

Nuremberg Trials: Signatures of Nazi Leaders

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Karl Dönitz (1891-1980)



Karl Dönitz arrested and escorted by British soldiers in Flensburg, Germany, May 23, 1945.

Karl Dönitz was the Supreme Commander of the Kriegsmarine, the Nazi's naval force. Dönitz was one of Adolf Hitler's most trusted Nazi leaders. At the time of his suicide, Hitler appointed Dönitz as Head of the State as Hitler's successor.

In his early years, at age nineteen, Dönitz enlisted in the Kaiserliche Marine or Imperial Navy of the German Empire. From his enlistment in 1913, Dönitz made a career in the naval force and was commissioned as an officer. Dönitz continued to climb ranks throughout World War I and the Interwar period.

After Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Dönitz immediate concern for the structure of the naval force was apparent. The striking issue was the lack of readied warships. After his promotion to Konteradmiral



or Commander of Submarines in October 1939, Dönitz ordered a building program take place, with numbers of ships steadily increasing by 1941.

Dönitz' efforts and loyalty towards the Kriegsmarine gained his respect with Hitler. Although Hitler appointed Dönitz as his successor, Dönitz was not a part of Hitler's inner circle. Yet, his dedication to the Nazi regime remained important.

After the fall of the Third Reich, Karl Dönitz was tried for war crimes in Nuremberg, Germany in 1946. Ultimately, he was found guilty of his crimes and attributions to the Nazi regime and sentenced to ten years of prison. After completing his sentence, Dönitz resided in a small village in West Germany where he wrote memoirs before his death in 1980.

Aside from his career and involvement as a Nazi military leader, Dönitz did not describe himself as a political figure. In one his books, he claimed he did not have influence on the ideologies the Nazis implemented. Evidently, Dönitz was proudly antisemitic but attempted to evade any accusations of it.

Sources:

[USHMM Encyclopedia | Karl Dönitz](#)

[Wikipedia | Karl Dönitz](#)

[JSTOR | Karl Dönitz](#)



Hans Frank (1900-1946)

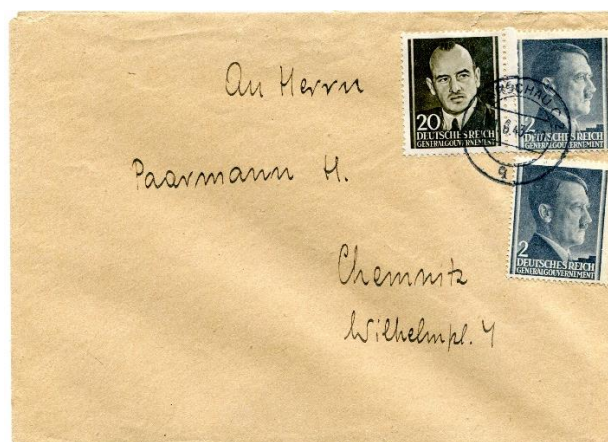


Hans Frank in his prison cell at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, November 25, 1945.

Hans Michael Frank was a major Nazi politician and personal lawyer to Adolf Hitler prior to the establishment of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP). Following the start of World War II, Hitler appointed Frank as the Governor-General of the German occupied Polish territories.

Frank's role as Governor-General allowed him to institute the Nazi regime's plan of extermination. Frank oversaw four extermination camps in Poland. Moreover, Frank had a strong aversion towards Jewish people and heavily believed in the eradication of the Jews.

Frank developed his lifestyle around Hitler's agenda. He secretly promised Jewish people they would not be executed if they provided him their entire fortunes. Heinrich Himmler despised Frank's unruly actions. Himmler believed in following Hitler's directions fully.



1943, June 11 cover features a Hans Frank 20-pfennig stamp.

This stamp depicting Hans Frank was produced by Ellic Howe, a printing expert who worked with the Political Warfare Executive (PWE) division of the British government. Howe designed the Frank stamp



and fulfilled the distribution. The stamp resulted in an outbreak, especially from the Nazi regime. The stamp plainly copied the widely used stamps of Hitler's depiction.

At first, the Hitler and the Nazi party believed Frank approved production for the stamp himself, further isolating him from the likeness of other Nazi leaders.

Hans Frank was put on trial at Nuremberg and found guilty of his crimes against humanity. Frank was sentenced to death by hanging and was executed on October 16, 1946.

