the way in which pregnancies among foreign workers and among German women impregnated by "non-Aryans" were handled. In the latter case, the men who "have had sexual intercourse with German women, will be transferred to a concentration camp...if upon racial examination they have proved unfit to become Germans, or to the SS-special Camp at Hingert if they have passed the test."\textsuperscript{108} The former case also showed a strong desire on the part of the chief of the security police and his associates to "save German blood." In two orders, issued in June and July of 1943, the head of the Reich security main office made more detailed provisions for dealing with female eastern workers who became pregnant.\textsuperscript{109} Both of

\textsuperscript{107}Affidavit of Bertus Gerdus (a party official), Doc. No. 3462-PS, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. VI, p. 162. Kaltenbrunner followed his own advice, since he had three children by his wife and two more by his mistress.

\textsuperscript{108}Translation of Kaltenbrunner's order on protective custody, Berlin, May 4, 1943, Doc. No. NO-1532, on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (Ref. No. CXXXII-77a).

\textsuperscript{109}Schnellbrief from Kaltenbrunner to all higher SS and police leaders, state police posts, and criminal
these ordinances provided that such pregnancies should be interrupted at the discretion of the appropriate authorities. They also indicated that every effort was to be made to save children who might have German blood. In case it was thought that either the mother or father of the child had elements of "good" blood, a strict examination of the racial merits of the case was to be undertaken. If it was determined that the blood lines were good, then the abortion was to be denied and the child was to be raised as a German. If, on the other hand, the examination was negative, then the interruption of the pregnancy was to be ordered.\textsuperscript{110} All of this elaborate procedure was necessary because the "necessity of hindering the loss of German blood will be made stronger through sacrifices of war."\textsuperscript{111} In short, Kaltenbrunner was deeply committed to the racial myths of the Nazi regime

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{110}Ibid.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{111}Abschrift from Kaltenbrunner to all higher SS and police leaders, \textit{et al.}, Berlin, July 27, 1943, Doc. No. NO-1383, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.}
and was in a position where he could carry out his fantasies.

Of course, not all of Kaltenbrunner's activities had such important consequences. He was also concerned with relatively minor matters as well. This interest in minutiae is clearly evident in an incident that occurred in early 1943. Kaltenbrunner's men found a flower shop in Berlin which was wrapping its cut flowers in copies of foreign newspapers, specifically, ten copies of the Neue Züricher Zeitung and two of The Times of London. This situation was considered dangerous since the National Socialist regime did not want its people reading anyone else's views of the news. The Swiss papers were considered especially dangerous in this regard, since they were written in German.

The security police tracked the papers to their source, which turned out to be the office of the under state secretary in the foreign ministry, Ernst Woermann. It turned out that his housekeeper had given the discarded newspapers to the florist's shop, not realizing that the papers included foreign journals. The upshot of the whole, somewhat ludicrous affair was that the chief of the security police himself politely told Under Secretary Woermann to mind better just what he did with his old newspapers.\footnote{112}{Kaltenbrunner to SS-Obergruppenführer Karl Wolff, chief of the Reichsführer SS's personal staff, Berlin,}
Woermann agreed.

A further example of Kaltenbrunner's interest in relatively minor matters while he was chief of the security police concerns an organization known as the Southeast Europe Society (Südosteuropagesellschaft).\(^{113}\) This association was an organization set up in 1940 to exploit the Balkan region in the German interest.\(^{114}\) The next year (1941) Kaltenbrunner was invited to become a director of the society.\(^{115}\) In view of Kaltenbrunner's long-standing interest in southeastern Europe,\(^{116}\) as well as his position as higher SS and police leader in Vienna,


\(^{113}\) On this organization, see the monograph by Dietrich Orlow, The Nazis in the Balkans: A Case Study of Totalitarian Politics (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968).

\(^{114}\) Ibid., p. 21.

\(^{115}\) Unsigned letter to Kaltenbrunner, n. p., June 11, 1941, National Archives Microcopy, T-71, R 63, frame 561586. See also T-71, R 63, frames 561576-561603.

\(^{116}\) Kaltenbrunner had been interested in the Balkans since his university days. See ante, p. 22. After the war, during his interrogation, he gave a long and detailed account of what he thought had been wrong with German policy in southeastern Europe. Vernehmung des Dr. Kaltenbrunner vom 13. September 1946 durch Mr. Selcke, Vol. I, Part 2, pp. 57-59, Doc. No. ZS-673 (1844/56), on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.
it is not surprising that the Southeast Europe Society
would want him as a director, nor that he would accept.
What is surprising, in view of his ambition, is that
Kaltenbrunner evidently never tried to make use of this
position for his own gain. Perhaps he was not as interested
in the Balkans as he intimated; or perhaps he had too many
other things occupying his mind.

One final instance of the chief of the security
c police's involvement with relatively minor matters during
his years as head of the Reich security main office concerns
the so-called "Vlassov army." The Vlassov army, one of the
least successful ventures of the Third Reich, was an attempt
to raise a group of anti-communist Russian volunteers to
fight against the Soviet Union. This attempt to create an
anti-Soviet Russian army shows very clearly the bureaucratic
in-fighting, the almost "feudal"117 lack of coordination
and cooperation, which existed within the National Socialist
regime. The basic problem was simple: should a group of
anti-communist Russians, organized and commanded by the
former Soviet general, Andrei A. Vlassov, be utilized in
combat in the increasingly unfavorable war on the Eastern
Front? The answer should have been obvious—to any

117 See Robert Koehl, "Feudal Aspects of National
Socialism," The American Political Science Review, Vol. LIV,
No. 4 (December, 1960), pp. 921-933.
reasonably rational person. The Germans were losing the war in the East and they needed all the aid they could muster. However, things were rarely, if ever, rationally decided in the Third Reich. The ministry of eastern occupied territories opposed the Vlassov scheme on the ground that it would alienate the subject nationalities within the USSR, whom the ministry was attempting to cultivate. 118 Others pointed out that the situation was getting desperate and that the Third Reich needed all the help it could get.

Up to this point in the argument, the chief of the security police had not taken a stand on the affair. 119 However, the entire discussion now began to get entangled in the internecine struggles that pervaded Nazi Germany and the SS in particular. Gottlieb Berger, an SS-Obergruppenführer and chief of the SS main office, began to press the anti-Vlassov position strongly; Kaltenbrunner started supporting the cause of the Vlassovites. 120 The whole


119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.
question of whether or not to arm these sub-humans (*Untermenschen*) very rapidly became a matter of who was stronger--Kaltenbrunner or Berger.\(^{121}\) In fact, their actual position on the use of Vlassov and his men really mattered very little. Indeed, they eventually switched sides in the argument, with Berger espousing the Vlassov army and Kaltenbrunner opposing it.\(^{122}\) In the final analysis, the Vlassov "army" proved to be a mere phantom--a shadow of the threat to the USSR it might have become--had it not been for the infighting within the Nazi hierarchy and the inherent conviction of the Germans concerned that the Slavs were *Untermenschen* and hence beneath contempt. The Fuhrer himself had said as early as mid-1943:

> I will never build a Russian army. That is a fantasy of the first order. Let no one imagine that we have any need to form a Russian State, that everything will then be in order, that we should get a million men. We should merely have committed a monumental folly.\(^{123}\)

Basically, Kaltenbrunner undoubtedly agreed with his Fuhrer, but for internal tactical reasons the chief of the security

\(^{121}\) *Ibid.*


\(^{123}\) As quoted in Höhne, *The Order of the Death's Head*, p. 506.
police was willing, at least temporarily and half-hearted, to support the Vlassovite movement.

Thus, Kaltenbrunner, during his years as chief of the security police, was deeply involved in all sorts of activities, ranging from the major to the minor. He was entangled in small- and large-scale murder, in intelligence operations, in police affairs, and in unimportant minutiae. In short, his duties were broad and multifarious. The authority of his office was great and grew during the two and a half years he was head of the Reich security main office. By early 1945 he was a powerful and influential hierarch in Hitler's Third Reich.
CHAPTER IV
AT THE SUMMIT OF POWER, 1943-1945

II: Nazi Hierarch

As chief of the security police and security service of the Reich, Kaltenbrunner was concerned with a multitude of diverse matters, some of which were examined in the preceding chapter. However, it should not be forgotten that he was also one of the most important members of the almost "feudal" National Socialist hierarchy, and it is in that role that he must now be examined.

In the kaleidoscopic power struggles which characterized the Nazi regime there was one fixed point: Adolf Hitler, the fount of all power, authority, and influence. The Führer "was the ideology, the focal point of fluctuating expectations and the desire for self-surrender and subjection."¹ This statement was no less true in the case of the chief of the security police than it was in that of any other Nazi hierarch. As Kaltenbrunner's associate,

¹Fest, The Face of the Third Reich, p. 41. See also ante, pp.
Wilhelm Höttl, succinctly put it, "Hitler was his [Kaltenbrunner's] God."² Or, put a different way: Kaltenbrunner's devotion to Hitler...was no case of reasoned loyalty alone. To the very end Hitler's personality held an almost mesmeric fascination for him; he sincerely worshipped him, and he had unfounded faith in what he regarded as his inspired foresight and vision."³

Even after becoming head of the Reich security main office and even after the twentieth of July, 1944, when he came into almost daily contact with Hitler, Kaltenbrunner's devotion to, and relationship with, his Führer did not change. Perhaps the chief of the security police's relationship with Hitler was best illustrated by an incident that occurred in early 1945. In March of that year, Kaltenbrunner was convinced by his subordinate, Dr. Höttl, that the war was lost and that he must tell this fact to the Führer.⁴ As a consequence, on March 23, 1945, the head of the Reich security main office went to a meeting at the Führer's headquarters determined to give the Nazi leader

²Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968.

³Höttl, The Secret Front, p. 66.

⁴Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. Whether Höttl played as big a role in this affair as he indicated in his interview with the author and in his books is dubious. There is, however, no reason to doubt that his statement about Kaltenbrunner's interview with the Fuhrer is essentially correct.
the rather obvious news that the war was as good as lost and that it should be ended forthwith. Kaltenbrunner requested and was granted a private interview following the daily situation conference.

When admitted to the Führer's presence, the chief of the security police was dumfounded to find the Führer bent over a huge model of the city of Linz—the home town of both men. The Nazi chief was full of enthusiasm over his plans to turn Linz into a new metropolitan center after the war. 5 Hitler plied Kaltenbrunner with questions about what he thought of the plans. This discussion continued for nearly an hour. The Führer then turned serious and reportedly said: "I know, Kaltenbrunner, what you want to say, but believe me, if I were not convinced that I should build Linz again with your help... I would blow my brains out this very day. You must believe; believe, that is all that is needed now. I still have ways and means of bringing the war to a victorious conclusion." 6 Hitler then took his leave to attend another conference.

5See Speer, Inside the Third Reich, pp. 89-100 and 297-298.

6Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, p. 154. Whether or not the Führer said precisely these words is hardly material. The tone and content of the conversation are very much in character for Hitler at that time.
Kaltenbrunner was duly impressed. Less than twenty-four hours later he was back in southern Germany telling Höttl: "That's all nonsense of yours about surrendering.... The Führer still has ways and means of ending the war with a victory at the eleventh hour."?

This anecdote would appear to be a very revealing one, for Kaltenbrunner, like many other far more brilliant and able men, was under Hitler's spell right up to the very end. It may be a cliche, but it seems that for many only death could break the bonds which bound them to their Führer.

The same kind of dogged devotion, however, did not apply to the chief of the security police's relationship with his immediate superior, the man who had elevated him to his position of great power and prestige within the Nazi hierarchy--Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler. It will be recalled that the probable reason for Kaltenbrunner's elevation from higher SS and police leader in Vienna to the post of chief of the security police was Himmler's desire to fill the position of head of the Reich security main office with a man who would not threaten his own place as master of the rapidly growing SS-police empire.

7Ibid., This entire section is based on ibid., pp. 153-154; Höttl, The Secret Front, p. 298; and Dr. Höttl's interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968.
Unfortunately for Himmler's peace of mind, things did not work out as he had planned. Kaltenbrunner slowly gained power at the expense of the Reichsführer SS. Especially after the twentieth of July putsch, the chief of the security police gained direct access to the Führer without having to go through Himmler.\(^8\) By the last year of the Hitler regime the head of the Reich security main office had become the Reichsführer's rival for power rather than his subordinate.\(^9\) As Walther Schellenberg, Himmler's confidant and Kaltenbrunner's nominal subordinate, put it: "So powerful had Kaltenbrunner become toward the end that even Himmler feared him."\(^10\) Even the chief of the security police himself admitted, in a different context, that he was independent of the Reichsführer. "I had become independent from both" Himmler and Schellenberg and "I had a monopoly on reporting on internal and external politics."\(^11\) Thus, the well-laid


\(^9\)Reitlinger, The Final Solution, p. 522.


plans of the head of the SS-police empire to place a man in the position of chief of the Reich security main office who would not be a rival to him had come to naught. He had raised up a man whose power at the end had come to equal his own. That very power, however, was later to put Kaltenbrunner in a most unenviable position at Nuremberg.

Of course, part of the reason for the growth in Kaltenbrunner's authority lay outside of his own actions or those of the Reichsführer SS. The chief of the security police had obtained a puissant ally, who, for his own reasons, had chosen to support the head of the Reich security main office in his struggle for power against Himmler: the Führer's brown eminence, Martin Bormann.\(^{12}\) Why Bormann chose to support Kaltenbrunner in this internecine quarrel is not difficult to discern.\(^{13}\) The leader

\(^{12}\) On Bormann's increasing power, see Louis E. Schmier, *Martin Bormann and the Nazi Party, 1941-1945* (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1968), passim. By 1945 Bormann had become head of the party chancellery, personal secretary to the Führer, and Hitler's general factotum.

\(^{13}\) On Bormann's support of Kaltenbrunner, see Arnold and Veronica Toynbee (eds.), *Hitler's Europe. Survey of International Affairs* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 26. See also Frischauer, *Himmler*, p. 186. Höttl holds the opinion that Kaltenbrunner was not on good terms with Bormann because the head of the party chancellery disliked the tone of the so-called SD situation reports and blamed the chief of the security police for them. Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. This latter view does not seem logical. Bormann was too shrewd to allow his real annoyance with
of the party chancellery desired to have the fullest possible power under the Führer. The SS-police empire was a serious threat. What better way to fight that menace than to alienate the chief of the security police from the Reichsführer SS and chief of the German police? It was an example of one of the oldest methods of ruling: divide and govern. That is not to say that Bormann and Kaltenbrunner were friends or that their alliance was anything but temporary and expedient in nature. The leader of the party chancellery would have turned on Kaltenbrunner had he felt that the chief of the security police was becoming too much of a threat, just as

the SD reports to interfere with his political power plays. It was far more important for him to have an ally against the rising power of the Reichsführer SS than to get upset over reports that annoyed Himmler and Kaltenbrunner as well. The person in charge of these reports, Otto Ohlendorf, attempted to make them as accurate as possible, which was not at all what his superiors wanted. As Himmler once remarked to his masseur: "If I were to listen to him [Ohlendorf], I would have to make bitter enemies on all sides. His pet idea is that I should let the Führer see his reports. But they're so pessimistic that this is quite out of the question; they would only impair the Führer's capacity for action."" Helix Kersten, The Kersten Memoirs, 1940-1945, pp. 215-216. These statements say a very great deal about the Third Reich and its hierarchs. The SD reports have been published in part in Heinz Boberach (ed.), Meldungen aus dem Reich: Auswahl aus den geheimen Lageberichten des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS, 1939-1944 (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1968).
Kaltenbrunner would have abandoned Bormann if it had been expedient—which it certainly was not!

It should be noted that one of Himmler's other chief subordinates and a friend of Kaltenbrunner's, SS-Gruppenführer Hermann Fegelein, also got drawn into this quarrel. Fegelein, an ex-jockey, was Himmler's liaison man at the Führer's headquarters. He was also the husband of Grete Braun, the sister of Hitler's mistress, Eva Braun. The presence at headquarters of Fegelein and his wife made it a bit easier to explain what Eva was doing in the Führer's entourage. Fegelein also decided to support Bormann in the struggle for power, though it did him little good in the end, since he was shot for desertion in late April, 1945.

Bormann did nothing to help him, which gives some inkling of the depth of the leader of the party chancellery's devotion to his supposed friends and supporters.

Kaltenbrunner's relations with his subordinates and other SS-police leaders are also illustrative of both the atmosphere that prevailed within the hierarchy of the


Third Reich and of the chief of the security police's position within it. The Reich security main office was hardly what one could have called a smoothly-functioning organization. Although Kaltenbrunner appears to have functioned fairly well with his two principal professional subordinates, Heinrich Müller, the head of the Gestapo, and Artur Nebe,¹⁶ the head of the criminal police, neither man evidently thought very highly of their immediate superior. Little can be said about Müller, since he was a very secretive man, who disappeared at the end of the war. More can be said about Nebe, though there is much about the man that is obscure and unclear. He seems to have been involved in, or at least cognizant of, the resistance movement. What his motives for dealing with the opponents of the regime were, or what he hoped to gain thereby, are very unclear. Suffice it to say that Nebe's professionalism and his increasing dissatisfaction with the Nazi system made it difficult for him to get along with his chief. The upshot of the whole business was that Kaltenbrunner eventually had the head of the criminal police arrested and executed.¹⁷

Much rockier was Kaltenbrunner's relationship with his other two main subordinates, the SD leaders, Otto

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¹⁶ On Nebe, see Gisevius, *Wo ist Nebe?*, passim.