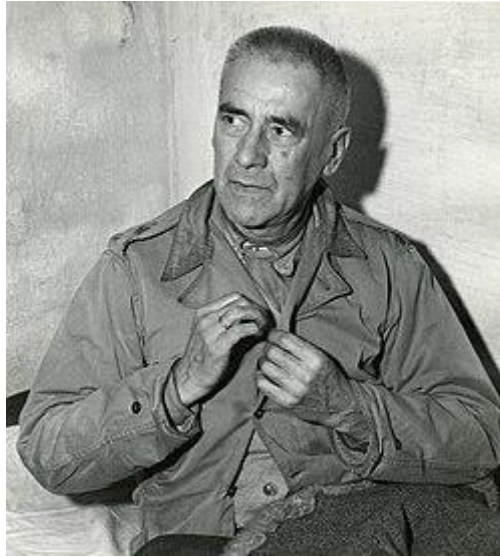
Sources:

[Wikipedia | Hans Frank](#)

[USHMM Encyclopedia | Hans Frank](#)



Wilhelm Frick (1877-1946)



Wilhelm Frick in his prison cell at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, November 1945.

An early member of the NSDAP, Frick served as the Minister of the Interior to Adolf Hitler beginning in 1933. A decade later, Frick served as governor of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia until 1945. Additionally, he was the head of the Kriminalpolizei or Criminal Police division in Munich.

The further establishment of the Nazi party and the expansion of the Schutzstaffel (SS) slowly disregarded Frick's efforts. Ultimately, he was replaced as Minister of the Interior by Heinrich Himmler in 1943, yet Frick remained in the cabinet until Hitler's death in 1945.

Frick was thoroughly antisemitic. He established the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935 and implemented laws which led to fruition of the T4 euthanasia programs.

Arrested and tried at Nuremberg, Frick was sentenced to execution and died by hanging on October 1, 1946. At the age of 69, it is recorded that he was the least steady of any Nazis to be executed thus far and that he seemed to stumble about, yet still managed to state, "Long live eternal Germany."

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Wilhelm Frick](#)



Hans Fritzsche (1900-1953)



Hans Fritzsche in his prison cell at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, November 1945.

Hans Fritzsche was a journalist who specialized in his role as the Ministerialdirektor at the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (RMPEP) of the Nazi party. Fritzsche was widely regarded as the voice of German broadcasting during World War II.

In 1917, Fritzsche assisted the Imperial German Army as a private soldier. After the war, he studied at universities, though not passing examinations. Following his failed education, Fritzsche joined the German National People's Party with nationalistic views and quickly began his broadcasting career.

In 1933, his broadcasting show was incorporated into the RMPEP. Aligning in views, Fritzsche eagerly joined the Nazi party. Throughout the war, Fritzsche continued broadcasting and in 1942 became the head of the Radio Division. In April 1945, Fritzsche was in the Führerbunker during the final days of Adolf Hitler's life before his suicide.

As tensions rose and Joseph Goebbels acted on the role of chancellor, Fritzsche believed surrendering to the Soviet Union was the right call. Goebbels held faith in the idea of a temporary ceasefire. Additionally, General Wilhelm Burgdorf disregarded the idea of surrendering and attempted to shoot Fritzsche before the firearm was knocked out of his hand. Evading Burgdorf, Fritzsche left the area and surrendered on Soviet lines before being taken prisoner.



Fritzsche was sent to Nuremberg and charged on multiple accounts including conspiracy to commit crimes, though many believed his insignificant role in the Nazi party did not deem him important enough to be held on trial. Ultimately, Fritzsche was acquitted.

In 1947, Fritzsche arrived at a labor camp which he was sentenced to a term of nine years. Three years later, Fritzsche was released. In the follow years, Fritzsche died of cancer.

In the three years of his freedom before his death, Fritzsche was uncovered to be apart of the Naumann Circle, a group of ex-Nazis who planned to restore the Nazi state.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Hans Fritzsche](#)

[USHMM | Hans Fritzsche](#)



Walther Funk (1890-1960)



Walther Funk, c.1940s.

Walther Immanuel Funk served as the Reichsminister for the Economy from 1939-1945 and additionally as president of the Reichsbank beginning in 1939. In his career, Funk was largely responsible for managing the mobilization of the economy and exploiting Jewish people in ghettos and concentration camps by raiding their assets.