Ohlendorf and Walther Schellenberg. These two men were much alike. They were both intelligent and capable intellectuals who had been in the security service (the SD) far longer than the newly-appointed chief of the security police and security service. Both tended to look down upon the head of the Reich security main office as being a bit less intelligent and clever than they themselves. Ohlendorf did not scruple to lecture the Reichsführer himself; how much more likely was he to treat this slow and cumberson Austrian provincial with respect.\footnote{Much of this section on Ohlendorf and Schellenberg is based on the author's earlier work on these men: N. Robert Houston, The Sowers of the Wind: The Story of the Sicherheitsdienst and of its Chief, Otto Ohlendorf (unpublished senior honors paper, Florida State University, 1964), pp. 55-69, and an unpublished seminar paper written at Rice University in 1967 for the Austrian history seminar entitled "Ernst Kaltenbrunner and Otto Ohlendorf: A Study in National Socialist Police Command."}

Furthermore, the SD reports which emanated from Ohlendorf's office III of the Reich security main office were a bone of contention between the chief of the security police and his subordinate. Ohlendorf sought uncompromising accuracy; Kaltenbrunner sought something a good bit different. The latter demanded that the reports be made less pessimistic or else Ohlendorf would find himself in jail.\footnote{Ohlendorf, as quoted in François Bayle, Psychologie et éthique du National Socialisme: Etude anthropologique des dirigeants SS (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1953), p. 40.}
obvious that Kaltenbrunner and Ohlendorf did not get along with one another.\textsuperscript{20}

Nor did Kaltenbrunner get along well with his other SD subordinate, Walther Schellenberg. According to Schellenberg, Kaltenbrunner hated him.\textsuperscript{21} The reasons for his intense dislike are fairly obvious. Not only was Schellenberg a very clever man; he was also in good standing with the Reichsführer SS, which meant that his subordination to Kaltenbrunner was to a large extent illusory. Furthermore, Schellenberg had been considered for the post which Kaltenbrunner received, which did not increase the two men's mutual admiration for each other, to say the least. Finally, as the war drew to a close, Kaltenbrunner and Schellenberg found themselves on opposite sides of the fence in the very tangled and complicated negotiations for peace which were set in train during the last few months of the conflict.\textsuperscript{22} All in all, these two

\textsuperscript{20}Still, after the war, Kaltenbrunner had this to say of Ohlendorf: "The person Ohlendorf is interesting. Ohlendorf is an extraordinarily cultured, earnest, intelligent man." Vernehmung des Dr. Kaltenbrunner vom 19. September 1946 durch Mr. Selcke, Vol. II, Part I, p. 13, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich [Ref. No. ZS-673 (1844/56)].

\textsuperscript{21}Bernadotte, The Curtain Falls, pp. 29 and 139.

\textsuperscript{22}This topic will be dealt with more fully on post, pp. 156-163.
men did not function well together and eventually Kaltenbrunner succeeded in firing Schellenberg.\footnote{23} However, this development came so late in the game as to render it a Pyrrhic victory.

These then were the relationships--some fair, some bad, none excellent--between Kaltenbrunner and his four principal subordinates: Müller, Nebe, Ohlendorf and Schellenberg. Before turning to the head of the Reich security main office's relationships with other members of the National Socialist hierarchy, one other subordinate's role needs to be explored--that of the ubiquitous SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Wilhelm Höttl. Höttl, like Ohlendorf and Schellenberg, was an intellectual. He obtained a doctorate in history from the University of Vienna, having studied under the famous Austrian historian and later supporter of the Nazis, Heinrich Ritter von Srbik.\footnote{24} He joined the SD shortly after the Anschluss.\footnote{25} Just when he first met the future chief of the security

\footnote{23}Testimony of Schellenberg, Doc. No. NG-4718, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

\footnote{24}Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. His dissertation was on the \textit{Turnvereine} in the War of Liberation of 1813-1814. \textit{Ibid.}

\footnote{25}Höttl, \textit{The Secret Front}, pp. 7 and 13.
police is unclear.\textsuperscript{26} Suffice it to say that by late 1944 Höttl had become one of Kaltenbrunner's closest associates and advisers,\textsuperscript{27} or so he says. Probably he was much less influential than he intimates at present, for he was never brought to trial by the Allies. In fact, at one point, in April, 1945, the chief of the security police had Höttl arrested by the Gestapo. When the latter talked himself out of incarceration and berated Kaltenbrunner for having had him arrested, the head of the Reich security main office remarked: "I never thought twice about it."\textsuperscript{28} This hardly seems the sort of action one would take toward the man who was supposedly one's chief adviser.\textsuperscript{29} Perhaps it might be

\textsuperscript{26}Höttl himself has given at least three different dates: 1935, in a letter to the author, Alt Aussee, November 25, 1965; 1936, in an interview with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968; and after the Anschluss, Deposition of Höttl, Nuremberg, October 10, 1945, Doc. No. FS-1764B, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

\textsuperscript{27}Testimony of Kurt Becher, Nuremberg, March 27, 1946, Doc. No. 827, in a volume containing doc. nos. 811 to 870, Eichmannprozess--Beweisdokumentation (21 vols., Israel Police issue), on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich.

\textsuperscript{28}Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, p. 155. See also ibid., pp. 154-155 and 299. That Höttl could talk himself out of imprisonment is not at all unlikely. He is a very glib man, and things were very confused by that stage of the war.

\textsuperscript{29}Unlike most Nazi leaders, Höttl has done very well for himself. As of 1968 he ran a private school in Bad Aussee and was a very prosperous man.
best to say that Höttl knew Kaltenbrunner and what he was doing, but had himself little influence upon the chief of the security police or his activities.

Such were Kaltenbrunner's relationships with his major subordinates. How did he get along with his SS colleagues and with other Nazi leaders? Generally speaking the answer to that question is: poorly. His poor relations with other Nazi hierarchy might perhaps be illustrated by two examples. The first of these instances concerns SS-Obergruppenführer Karl Wolff, the head of Himmler's personal staff and later highest SS and police leader in Italy. Originally Kaltenbrunner and Wolff had gotten along well with one another.\textsuperscript{30} However, their relationship started to deteriorate when the chief of the security police began to doubt the totalness of Wolff's commitment to National Socialism and to the Führer.\textsuperscript{31} Kaltenbrunner began to suspect that Wolff was carrying on some sort of negotiations with the Allies. As it happened Wolff was negotiating with the American intelligence chief in Switzerland, Allen W. Dulles, for the surrender of

\textsuperscript{30} Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
all German forces in Italy.\footnote{On Wolff's surrender negotiations with Dulles, see Allen W. Dulles, \textit{The Secret Surrender} (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), \textit{passim}.} While the chief of the security police was never able to prove his assumptions until the actual surrender took place on May 2, 1945, his suspicions caused his relationship with Wolff to become embittered. This whole affair shows once again the Byzantine nature of the National Socialist system, which pitted two of the highest-ranking SS leaders against one another--Wolff trying to surrender and Kaltenbrunner attempting to prevent him from doing so.

Nor did Kaltenbrunner get along well with other Nazi leaders. For example, he and the foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, disliked and distrusted one another.\footnote{Höttil, \textit{The Secret Front}, p. 275; Dulles, \textit{The Craft of Intelligence}, p. 143.} This mutual disregard was in large part a result of the failure of the Germans to make good use of the Cicero information\footnote{See ante, pp. 118-119.}--a failure which cost them dearly. Eventually the friction between the chief of the security police and the foreign minister reached the point that, when Schellenberg facetiously suggested that Kaltenbrunner replace von Ribbentrop at the foreign office, the former
took the statement seriously and indicated that he thought it was a fine idea.\textsuperscript{35} Again the lack of solidarity among the Nazi leadership is clear.

These two examples of distrust and cross-purposes between Kaltenbrunner and his peers should not, however, be taken to indicate that he failed to function with all his associates, for he and Bormann did operate well together.\textsuperscript{36} What these instances of friction do indicate clearly, when taken along with Kaltenbrunner's relationships with Himmler, Ohlendorf, Schellenberg, and others, is that the National Socialist hierarchy was not a smoothly-functioning, monolithic entity; rather, as Professor Robert Koehl has indicated,\textsuperscript{37} it was a very "feudal" system in which subordinates and superiors, colleagues and peers, fought one another for the power that flowed from the fount of the Führer. The chief of the security police played the game like everyone else.

Even in minor matters the Nazi state was very "feudal." By 1944 who one knew was more important than what one knew. In Kaltenbrunner's case the question of influence replacing

\textsuperscript{35}Bernadotte, The Curtain Falls, pp. 142-143.

\textsuperscript{36}See ante, pp. 139-141.

ability is clearly shown in an incident concerning Ernst's younger brother, Roland Kaltenbrunner. In mid-1944 the chief of the security police wrote a letter to the Reich ministry of justice requesting that Roland be allowed to take his civil service examination under the special wartime provisions of the civil service law. This intervention received a favorable reply, although the state secretary in the justice ministry, Herbert Klemm, thought that the younger Kaltenbrunner ought to take the test for assessor before venturing that for Referendar. One had to have a protector in the Third Reich or one was lost. The state of law (Rechtsstaat) of which Germans were so proud had vanished. Thus, one of Kaltenbrunner's major roles in the years from 1943 to 1945 was that of a baron in the "feudal" system that was Nazi Germany. He played his role well and by early 1945 was one of the most powerful men in the Third Reich.

It might be useful at this point to digress briefly in order to describe Kaltenbrunner's physical appearance and personal habits during the two years when he exercised

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38 Herbert Klemm to Kaltenbrunner, Berlin, July 7, 1944, Doc. No. NG-1917, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich. See also the handwritten notes on Roland Kaltenbrunner, Doc. No. NG-477, also on file at the Institut.
so much power and influence. He was 42 years old when he was appointed chief of the security police. He was not a handsome man, lacking proportion and grace in his bodily makeup. In fact, he was described by one who knew him as "a giant in statue, heavy in his movements—a real lumberjack." His face was coarse and crisscrossed with scars and his "small, penetrating eyes were unpleasant," staring at one "like the eyes of a viper." His teeth were bad and some were missing, and he spoke indistinctly, although his voice was not unpleasant with its pronounced south German accent. In short, the head of the Reich security main office was not a handsome man.