In 1914, Funk enlisted in the infantry division of the Imperial Germany Army. Two years later, Funk was wounded in action and discharged. Following the armistice, Funk began working as a journalist and eventual editor of a moderate-right financial newspaper.

Funk was a nationalist and anti-Marxist who believed in the mission of the Nazi party. After connecting with Adolf Hitler through Gregor Strasser, an early leader of the Nazi party, Funk was elected as a Reichstag deputy. Through his loyalty and economic expertise, Adolf Hitler named Funk in his will and desired for him to continue as Reichsminister. Unwritten into the plan for the Flensburg Government formed by Karl Dönitz and Lutz Graf Schwerin von Krosigk, Funk's career as Reichsminister was over.

Less than a month later, Funk was arrested and to be put on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg. Funk was accused on multiple accounts and exposed for stealing Jewish property, gold jewelry, and specifically gold teeth he had extracted from the mouths of Jews in concentration camps.

On trial at Nuremberg, Funk was visibly emotional, even crying at photo and video evidence of the murders at the concentration camp. According to Hjalmar Schacht, Funk seemed unable to grasp the serious nature of the responsibilities he assumed. Hermann Göring even went as far to call Funk as "insignificant subordinate".

Ultimately, Funk served eleven years at Spandau Prison in Berlin, Germany. In 1957, Funk was granted compassionate release for poor health. He died from diabetes complications three years later.



Hermann Göring (1893-1946)



Hermann Göring smiles for a photograph at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, December 5, 1945.

One of the most notorious Nazi figures, Hermann Wilhelm Göring was a World War I fighter pilot ace. An early member of the Nazi party, Göring gained the trust of Adolf Hitler and was named minister without portfolio in 1933. Early in his career with the Nazi party, Göring was not deeply antisemitic. He did not have an innate hatred for Jewish people as Joseph Goebbels or Heinrich Himmler did. Yet, Göring backed the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 and more policies that would help remove Jews from Europe.

In the years before the war, Göring oversaw the foundation of the Gestapo, helped create the Four-Year Plan, and preparing the economy for warfare. By 1941, Göring was greatly powerful, especially since Hitler had entrusted Göring to carry out the process of the Final Solution, the eradication of Jewish people which Göring had passed off to Reinhard Heydrich. Yet, despite his power and influence, his relationship with Adolf Hitler would strain. Two major factors led to Göring's exit from office. First, the Luftwaffe failed to protect German cities from Allied bombings. Additionally, the lack of resupply to Axis forces in Stalingrad during the winter of 1941 was extremely detrimental. As a result, Göring withdrew from politics, and shifted focus to propaganda and stealing assets from Jewish victims.

In April 1945, the end of war was impending. Top Nazi leaders sent their families to Obersalzberg, a large Nazi complex in the mountainous Alps region. On April 25, 1945, Göring got word of Hitler's plan to commit suicide. This knowledge encouraged Göring to send a telegram to Hitler requesting to resume position as chancellor. Hitler was unmoved by Göring's request and revoked all of his positions from the Nazi party and ordering an arrest.

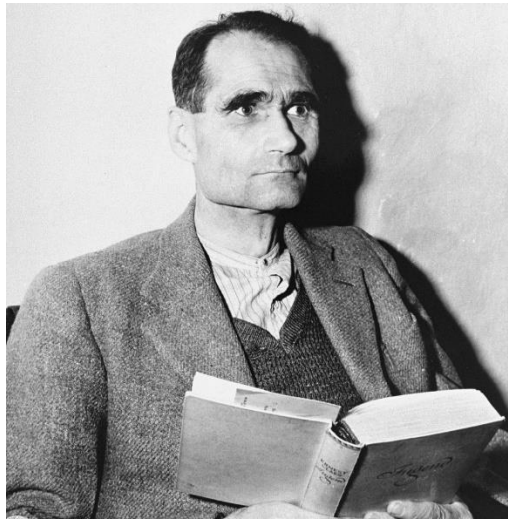
Following his arrest, Göring was placed on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany. Although Göring held multiple positions of power, leading to the mass eradication of Jews, he pleaded not guilty to crimes against humanity. Sentenced to death by hanging, Göring made an appeal for death by firearm, though it was denied by the court. A day before his scheduled execution, Göring committed suicide with a potassium cyanide tablet, convulsing which alarmed the guards but being far too late, Göring died within five minutes.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Hermann Göring](#)



Rudolf Hess (1894-1987)



Rudolf Hess in his prison cell at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1945.

Rudolf Walter Richard Hess was Deputy to the Führer of the Nazi Party until 1941 when he fled Germany for Scotland, attempting to negotiate a peace treaty with the United Kingdom's Duke of Hamilton. Before his departure, Hess provided Karlheinz Pintsch a letter addressed to Adolf Hitler with his plans listed. Upon receiving the letter, Hitler was immensely worried Hess had incited a coup d'état.

British authorities arrested Hess and held him in custody until the end of World War II, when he was placed on trial in 1946 at Nuremberg, Germany. Hitler had removed Hess from power, despite his custody in the United Kingdom. Hitler went on further to rid the position of the Deputy to the Führer.

Hess was tried for crimes against peace and conspiring against Germany. He was sentenced to life in Spandau Prison in West Berlin, Germany. He remained there for 41 years until committing suicide by hanging in 1987 at age 93.

Hess had expressed rooted antisemitism well before World War II. At the end of World War I, Hess had joined the Thule Society, an antisemitic right-wing group. According to Hess himself, he believed that Egypt made him a nationalist, the war made him a socialist, and Munich made him an antisemite.

In addition to his strong antisemite and nationalistic views, Hess was devoutly loyal to Hitler, seeking his approval. Yet, with a less political role, Hess's responsibilities became few and far between during the war. Ultimately, seeking the peace negotiation with the United Kingdom had incited hope within Hess that he would help progress a war victory.

Hess is buried in Wunsiedel, a small German town. His gravestone had since been a destination for neo-Nazi visits. The parish council of Wunsiedel chose not to renew the gravesite under Hess and removed his remains, cremated, and gave the ashes to his family members.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Rudolf Hess](#)



Alfred Jodl (1890-1946)



Alfred Jodl (left) and Wilhelm Keitel (right) in makeshift dining room in Nuremberg, Germany, November 1945.

The Chief of the Operations Staff of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, Alfred Jodl was a dedicated military commander to the Nazi party. Notable Axis operations such as the invasion of Denmark and Norway were headed by Alfred Jodl. Additionally, Jodl signed orders for soldiers to shoot and kill Allied commandos and political commissars.

As a highly decorated military commander, Jodl earned some respect from Adolf Hitler and was not afraid to speak up to him. Yet, testimony from June 3, 1946, relays Jodl ensuring Hitler only knew him by last name and that he was from Bavaria. However, Jodl providing this account to avoid further prosecution is a possibility.

In his early career, Jodl served on the Western Front in World War I for two years before being wounded in action. He was awarded an Iron Cross 2nd Class medal and became a Generaloberst, the second highest rank in the Imperial German Army. After the end of the first World War, Jodl continued as a soldier with the Reichswehr during the interwar government, the Weimar Republic. Just before the start of World War II, Jodl met Adolf Hitler who appointed him as commander of artillery in the 44th division.

After the fall of the Nazi regime, Jodl signed the German Instrument of Surrender on May 7, 1945. He was then arrested and put on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany. He was tried on multiple accounts including wars of aggression and crimes against humanity. During the trial he was exposed for mass executions of Soviet prisoners of war (POW), to which he explained he only ordered Nazi soldiers to shoot POWs who did not want to walk, not those who were simply unable.

Jodl pleaded not guilty to the charged accounts. However, the atrocities committed by Jodl and the Nazi military were unmistakable and Jodl was sentenced to death by hanging. Moments before his execution, Jodl stated, "I salute you, my eternal Germany." Jodl was executed on October 16, 1946.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Alfred Jodl](#)



Ernst Kaltenbrunner (1903-1946)



Ernst Kaltenbrunner on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1946.

Ernst Kaltenbrunner was a lawyer and high-ranking Schutzstaffel (SS) official. In 1942, as a result of Reinhard Heydrich's assassination, Kaltenbrunner was appointed the Director of the Reich Security Main Office. Additionally, he acted as the president of Interpol during World War II.

As a highly educated official, Kaltenbrunner played an integral part in the organization of the Holocaust. Some of his achievements included the coordination of security, suppressing resistance movements, and facilitating arrests and executions.

Kaltenbrunner's father, Hugo, played a primary role in his early exposure to antisemitism. The environmental factor of Hugo believing in antisemitic values accompanied with his school education focused on nationalistic ideas was the foundation for Kaltenbrunner's identity. Moreover, Kaltenbrunner and Adolf Eichmann, an SS officer notorious for the implementation of the Final Solution were childhood friends. It is apparent Kaltenbrunner's antisemitism dates well into his adolescence.