Similarly, his personal habits left much to be desired. He drank heavily, often starting early in the forenoon. He smoked about 100 cigarettes a day, which left his small, pudgy fingers discolored. In addition, he was


41Ibid., pp. 373-374. This evidently annoyed Himmler, who ordered Kaltenbrunner to go to see the dentist. Ibid., p. 374.


known as a rake and kept at least one mistress. Perhaps the best summation of Kaltenbrunner's personal habits is that given by his ubiquitous subordinate, Dr. Höttl, who said: "Kaltenbrunner smoked, drank, and loved a very great deal."  

Having now examined Kaltenbrunner's activities while he was chief of the security police, his position as a Nazi hierarch, and his personal appearance and habits, one question yet remains to be posed before turning to his fall from power in 1945-1946: why did the basically moderate Nazi of the 1930's turn into the callous, unthinking killer of the 1940's? From an examination of the chief of the security police's career, it would seem that three interlocking factors were involved. The first of them may be explained by Lord Acton's perceptive comment that power "tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." And Kaltenbrunner had an abundance of

44 See post, p. 172.

45 Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. The German of this quote has a certain economy of statement: "Kaltenbrunner raucht, trinkt und liebt sehr viel." Ibid.


power. It was the kind of authority that easily might have corrupted a possessor of greater character than Kaltenbrunner. It is not to be wondered at that a man with the "elastic conscience"48 of the chief of the security police found the perquisites of his powerful position beyond his strength to resist.

Coupled with this temptation to use one's great authority fully was Kaltenbrunner's personality. His behavior pattern was the kind that has been labelled dominant-submissive. That is, he desired both to control others and to be controlled by some authority greater than himself. That authority for Kaltenbrunner was, from the early 1930's onward, the Führer. Hitler was his "god," and whatever the Führer ordered had to be done. During the years immediately prior to the Anschluss, Hitler's orders to the Austrian party had been to follow an evolutionary, legalist line. Therefore, Kaltenbrunner supported that course. Throughout the years 1943-1945, the Führer's orders had been to kill and destroy and that is what the chief of the security police did. Hitler ordered; Kaltenbrunner followed.

48 Höttl, The Secret Front, p. 299.
Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is Hannah Arendt's very cogent argument that in the Third Reich morality was turned upside-down. As she lucidly puts it:

And just as the law in civilized countries assumes that the voice of conscience tells everybody 'Thou shalt not kill,' even though man's natural desires and inclinations may at times be murderous, so the law of Hitler's land demanded that the voice of conscience tell everybody, 'Thou shalt kill,' although the organizers of the massacres knew full well that murder is against the normal desires and inclinations of most people.49

It would have taken a man of both great moral and physical courage to have set himself against the pervading ethos of the Third Reich, whether it was a matter of ideological orders, as Hans Buchheim would have it, or a matter of the reversal of moral values, as Miss Arendt puts it. This sort of courage was not a part of Kaltenbrunner's makeup. He found himself in a position of great power

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49 Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, p. 150. In the Anatomy of the SS State Hans Buchheim takes a somewhat different position, arguing that to "the question whether those involved in National Socialist mass crimes were conscious of wrong-doing, the general answer must be 'Yes.' Basically the mental attitude of these men stemmed neither from complete rejection of all positive moral norms; it was rooted in the belief that fulfillment of an historical (or political) necessity produced an exceptional situation, calling for the suspension of all recognized and normally respected standards." Buchheim, Anatomy of the SS State, p. 362. Buchheim's concept of ideological orders seems valid, but it does not go far enough. It would appear that there was at least a subconscious reordering of moral values, as Miss Arendt suggests.
and prestige—a position from which he could dominate others and bask in the approbation of his Führer and from which he could enjoy the considerable and pleasant perquisites of power.

As Hans Buchheim remarked, a "man is by nature inclined to try to show himself worthy of his social environment and adapt himself to its fundamental views and rules of behaviour."\(^50\) That is what Kaltenbrunner tried to do. That is also what Eichmann did. They were not monsters. They were something far worse. As Miss Arendt put it, they were—banal.

Thus, between the years 1943 and 1945 Kaltenbrunner emerged from the relative backwater of Vienna to take his place as one of the hierarchs of the Third Reich. In little more than two years he rose to be one of the most powerful men in Nazi Germany. In a period of twenty-six months he was responsible for more murders, imprisonments, and terror than most men cause in a lifetime. However, by the beginning of 1945 his days at the summit of power were numbered. National Socialist Germany was crumbling and with it Kaltenbrunner's world. He was about to enter the most unhappy part of his life.

\(^{50}\) Buchheim, \textit{Anatomy of the SS State}, p. 386.
CHAPTER V
THE FALL FROM POWER, 1945-1946.

By January 30, 1945, the second anniversary of Kaltenbrunner's appointment as chief of the security police and security service (and the twelfth anniversary of the Nazi regime as well), it was apparent to all but the most purblind and fanatical that the days of the Third Reich were numbered. The great German counterattack in the Ardennes (the Battle of the Bulge) had failed and the Western Allies were poised on the Rhine. Meanwhile, a powerful Russian offensive was sweeping across Poland into the Reich. Time was running out for the Hitler regime—and for its servant, Ernst Kaltenbrunner. Just as the latter's rise to power had been rapid, so also would his fall from the summit be swift and final.

Kaltenbrunner's actions and policies during these last three months of the Third Reich often seem ambivalent
and contradictory, as though he had lost his moorings
and had been cast adrift. This is not surprising, how-
ever, as a large number of the Nazi hierarchs behaved in
a most unusual manner during the same period of time.¹

One of the clearest indicators of the strange con-
ditions which prevailed involves the various peace nego-
tiations undertaken by different members of the National
Socialist hierarchy during the three month period between
January and May, 1945. Even Reichsführer SS Himmler
attempted to make peace with the Western Allies through
the intermediary of Sweden's Count Folke Bernadotte.²
So also did SS-Obergruppenführer Wolff³ through his dis-
cussions with Mr. Allen Dulles. Finally, Kaltenbrunner
himself tried his hand at peacemaking.

¹It should be kept in mind that in the final days
of the National Socialist regime both the Reichsführer SS
and Reichsmarschall Göring were stripped of their offices
and expelled from the NSDAP. If two such old and respected
Nazis could fall from the grace of the Führer, the former
for peace negotiations and the latter through misunder-
standing, how much more understandable it is to find that
a second-ranker like Kaltenbrunner was drifting with the
tides.

²Bernadotte was a member of the Swedish royal house
and vice-president of the Swedish Red Cross. See Berna-
dotte, The Curtain Falls, passim.

³It will be recalled that Wolff was head of the
Reichsführer's personal staff, and by early 1945 highest
SS and police leader in Italy.
The first of these affairs, the one involving Himmler and Count Bernadotte, began as an effort on the part of the Swedish Red Cross to improve the lot of the concentration camp inmates. Under pressure from the indefatigable Schellenberg, it soon turned into something quite different. The Count arrived in Berlin on February 16, 1945. He was immediately taken by Schellenberg to a conference with the head of the Reich security main office at Kaltenbrunner's villa in the fashionable Wannsee district of Berlin. The latter greeted the Swede affably, offered him Chesterfields and Dubonnet, and made an effort to find out why Bernadotte was desirous of seeing Himmler. The conference achieved little or nothing, since neither man trusted the other.

Shortly thereafter, the Count saw Himmler and, with Schellenberg's aid, convinced the Reichsführer to improve the living conditions of Scandinavian prisoners in German custody. Meanwhile, Kaltenbrunner had brought up this matter with the Führer, whose comment concerning it is

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4 This action was very typical of Kaltenbrunner.


instructive: "One cannot accomplish anything with this sort of nonsense in a total war."\(^7\)

In the interim, Schellenberg had been working on the Reichsführer to permit him to turn the Count into an intermediary through which they could negotiate with the Western powers. Pursuant to this aim, on March 12 Himmler signed an agreement pledging himself to try to prevent the execution of Hitler's orders to destroy the concentration camps and their inmates rather than to let them fall into Allied hands.\(^8\) Shortly after this agreement was made, Bernadotte was informed that Kaltenbrunner "was on the warpath."\(^9\) The chief of the security police seemed to be out to wreck the count's plans to help the various prisoners in German custody.\(^10\) Indeed, a few days later (on March 15) Kaltenbrunner openly informed Bernadotte that he did not intend to help Bernadotte with his humanitarian schemes.\(^11\) To this bald statement of opposition the

\(^7\)As quoted in Höne, *The Order of the Death's Head*, p. 570.

\(^8\)Manvell and Fraenkel, *Himmler*, p. 221.

\(^9\)Bernadotte, *The Curtain Falls*, p. 64.

\(^10\)Ibid., pp. 64-65.

\(^11\)Ibid., p. 66.
count replied that he would not permit a subordinate
official to disrupt an arrangement made with the
Reichsführer SS.\textsuperscript{12}

Of course, the vacillating Himmler was much less
adamant about trying to override Kaltenbrunner's intran-
sigence than was Bernadotte. During the course of the
negotiations over the release of concentration camp in-
mates the Reichsführer turned to Schellenberg and cried:
"How am I going to do that with Kaltenbrunner about? I
shall be completely at his mercy."\textsuperscript{13} These two sentences
illustrate very concisely how dramatically the positions
of these two men had changed since early 1943.

The chief of the security police continued to oppose
all of Bernadotte's attempts to assist the inmates of the
concentration camps, as he also opposed the similar
efforts of the former president of the Swiss confederation,
Jean-Marie Musy.\textsuperscript{14} Kaltenbrunner followed a consistently

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., pp. 66-67. The text of this work says that
the confrontation took place on March 5, but this is
impossible. Bernadotte was in Sweden at that time and
the agreement had not even been made.