Kaltenbrunner was extremely hands-on with meetings and prompt information about the eradication of Jews in concentration camps. He attended a December 1940 meeting where it was decided Jews who were incapable of labor would be gassed.

In addition to Kaltenbrunner's blatant antisemitism, he urged for the persecution of homosexual men in the greater Reich territory. A majority of officials prosecuted nearly 6,000 homosexual individuals but Kaltenbrunner wanted to push further, hoping to castrate anyone guilty of committing crimes of homosexuality.

Aside from targeting civilians, Kaltenbrunner spearheaded Operation Long Jump, a plan to assassinate global leaders like Joseph Stalin, Winston Churchill, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.



The war came to an end and Kaltenbrunner was named commander-in-chief just three weeks prior. Kaltenbrunner's understanding that the Nazi regime was compromised urged him to flee to a countryside cabin in Austria along with a few other Nazi officials. Intel offered to the United States Army allowed the 80th Infantry Division to locate Kaltenbrunner.

After his arrest on May 12, 1945, Kaltenbrunner was held on trial in Nuremberg, Germany. He was convicted of crimes against humanity and war crimes, resulting in his execution on October 1, 1946. He was executed by hanging and cremated in Munich.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Ernst Kaltenbrunner](#)



Wilhelm Keitel (1882-1946)



Wilhelm Keitel signing the German Instrument of Surrender, in Berlin, Germany, May 8, 1945.

Acting as a Field Marshal for nearly the entirety of World War II, Wilhelm Bodewin Johann Gustav Keitel was a notable figure of the Nazi party. An eventual promotion to Chief of the Wehrmacht reflected Keitel's military expertise.

Keitel's relationship with Adolf Hitler was complicated. Initially Hitler viewed Keitel as a hard-working and decent man. Keitel was extremely devout to Hitler and referred to as a "stupid follower" and "blindingly loyal toady" by other Nazi officials. Many Nazi leaders did not feel Keitel had the skill or knowledge to possess such a role as Chief of the Wehrmacht. They believe he was subordinate and idiotic.

Keitel played a pivotal role in World War II. Keitel aided in the planning of Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union. When considering Nazi Germany's struggles in the war, the winter of 1941 is a massive failure. Unprepared and undersupplied, Nazi forces marched into the Soviet Union. Ahead of the invasion, Adolf Hitler suggested Georg Thomas, a Nazi general, study the economic factors. After discussing the concerns, Keitel dismissed Thomas, assuring him that Hitler would not have interest in learning about these concerns. Ultimately, Thomas recommended the invasion regardless of his findings.

At some fault for the hardships faced by the soldiers on the Eastern Front, Keitel continued to be a lackluster general, positioning troops in troubling places. The most successful thing Keitel did during the war was sign the German Instrument of Surrender.

Additionally, Keitel issued an order stating the execution of 50-100 communists was reasonable for the loss of just one German soldier. This philosophy further radicalized the Wehrmacht, and a similar field of thought was practiced with the Holocaust and extermination of Jews.



Keitel was not outwardly antisemitic but certainly did not oppose the Final Solution. He believed the evacuation of Jews from homes and towns needed to be done thoroughly and carefully without causing trouble later on.

At the Nuremberg trials, Keitel was indicted on four counts including conspiracy to commit crimes against peace, waging wars of aggression, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Keitel was executed by hanging on October 16, 1946.



Konstantin von Neurath (1873-1956)



Konstantin von Neurath at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1946.

Konstantin Hermann Karl Freiherr von Neurath was a politician who served as the Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs during World War II. Neurath was notable for playing pivotal role in Adolf Hitler's opposition to the Treaty of Versailles following World War I. As the war progressed, Neurath had a particular aversion to Hitler and his replacement by Joachim von Ribbentrop did not help. In 1939, Neurath was positioned as Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, but his authority decreased with time.

During World War I, Neurath served as an officer with an infantry regiment of the Imperial Germany Army and was awarded the Iron Cross after becoming poorly wounded. After taking his leave in 1916, Neurath wrote a memorandum from his official position regarding the Armenian genocide in which he writes the actions of the Ottoman Empire are just but protesting against the excessive decisions of the genocide.