\textsuperscript{13}As quoted in Manvell and Fraenkel, Himmler, p. 225.

\textsuperscript{14}See Eidesstattliche Versicherung of Walther Schellen-
berg, Nuremberg, June 18, 1948, on file at the Centre de
Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (Ref. No. CXCVI-34).
hard line throughout all these discussions. He tried to thwart all efforts to ameliorate the conditions in the camps or to turn discussions originally undertaken for these purposes into genuine peace negotiations. The head of the Reich security main office remained intransigent.

His hard-line attitude is also clear in regard to the attempts of Karl Wolff, the highest SS and police leader in Italy, to bring about a separate surrender of the German forces in northern Italy.\footnote{On this affair, see Dulles, The Secret Surrender, passim.} Having come to the conclusion, inescapable to a rational man, that Germany had been defeated and should surrender, Wolff got in touch with the American Office of Strategic Service's representative in Switzerland, Mr. Allen W. Dulles, in order to arrange for the German forces in Italy to give up the fight. Somehow or other Kaltenbrunner got word of these surreptitious negotiations and did his best to thwart Wolff.\footnote{Dulles, The Secret Surrender, pp. 171-174.}

Up to this point one is confronted by the image of Kaltenbrunner the intransigent, the man opposed to all measures to end the war and to extract Germany from the terrible situation in which she found herself. However,
this picture was not an entirely accurate one, for Kaltenbrunner himself was also trying to make peace. According to Dr. Höttl, Kaltenbrunner had been aware of Germany's desperate situation since the fall of Stalingrad in early 1943.\(^{17}\) This statement is a perfectly reasonable one, since as head of the Reich security main office Kaltenbrunner was engaged in intelligence-gathering activities and should have been fairly well-informed as to the Reich's status.

He appears, however, to have been of two minds as to what steps to take to solve this predicament.\(^{18}\) On the one hand, he was trying to sabotage the peace negotiations of his superior, Himmler, and of his colleague, Wolff. On the other, he himself was attempting to make peace. In March, 1945, he tried to use Himmler's Swiss channels to ingratiate himself with the Western Powers by allowing Red Cross representatives to enter the concentration camps and by making other concessions to them.\(^{19}\) All these efforts came to naught because of the chaotic conditions which prevailed in the Reich.

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\(^{17}\) Höttl, *The Secret Front*, p. 66.

\(^{18}\) Ibid.

\(^{19}\) Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, p. 503.
At about the same time (February, 1945), the American spy-chief, Allen Dulles, was informed that Kaltenbrunner was desirous of making peace.\textsuperscript{20} A few weeks later Dulles received confirmation of this amazing peace offer\textsuperscript{21} when Höttl contacted the American's chief of Austrian affairs and told him that the chief of the security police was in Austria and was ready to turn all of Austria, including the so-called "National Redoubt,"\textsuperscript{22} over to the Allies. Mr. Dulles' comment on this proposal is instructive and enlightening: "Kaltenbrunner...was one of the most wanted men on the list of war criminals. It is difficult to conceive, then as now, how he could have imagined that the Allies would deal with him...or would entertain the idea of a separate surrender with Austria, which for some years had been an integral part of the Greater German Reich."\textsuperscript{23}

Yet, in spite of this attempt on the part of the Allies, Kaltenbrunner really appears to have believed that he could save Austria from the general debacle and could himself become an important functionary in an independent Austrian state. Indeed, he fancied himself as "the savior

\textsuperscript{20}Dulles, \textit{The Secret Surrender}, pp. 50-51.

\textsuperscript{21}Ibid., p. 216.

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid. On the Redoubt, see \textit{post}.

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid. Kaltenbrunner also got in touch with the British through the intermediation of the noted historian,
of Austria\textsuperscript{24} and was considering the creation of an independent, anti-communist Austrian government headed by a Christian Social chancellor, with a socialist vice chancellor, and with himself as chief of police.\textsuperscript{25} Needless to say, Kaltenbrunner's somewhat fantastic day-dreams were shattered by reality. Did he actually think that he could make peace with the Western Allies against the wishes of the USSR? Did he really believe that the enemy, or even his fellow Austrians, would permit him to retain power, especially police power, in a revived Austrian state? The answer to both queries is "yes." That such could be the reply tells a great deal about both Kaltenbrunner's state of mind and that of the hierarchs of the Third Reich as a whole. If one of the best-informed men in Germany could take part in such bizarre projects, it is small wonder that the German

Elizabeth Wiskemann, who was attached to the British embassy in Switzerland. She could not believe he was serious, either. Elizabeth Wiskemann, \textit{The Europe I Saw} (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1968), p. 200.

\textsuperscript{24}Höttl, \textit{Hitler's Paper Weapon}, p. 152.

\textsuperscript{25}Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. See also Heinrich Benedikt, \textit{Geschichte der Republik Österreich} (Munich: Verlag R. Oldenburg, 1954), p. 287.
people expected a miracle to the last.26

One such miracle was the dream of the so-called "National Redoubt" or Alpine fortress (Alpenfestung). This redoubt also concerned the chief of the security police, for in late March, 1945, the Reichsführer SS named him as his deputy south of the River Main.27 This appointment was made because Germany was in imminent danger of being cut in half by the advancing armies of the Western Allies and the Russians. Kaltenbrunner exercised full powers in that region as Himmler's deputy.28 One of his tasks was to create a redoubt in the Bavarian-Austrian Alps from which the Nazis could fight on.

26 Needless to say, the attempted peace negotiations of Himmler fall into the same category. The SS-police leaders failed to comprehend the utter disgust with which they were regarded, particularly as the camps and massacres of the "final solution" started to become known in fuller detail. The SS-police leaders continued to think of themselves as respectable.


As of late March, 1945, there was no Alpine fortress at all. Even so, the chief of the security police thought that it would be possible to create one in a fairly short period of time. "He explained [to Höttl]... that the region he had in mind could offer resistance to highly mechanized troops for quite a long time." And, even if one could not fight there, one could use the threat of such resistance to gain much better peace conditions from the nervous Allies, or so Kaltenbrunner reasoned. In some respects he was quite accurate in his appraisal, for the Allies were deeply worried about the redoubt and were strongly influenced in their decisions by its supposed existence. In actuality there never was a functioning fortress in the mountains—the whole affair was nothing but a fantasy.

29 Höttl, Hitler's Paper Weapon, p. 150.


32 Ibid., p. 152.

33 This is the theme of Minott's work: that the Americans in particular wasted forces on the so-called redoubt which could have been better employed elsewhere. His argument is a good case of historical second-guessing.
Thus far, the only thing clear about Kaltenbrunner's policies in early 1945 is that they are very obscure. Was he opposed to peace negotiations or was he not? Did he still believe in National Socialism or did he not? Did he truly think that the Alpine fortress was viable or was it merely another bargaining counter? Perhaps the best answer that can be given is that the chief of the security police was himself not at all sure what he wanted to do. Like many other Nazi leaders, he realized that the war was lost, but he still could not tear himself away from his allegiance to the Führer. Kaltenbrunner still needed someone in whom to believe--and that someone was his leader, Adolf Hitler.

The ambivalence of the chief of the security police's actions is shown further in his dealings with the concentration camps during the last days of the Third Reich. The evidence points with some certainty to the fact that Kaltenbrunner was out to kill as many camp inmates as he could. He was also trying to eliminate as many other embarassing witnesses to the crimes of Nazi Germany as he possibly could. On April 18, 1945, he told Wolff: "Be sure no important civilian prisoners in your area fall

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into Allied hands. As the Allies approach, liquidate them."35 The head of the Reich security main office was once again the hard-liner.

Kaltenbrunner seems to have left Berlin for the last time on April 19 and to have set up his headquarters first at Innsbruck in the Tyrol and then at the village of Alt Ausee in the Salzkammergut36—a quaint little hamlet in a superb mountain setting—which was crawling with SS-police officers and Nazi collaborators, including Horia Sima, the Rumanian fascist leader,37 and SS-Standartenführer Paul Blobel, the SS-police exhumation expert.38 In addition, three of Kaltenbrunner's closest friends and associates were also there: Otto Skorzeny,

also testimony of Kurt Becher (SS officer), Nuremberg, March 27, 1946, Doc. No. 827, in a volume containing docs. nos. 811-827, Eichmannprozess--Beweisdokumente, pp. 12 and 16-17, on file at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich; and Davidson, The Trial of the Germans, p. 321, citing the deathbed testimony of Franz Ziereis, the commandant of Mauthausen.

35As quoted in Dulles, The Secret Surrender, p. 178.

36Reitlinger, The Final Solution, p. 522.


38Reitlinger, The Final Solution, p. 522.
Wilhelm Höttl, and Adolf Eichmann. The first of these men, Skorzeny, stayed a very short time.\textsuperscript{39} In keeping with his reputation as a commando, he managed to escape the Allied net and went to Spain.\textsuperscript{40} The second man, Höttl, stayed in Alt Aussee because it was his home. He quietly withdrew himself from Kaltenbrunner and contrived to avoid arrest by the Allies.\textsuperscript{41}

The third and most famous (or infamous) of these SS-police officers, Adolf Eichmann, was also in Alt Aussee in early May, 1945.\textsuperscript{42} He went to visit Kaltenbrunner at the latter's villa. He found the chief of the security police dressed in a uniform blouse, ski pants and ski boots, drinking cognac and playing solitaire.\textsuperscript{43} The head of the Reich security main office asked his old friend:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
    \item \textsuperscript{39}Höttl, \textit{The Secret Front}, p. 308.
    \item \textsuperscript{40}Skorzeny was wanted for violations of the rules of war. He is still alive (1971) and prosperous in Spain.
    \item \textsuperscript{41}He, like Skorzeny, is today (1971) a prosperous survivor of the Nazi regime.
    \item \textsuperscript{42}Reitlinger, \textit{The Final Solution}, p. 522; interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968.
    \item \textsuperscript{43}Eichmann, "Eichmann Tells His Own Damning Story, Part II," \textit{Life}, Vol. XLIX, No. 23 (December 5, 1960), p. 152.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
"What are you going to do now?" Eichmann replied that he was going into the mountains to organize guerrilla warfare. Kaltenbrunner replied: "That's good." With that the men began to take leave of one another. At that moment, Eichmann heard his old friend mutter: "It's all a lot of crap. The game is up."

As a matter of fact, the game was almost up for the erstwhile chief of the security police, although his old friend Eichmann was to avoid retribution for another decade and a half. On May 7, accompanied by his adjutant, orderly, and chauffeur, Kaltenbrunner fled Alt Aussee into the mountains. He had made but few preparations for the flight and carried false papers which Dr. Höttl

44 Ibid., p. 155.


47 Ibid. It is quite plain that Kaltenbrunner thought Eichmann a bit crazy with his guerrilla warfare scheme. According to Höttl, Kaltenbrunner told his adjutant, Otto Scheidler, to get Eichmann out of the area fast. Indeed, the chief of the security police tried to dissociate himself from all his old comrades. Reitlinger, The Final Solution, p. 522.

48 Höttl, The Secret Front, p. 313.
later characterized as "quite ridiculous."\textsuperscript{49} He assumed that the people around Alt Aussee would help him hide, since he had prevented the destruction of the Salzburg salt mines with their collection of art works from all over Europe (stored there for safekeeping).\textsuperscript{50} He was sadly mistaken. His guide, a forest ranger, later told a local anti-Nazi where Kaltenbrunner was to be found.\textsuperscript{51} He, in turn, notified the American authorities.

At dawn on May 12, over one hundred men\textsuperscript{52} of the 318th Infantry Regiment, led by Colonel R. E. Matteson of the 80th Combat Intelligence Corps detachment, stormed the mountain lodge where Kaltenbrunner was sleeping.\textsuperscript{53} He was seized, along with quantities of weapons, ammunition,

\textsuperscript{49}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{50}Ibid., p. 312.


\textsuperscript{52}Höttl, The Secret Front, p. 313.

candy, and counterfeit money.\textsuperscript{54} The former head of the Reich security main office at first denied that he was Kaltenbrunner. The lie was given to this statement, however, in a way more typical of fiction than of fact; his mistress, Countess Gisela von Westarp,\textsuperscript{55} impulsively rushed up and kissed him.\textsuperscript{56} He then admitted his identity and expiated at length on plans to set up an anti-Bolshevik underground in Germany and Austria.\textsuperscript{57}

By the time Kaltenbrunner fell into American hands, the man and the regime he had served had likewise fallen—Hitler by his own hand of April 30, and the Nazi regime through unconditional surrender on May 7. The erstwhile head of the Reich security main office now faced a very bleak future, for the triumphant United Nations had

\textsuperscript{54}Minott, \emph{The Fortress that Never Was}, p. 127.

\textsuperscript{55}Kaltenbrunner's mistress had given birth to twins in February, 1945. Interview of Dr. Höttl with the author, Bad Aussee, April 21, 1968. The children were named Visula and Wolfgang. Pearson, \emph{Enroute to the Redoubt}, Vol. III, p. 231. When informed that his wife had been arrested two days earlier, Kaltenbrunner simply accepted the fact in silence and did not even inquire as to her health or that of his three legitimate children. \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 218 and 231.

\textsuperscript{56}Minott, \emph{The Fortress that Never Was}, p. 127.

\textsuperscript{57}\textit{Ibid.}
determined that the crimes of the National Socialist system would not go unpunished. The final reckoning was not long in coming.

Kaltenbrunner was placed in custody, part of which he served in England, until he was eventually transferred to Nuremberg, where he was to stand trial as one of the twenty-four major war criminals charged before the International Military Tribunal. A question now presents itself: what was Kaltenbrunner doing among the twenty-four major war criminals? After all, he was a co-defendant with such luminaries of the Third Reich as Reichsmarschall Göring, Foreign Minister von Ribbontrop, 


59 Twenty-four major war criminals were indicted, but only 21 actually stood trial. Robert Ley, the head of the German Labor Front, managed to hang himself; Alfred Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach was too ill to be tried; and Martin Bormann was among the missing. However, the last of these three men was tried in absentia. A great deal of ink has been spilt over the morality, legality, and rationality of this trial. It seems inappropriate to delve into that literature here. Suffice it to say that the trial may have been illegal under American procedure, but it was certainly expedient and moral. Something had to be done with the leaders of a regime such as that of the Nazis, if only to prevent lynch law. Within its limits as a court of the victors, the trial was scrupulously fair. It is also a gold mine of information for historians, the present author included. On the trial itself, and on the defendants, see Davidson, The Trial of the Generals, passim.
Armaments Minister Speer, Field Marshal Keitel, Grossadmiral Dönitz, and Proconsul Frank. Even in his most powerful days he had not rivalled some of these men, most of whom were well-known to the world. He had always been a second-rank, although powerful, leader. The answer to this question is fairly simple. The SS-police empire represented one of the major pillars of the National Socialist state. The man who should have symbolized it at Nuremberg, Heinrich Himmler, had cheated the Allies by committing suicide. That left Kaltenbrunner "holding the bag," so to speak. He was a symbol for the so-called SS State. As he himself put it: "I know that the hatred of the world is directed against me; that especially since Himmler, Müller and Pohl are dead, I alone must answer before this tribunal and before the world." Or, as he had written some time earlier: "I refuse to be judged as a substitute for Himmler."  

60 Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Procès des Grands Criminels, Vol. XI, p. 240. Actually, Pohl was not dead; he was executed in 1951. Müller had vanished, never to be found. Even so, the statement is fundamentally valid.

Nevertheless, ironically, that was precisely how he was to be judged.

Before he could be brought to trial, however, he had to be physically well—and this he was not. On November 17, 1945, before the court convened for the first time, he suffered a spontaneous subarachnoid hemorrhage.62 While this illness could have proved fatal, all that Kaltenbrunner suffered were severe headaches and an inability to get about.63 Within a fortnight he was in the dock.64 Two weeks later he had a relapse and was again hospitalized. He eventually was able to return to the trial and to present his own defense.65

What sort of defense did this former Austrian lawyer devise? First of all, he stated that "I want to declare

62Kelley, 22 Cells in Nuremberg, p. 134. Dr. Kelley was the Nuremberg psychiatrist. Also see press release, Nuremberg, December 6, 1945, on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (Ref. No. XIX-26); and Col. Burton C. Andrus, I Was the Nuremberg Jailer (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1969), p. 115. Col. Andrus was commandant of the Nuremberg prison.

63Kelley, 22 Cells in Nuremberg, p. 134. I wish to thank Guy E. Faget, M.D., of Mobile, Alabama, for explaining the exact nature of this ailment to me.

64Andrus, I Was the Nuremberg Jailer, p. 116.

65Ibid.
that I accept responsibility for all the wrongs committed by the RSHA since the time that I was named its Chief, insofar as they were within my area of authority, and insofar as I knew or ought to have known about them."  

He then asserted that he was only competent to handle intelligence operations and that he had no competence for undertaking any "executive" actions. In short, no war crimes had been within his area of authority. Having firmly and repeatedly made this point, he claimed that even if some of these illegal acts might possibly be laid at his door, he had not known about them. Or, as he put it: "I never gave orders and never executed them. You have no idea how secret these things [war crimes] were kept from me."  

Put another way: "directives were given by Himmler, but in State Police and Criminal Police matters

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68 See ibid., pp. 236-252, for a full exposition of this point of view by Kaltenbrunner and his attorney. See also testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Nuremberg, November 12, 1945, taken under the direction of General Alexandrov, pp. 1-9, on file at the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (Ref. No. CCXXVII-45).