Neurath had a varied career in politics. Working as Minister to Denmark after joining the embassy in 1919. Additionally, from 1921-1930, Neurath was the ambassador to Rome and was not impressed with Italian fascism. Only two years later would this irony show as he was called to become the Reichsminister of Foreign Affairs.

Neurath was politically charged. His sphere of influence was facilitating decisions like retreating from the League of Nations and remilitarization of the Rhineland. Neurath did not have much influence with the Holocaust, nor did he necessarily want to. In addition to his view on the Armenian genocide, he did not partake in the "excesses" of it and attempted to control police chief, Karl Hermann Frank and his actions against Jews.



Following his appointment as Reichsprotektor of Bohemia and Moravia, Neurath was stripped of his powers by Hitler considering his rule was too lenient.

Neurath was held on trial in Nuremberg, Germany in 1946 where he was accused on all four counts. The International Military Tribunal decided Neurath's crimes were carried out in such a short period during his position at Reichsprotektor. Neurath was ultimately found guilty and sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment. He was released in 1954 after suffering a heart attack and retired to his family estates before his death two years later.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Konstantin von Neurath](#)

[Britannica | Konstantin von Neurath](#)



Erich Raeder (1876-1960)



Karl Dönitz, Erich Raeder, and Baldur von Schirach (left to right) pictured with United States Army Military Police in Nuremberg, Germany, 1945-1946.

Erich Johann Albert Raeder was a German admiral who made important strides to the naval history of World War II. Raeder was leader of the Kriegsmarine from 1939-1943 until his resignation and replacement by Karl Dönitz.

Raeder joined the Kaiserliche Marine in 1894. He became chief of staff to Franz von Hipper, an admiral in the German Imperial Navy in 1912. A very dedicated and intelligent man, Raeder was stoic and cold. He certainly climbed quickly in rank.

Following World War I, two major philosophies surrounding the German navy appeared. The Grand Admiral of the Germany Imperial Navy, Alfred von Tirpitz believed building a balanced fleet would lead to sure annihilation of the British Royal Navy; whereas Commander Wolfgang Wegener argued submarines and cruisers would be Germany's greatest strength. Raeder took to opposition to Wegener and detested his thesis. Raeder gained traction as a naval strategist and philosophical thinker. Admiral Hipper took to Raeder and received many promotions due to his deliberate knowledge. Eventually, Raeder became Admiral of the Kriegsmarine in 1925.

Aiding to Nazi Germany's war effort, Raeder worked with Adolf Hitler to confirm military missions, advancements, and goals. In 1941, Raeder proposed firing on United States warships even if they were passive. Furthermore, Raeder urged Hitler to declare war on the United States so he could deploy naval forces, eager for warfare. Ultimately two ships were sent out on mission to raid Allied escorts, the Bismarck and Prinz Eugen. The Bismarck sunk, wasting resources and military troops. Hitler was displeased with the result, connected to Erich Raeder.

In January 1943, Erich Raeder resigned after failing to inform Hitler of a battle which he learned about through the news. Hitler found Albert Speer's goals to align better with his own, leading to Raeder resignation.



In 1946, Raeder was held on trial in Nuremberg, Germany. He was tried three counts, though found guilty of ordering unrestricted submarine warfare. Additionally, Raeder approved of executing naval battle survivors. Raeder was sentenced to life in prison but was released in 1955 due to his poor health. He died five years later.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Erich Raeder](#)

[Wikipedia | Second London Naval Treaty](#)



Joachim von Ribbentrop (1893-1946)



Joachim von Ribbentrop in his prison cell at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1946.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nazi Germany from 1938 to 1945, Joachim von Ribbentrop first came to Adolf Hitler as a well-versed businessman. Ribbentrop quickly became a close confidant of Hitler, aiding in various ways.

Ribbentrop worked in Canada following his adolescent education in then Prussia. Returning, Ribbentrop served in World War I, fighting on the Eastern then the Western Front. He was awarded the Iron Cross for his bravery while wounded in action. In 1918, Ribbentrop befriended Franz von Papen by chance. In 1928, Ribbentrop was introduced to Hitler and displayed himself as a trustworthy businessman with connections. He offered to be Hitler's secret emissary, but Hitler declined his offer, only to return to it six months later, offering Ribbentrop the position.

Ahead of the war, as the Nazi party gained popularity, a strongly devoted Ribbentrop was disliked by most members of the party. Joseph Goebbels claimed Ribbentrop bought his name, married his money, and swindled his way into office. Additionally, Ribbentrop was apolitical and did not seem to express antisemitism, shocking Jewish individuals who knew him before his devotion to the Nazi regime.