69 As quoted in Hausner, Justice in Jerusalem, p. 86.
things were often done, as I found out very much later, in
the name of the Chief of the Reich Security Main Office,
that is, in my name, without my knowing of or seeing these
orders when they were issued.\textsuperscript{70} His signature was faked
as a matter of course.\textsuperscript{71}

Kaltenbrunner was constant in his espousal of this
double-barreled defense. As he expressed it to the
Nuremberg psychologist, Dr. G. M. Gilbert: "I do not feel
guilty of any war crimes, I have only done my duty as an
intelligence organ [sic]."\textsuperscript{72} He never relaxed his pose
of innocence, not even with his fellow defendants. The
former Nazi youth leader and Gauleiter of Vienna, Baldur
von Schirach, asked him about the Jewish problem at
Nuremberg and was told: "I know nothing about the entire
question of the destruction of the Jews." Schirach replied:
"Mr. Kaltenbrunner, then we have no more to say to one
another."\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{70}Testimony of Kaltenbrunner, Trial of the Major War

\textsuperscript{71}\textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{72}As quoted in G. M. Gilbert, \textit{Nuremberg Diary} (New

\textsuperscript{73}Baldur von Schirach, \textit{Ich glaubte an Hitler} (Hamburg:
Why did the erstwhile chief of the security police adopt a line of defense which, hopefully, this monograph has shown to be totally false and untenable? Two explanations seem valid in this case. First, Kaltenbrunner had come to the conclusion that he had no viable defense, that the court was operated by the enemy, and he therefore decided to deny everything.\textsuperscript{74} Second, by taking this stance, he made the prosecution’s task much more difficult. In the chaotic conditions of Germany in 1945-1946 finding evidence was hard to do. Kaltenbrunner’s prosecutor, Whitney R. Harris, considered that his defense was a good one, given the handicaps under which the former head of the Reich security main office labored.\textsuperscript{75}

Unfortunately for him, the court did not accept Kaltenbrunner’s version of events. On October 1, 1946, three days before his forty-third birthday, he was sentenced to death by hanging.\textsuperscript{76} He filed no petition for clemency.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{74}Davidson, \textit{The Trial of the Germans}, p. 327. In moments of despair even Göring, who most enjoyed the slash and thrust of the trial, thought that perhaps Kaltenbrunner’s tack was best. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 61. See the comments of the psychiatrist, William H. Dunn, as quoted in Andrus, \textit{I Was the Nuremberg Jailer}, p. 97.

\textsuperscript{75}Letter of Mr. Harris to the author, St. Louis, Mo., April 12, 1968.

\textsuperscript{76}Harris, \textit{Tyranny on Trial}, p. 481.

\textsuperscript{77}\textit{Ibid.}
Fifteen days later, in the early morning of October 16, Kaltenbrunner, wearing a woolen sweater and a shabby coat, and accompanied by the Catholic chaplin, walked to the gallows. His last words were:

I served the German people and my fatherland with willing heart. I did my duty according to its laws. I am sorry that in her trying hour she was not led only by soldiers. I regret that crimes were committed in which I had no part. Good luck Germany.

At 1:36 A.M. he mounted the gallows; at 1:39 the trap was sprung; and at 1:52 he was pronounced dead. The body, with the rope still around its neck, was taken out, placed on a plain wooden coffin, and photographed for posterity. The bodies of those executed were taken to Dachau concentration camp and cremated; the ashes were strewn in a river. The career of Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Austrian lawyer, provincial satrap of the SS-police empire, and erstwhile chief of the security police and security service was over. He was just forty-three years and thirteen days old.

78 Andrus, I Was the Nuremberg Jailer, p. 196.
79 Harris, Tyranny on Trial, p. 486. There is a slightly different version in Andrus, I Was the Nuremberg Jailer, p. 196.
81 See the photograph in Harris, Tyranny on Trial.
82 Andrus, I Was the Nuremberg Jailer, p. 198.
CHAPTER VI
KALTENBRUNNER AS AN HISTORICAL FIGURE

Having examined the career of SS-Obergruppenführer Dr. Ernst Kaltenbrunner, it is now necessary to put that life to the question. What were Kaltenbrunner's motivations? Why did he join the NSDAP? Why did he become an SS man? How was it that he became a war criminal? In short, what made him tick?

First of all, it must be made clear that the man being dealt with here was not a monster. He was not clinically insane, nor was he abnormal in any meaningful sense of that word. Indeed, one is struck during an examination of his life by the lack of any grave aberrations. Secondly, it should be pointed out that while Kaltenbrunner was far from being a genius—he was called a lout by some who knew him—he was not stupid. In fact, his measurable intelligence was above average, though just barely.¹ At the very

¹His IQ was 113; average is 90-110. Kaltenbrunner had the second lowest IQ of the prisoners at Nuremberg. Gilbert, Nuremberg Diary, p. 34.
least, his relatively successful tenure as chief of the Reich security main office should go far toward removing any doubts as to his cunning.

If Kaltenbrunner was not insane, and if he was not a moron, then what motivated him to become a Nazi? There were probably many reasons for his entrance into the National Socialist Party and its auxiliary formation, the SS, and these will be examined in due course. It would seem, however, that the fundamental reason behind Kaltenbrunner's entry into the NSDAP is to be found in a deep-seated trait of his own personality structure. He had the kind of personality that psychologists have labelled dominant-submissive; this type of character combines a love of power over others with a concomitant desire to be dominated.\(^2\) As has been seen, Kaltenbrunner reveled in power and used it effectively and brutally.\(^3\) Even while exercising great power and authority, however, he felt the need to subordinate himself to some greater power. In his case, that greater authority was the will of the Führer; Hitler was


\(^3\)See especially *ante*, Chapter III, passim.
Kaltenbrunner's "god" and maintained his hold over his follower to the end. When his guiding light was removed, Kaltenbrunner was left with nothing to sustain him. As a consequence, his behavior at Nuremberg was in many respects pitiful. According to the psychiatrist at Nuremberg, Dr. Kelley, Kaltenbrunner would break down and cry, complaining that everyone was picking on him, virtually every time the doctor visited him. 4 The psychologist, Dr. Gilbert, saw him as "a whining, inadequate personality," 5 who would write an essay condemning Himmler in return for a candy bar. 6 It is perhaps significant in this regard that Kaltenbrunner, who had been raised as a Catholic, and had been Gottgläubig (a believer in God) 7 during his years as a Nazi, resumed his Catholicism while at Nuremberg. 8 He had

4 Kelley, 22 Cells in Nuremberg, p. 134.

5 Letter to the author, Brooklyn, February 27, 1968.

6 Ibid.

7 Many National Socialist leaders adopted this term to indicate that while they no longer followed the tenets of Christianity, they still were not atheists. See Percy Ern nach Schramm, Hitler: The Man and the Military Leader. Translated and edited by Donald S. Detwiler (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), pp. 89-90 and 90 n. On Kaltenbrunner's status, see his SS Personnel Records, p. 1, on file in the Berlin Document Center.

to have something bigger than himself in which to believe, and when the Führer failed him he turned again to the faith of his youth.

Granted that Kaltenbrunner had the type of personality that made him susceptible to the lure of a strong leader or ideology, why did he turn to Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist movement? There were a number of factors which influenced him. First of all, he was a member of a group which was generally German nationalist in outlook; his parents, for example, were supporters of the German National Peoples' Party. His entire upbringing had inclined him to regard Germany—not poor, tiny Austria—as his homeland, and he had become involved in German nationalist movements while at the university. And, of course, Adolf Hitler spent much of his career trying to appeal to people such as Kaltenbrunner.

Secondly, Kaltenbrunner came from a class (the petty bourgeois semi-officialdom) which found itself threatened with proletarianization after the First World War and the social and economic turmoil of the early 1920's. That is, he and others like him were faced with being declassed. 9

9On this question, see Rudolf Heberle, From Democracy to Nazism, p. 10; Gerth, "The Nazi Party," pp. 105-106; Barbu, Democracy and Dictatorship, pp. 128-129; and Bulluck, Hitler, p. 159.
This is particularly clear in the case of the subject of this monograph, for Kaltenbrunner's family had been impoverished, and he made it through college only by dint of his hard, manual labor. The Nazi movement was especially attractive to such persons, as it offered them an escape from the threatening danger of being reduced to the proletariat.

Once it is accepted that Kaltenbrunner and many just like him were alienated from the society in which they lived—and this was particularly the case in Austria—it becomes logical that they should seek a way out of their predicament. And the Nazis offered this panacea: the party was nationalistic; it was in favor of a reversal of the humiliation of the First World War; it opposed the Versailles (and St. Germain) Diktat; it offered scapegoats in the form of the Jews, Socialists, and other "socially acceptable" persons;¹⁰ and, most importantly, it offered the dynamic and forceful personality of the Führer, whose charismatic appeal captivated so many people.

¹⁰ For such alienated people to have become communists was well-nigh impossible, since their entire upbringing and background was opposed to Marxian ideals and their emphasis on the working class. This is not to say that many did not flirt with Bolshevism, for many did. In the end, though, the Nazis were a more "comfortable" group to join.
Nor was the crudity and intellectual aridity of National Socialism a bar to intellectuals such as Kaltenbrunner. It should be remembered that Nazism attracted many who would qualify as intellectuals, if only of the second rank, in any society. For instance, there were Dr. Goebbels, Dr. Ohlendorf, Dr. Schellenberg, Dr. Kaltenbrunner, and many other educated men who joined the NSDAP and the SS. They saw only what they wanted to see in the party and in the charisma of the Führer. And, above all, they saw opportunity. These alienated and adrift young men, like Kaltenbrunner, perceived in National Socialism and its leader the promise of being someone and something important. They felt that they were being offered an opportunity to escape from their humdrum existence; they seized their chance eagerly.

11 Mosse, The Culture of Western Europe, p. 318.

12 The Nazi Party and the SS were both strongly youth-oriented. For example, just before the party came to power the percentage of members between 18 and 30 years old was 42.2. Gerth, "The Nazi Party," p. 107. Many of Kaltenbrunner's SS colleagues were quite young. For instance, in 1939 Kaltenbrunner was 36, Himmler was 39, Heydrich was 35, Ohlendorf was 32, and Schellenberg was 29.

13 Whitney Harris describes Kaltenbrunner as "essentially opportunistic." Letter to the author, St. Louis, Missouri, November 4, 1965.
Thus, there were several interlocking motivations which reinforced Kaltenbrunner's basic personality traits in making him susceptible to the blandishments of National Socialism. He was nationalistic in a Pan-German sense; he was afraid of losing status; he was alienated from the society and from the state in which he lived; he was attracted by the charisma of the Führer; he was offered a place in the Nazi hierarchy where he could both dominate and be dominated; he was offered status, authority and security; he was offered panoply and pageantry. It is small wonder that such a man became a Nazi.

His conversion was expedited by the situation which prevailed in his homeland. Once the Heimwehr movement proved to be a broken reed, it seemed to many men, Kaltenbrunner included, that there was no place left to turn but to the Nazis. Austria was not, at least until after World War II, a state that held the devotion of its people. With the possible exception of Dollfuss, there was in the 1930's no man who captured the imagination of even a sizable portion of the inhabitants. In short, Austria lacked men of the stature of Roosevelt in the United States, or Stalin in the U. S. S. R., or--more to the point--of Adolf Hitler in Germany. Kaltenbrunner and many of his compatriots turned to the nearest available
strong leader and offered themselves to him.\footnote{14}

If it is fairly clear why Kaltenbrunner became a Nazi, one is still left with the nagging question of why, once he had become a National Socialist and an SS man, he became a mass murderer. His basic personality structure again forms a part of the answer: he was deeply dedicated to Adolf Hitler.\footnote{15} Whatever the Führer said was law to Kaltenbrunner. Once that relationship is accepted, it is easier to understand why the chief of the security police would carry out barbaric orders. His "god" had ordained it; who was he to argue?

Secondly, the very nature of the Nazi regime made it likely that Kaltenbrunner would carry out his instructions. Through the use of so-called "ideological" orders\footnote{16} which

\footnote{14}Of course there were many Austrians, the vast majority, who did not turn to Hitler and Nazism. Still, there were a fair number of men who did follow much the same path as the subject of this monograph.

\footnote{15}His "personal dedication to Hitler...was no case of reasoned loyalty alone. To the very end Hitler's personality held an almost mesmeric fascination for him; he sincerely worshipped him, and he had unbounded faith in what he regarded as his inspired foresight and vision." Höttl, The Secret Front, p. 66.

\footnote{16}See especially Buchheim, \textit{et al.}, \textit{The Anatomy of the SS State}, pp. 305-319, on the concept of "ideological orders."
were outside the purview of ordinary law, through an implicit reordering and—inversion of moral and ethical values, National Socialism went far toward making it impossible for all but those with the most powerful consciences to attempt to thwart Hitler's plans in any way. Why should one expose himself to degradation and perhaps imprisonment in order to help creatures whom the Führer, in his capacity as supreme law giver of the Third Reich, had put beyond the pale of the law—creatures who were, according to the Nazi Weltanschauung, sub-human in any event? It certainly would have taken a person very unlike Kaltenbrunner to have acted contrary to the spirit of the times.

Finally, he was opportunistic and hedonistic. He was offered a position of rank and power in 1943—a post with many and varied perquisites. He was hardly one to turn it down. Indeed, it is perhaps asking too much of the man Kaltenbrunner that he should be a moral giant. After all, he was a rather ordinary human being, subject to the same

17 Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, p. 150.

18 See especially the comments of Whitney Harris: "He [Kaltenbrunner] was given the opportunity of a higher position in the Nazi regime and was honored to accept it." In his letter to the author, St. Louis, Missouri, November 4, 1965.
idiosyncrasies and weaknesses as his fellows.

Another query which presents itself is whether or not Kaltenbrunner's life and career can tell us anything about the NSDAP and the SS in general. Is he a symbol historically, as he was morally (at his trial)? The answer seems to be that while he can hardly be taken as symbolizing the entire Nazi movement or even the SS, he is typical of many who found themselves enmeshed in the National Socialist system during the 1920's, '30's, and '40's. He was fairly young when he reached the seat of power; this was true of many NSDAP and SS leaders. He was college educated and possessed a doctorate, which was again true of many in the Nazi movement and the SS. He came from the same south German-Austrian, Catholic background which gave birth to many other luminaries of the Party, not the least being Hitler and Himmler—the former born not 20 miles from Kaltenbrunner's birthplace, the latter a Bavarian. He was of the same lower middle class background as were many in the NSDAP and SS, once more like Hitler himself. In short, Ernst Kaltenbrunner was similar to many who joined the National Socialist movement; his life and career should tell the historian a bit more about the kind of persons who became leaders of the NSDAP and the SS.
Hopefully, further studies of second- and third-rank Nazi leaders will tend to verify or to refute the conclusion to be drawn from Kaltenbrunner's life: dominant-submissive personalities who become alienated and frustrated are likely to turn to totalitarian movements, particularly those possessing a charismatic leader. This conclusion, if valid, would go far toward proving Hannah Arendt's assertion that the truly horrifying thing about the National Socialist regime was that the men who carried out its most terrifying schemes were not lunatics or sadists, in the main, but were rather ordinary persons who were caught up in a system that made immoral acts moral, and unethical ones ethical. This theory remains unproven, but it is believed that this study of Ernst Kaltenbrunner has perhaps shown that such a theory is at least in need of further exploration and research. Kaltenbrunner was a commonplace, run-of-the-mill chap who ended his life as a convicted war criminal. Yet he was not a monster; one could not easily distinguish him from another person on the street; he was simply an example of the horrible banality of evil.
APPENDIX I:

TABLE OF COMPARATIVE OFFICER RANKS OF THE SS, GERMAN ARMY,
AND U. S. ARMY*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U. S. ARMY</th>
<th>GERMAN ARMY</th>
<th>SS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General of the armies</td>
<td>Generalfeldmarschall</td>
<td>Reichsführer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Generaloberst</td>
<td>Obergruppenführer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant General</td>
<td>Generalmajor</td>
<td>Gruppenführer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major General</td>
<td>Generalleutnant</td>
<td>Oberführer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigadier General</td>
<td>Oberleutnant</td>
<td>Standartenführer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Obersturmbannführer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Colonel</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Hauptsturmführer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Obersturmführer</td>
<td>Untersturmführer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Except for detective ranks, police ranks in Germany were similar to those for the army.
THE REICH SECURITY MAIN OFFICE

Ernst Kaltenbrunner
Chief of the Security Police and Security Service

OFFICE I
(Personnel, Training, Organization)

OFFICE III
(SD-Inland)
Otto Ohlendorf, Chief

OFFICE V
(Criminal Police)
Artur Nebe, Chief

OFFICE VII
(Ideological Research)

OFFICE II
(Budget, Administration)

OFFICE IV
(Gestapo)
Heinrich Müller, Chief

BUREAU IVB 4
(Jewish Affairs)
Adolf Eichmann, Chief

OFFICE VI
(SD-Ausland)
Walther Schellenberg, Chief
APPENDIX IV

SUMMARY OF THE CAREER OF
ERNST KALTENBRUNNER

1903--October 4--born at Ried, Upper Austria
1905--family moved to Raab, Upper Austria
1909-1913--enrolled in elementary school at Raab
1913-1921--academic high school in Linz
1918--family moved to Linz
1914-1921--met and befriended Adolf Eichmann during these years
1921-1923--attended Institute of Technology at Graz
1923-1926--attended law school of the University of Graz
1924-1925--was president of nationalist student union at Graz University
1926--awarded J. D. degree
1926-1927--law clerk with provincial court of Upper Austria
1927-1928--candidate lawyer with a law firm in Salzburg
1928--joined his father's law firm in Linz
1929--joined Heimwehr; remained a member at least nominally until 1932
1930--October--joined Austrian NSDAP
1931--August--joined Austrian SS
1932--September--appointed SS-Hauptsturmführer
1932--induced Adolf Eichmann to join NSDAP and SS
1932-1936--held various SS appointments, including legal counsellor to SS-Abschnitt VIII, commander of SS-Standarte 37, and commander of SS-Abschnitt VIII
1934--January--married Lisl Eder

1934--January--arrested for the first time for his political activities--imprisoned for 4½ months, during which time he led a hunger strike

1934-1935--involved in negotiations with the Schuschnigg regime

1935--May--rearrested--served 10 months' imprisonment

1935--Spring--deprived of right to practice law

1937--January--appointed head of Austrian SS

1937--April--promoted SS-Oberführer

1936-1938--pursued moderate policies and supported Seyss-Inquart and his points of view

1938--March--took part in Anschluss

1938--March--appointed state secretary for security in last Austrian government--post abolished along with the Austrian government in 1940

1938--March--promoted SS-Brigadeführer and appointed head of SS-Oberabschnitt Österreich--later SS-Oberabschnitt Donau

1938--September--promoted SS-Gruppenführer

1938--late--appointed higher SS and police leader in defense district XVII (Vienna, Lower Austria, and Upper Austria)

1938-1943--higher SS and police leader in Vienna

1943--January 30--appointed chief of the security police and security service (head of the Reich security main office)

1943--June 23--promoted SS-Obergruppenführer and General der Polizei

1943-1945--chief of the security police and security service (Head of the Reich security main office)

1945--May 12--captured by American soldiers

1945-1946--on trial at Nuremberg as a major war criminal
1945--November--suffered subarachnoid hemorrhage--recovered
1946--October 1--convicted of war crimes and sentenced to death
1946--October 16--executed and cremated
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