Ribbentrop was appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and was reviewed by his colleagues as lazy, diverting, and superficial. Many could not believe he gained the position he did. During the war, Ribbentrop failed to protect Hitler from an assassination attempt constructed by old Foreign Office diplomats. Hitler believed Ribbentrop's "bloated administration" obstructed him from organizing and committing to his diplomat responsibilities. Eventually, Ribbentrop was excommunicated by Hitler and rejected in attempts to meet with him.

In 1946, Ribbentrop appeared on trial in Nuremberg, Germany. Ribbentrop was described by the psychologist at Nuremberg as "highly neurotic". Even until the end of his life, Ribbentrop was loyal to Hitler who wanted nothing to do with him. He was executed by hanging in 1946.



Sources:

[Wikipedia | Joachim von Ribbentrop](#)



Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946)



Alfred Rosenberg in his prison cell at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1946.

An early member of the NSDAP, Alfred Rosenberg held several positions with the Nazi regime. Rosenberg's main responsibility was his role as the NSDAP Office of Foreign Affairs from 1933 to 1945. Additionally, he was the head of the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern territories from 1941 to 1945. Rosenberg believed heavily in anti-Slavic and antisemitic rhetoric. Rosenberg is regarded as one of the main founders of Nazi ideology and hatred for Jewish individuals.

During World War I, Rosenberg pursued higher education in architecture and art. He then worked as an educator teaching drawing in 1918. By this time, Rosenberg was an established antisemite. He had joined the German Worker's Party which became the NSDAP and eventually the Nazi Party, joining before Adolf Hitler did.

In the years leading up to World War II, Rosenberg questioned Jewish identity, culture, and religion through various works. He played a key role in Hitler's development of Jewish conspiracies. In 1942, Rosenberg took to spearheading propaganda designed to win the Russian public's opinion on the Nazi Party; yet the efforts were lackluster. In addition, posters and flyers directed to the German and Russian public did not result in the outcome the Nazis hoped for.

After the war ended, Rosenberg was arrested and tried in Nuremberg, Germany. He was found guilty on all four counts. Rosenberg was named as one of the main planners of the Invasion of Norway and the Soviet Union. He was executed by hanging on October 16, 1946.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Alfred Rosenberg](#)



Fritz Sauckel (1894-1946)



Fritz Sauckel on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1946.

Ernst Friedrich (Fritz) Sauckel was the General Plenipotentiary for Labor Deployment from 1942 to 1945. Sauckel's main responsibility was instating and maintaining forced labor civilians and foreign volunteers.

During World War I, Sauckel joined the merchant marine of Norway and Sweden. Aboard a German ship en route to Australia, the ship was captured by the French navy. Sauckel was interned in France from 1914 to 1919. After his release, Sauckel returned to Germany and worked as a locksmith and toolmaker before joining Deutschvölkischer Schutz und Trutzbund, a globally influential antisemitic organization. In 1921, he studied engineering but was soon expelled for his political activities.

After joining the NSDAP in 1923, Sauckel immediately became an active member. Sauckel worked to establish a newspaper, *Der Nationalsozialist*, serving as its editor from 1927 to 1945. In 1933, Sauckel was appointed as Reichsstatthalter or Reich Governor of Thuringia, a state in Germany. His position provided more control over state centralized governments.

In the midst of the war, Sauckel, General Plenipotentiary for Labor Deployment was in charge of managing over five million foreign workers utilized forced labor. Of the five million, only around 200,000 volunteered for labor aiding to the war effort. The extensive number of laborers allowed Sauckel and Germany to divide the work among many German industries like steel, mining, and weapons manufacturing.

At the end of the war, on his 50th birthday, Sauckel was awarded a cash sum of 250,000 Reichsmark. Months later, on April 10, 1945, Sauckel fled Weimar in Thuringia, Germany but was arrested a month later.



Sauckel was put on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany. He was found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and shortly after was executed by hanging on October 16, 1946. At the end of his life, Sauckel believe he was an innocent man and that his sentencing was unjust.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Fritz Sauckel](#)



Baldur von Schirach (1907-1974)



Baldur von Schirach on trial in Nuremberg, Germany, 1945.

Baldur Benedikt von Schirach was a politician and leader of the Hitler Youth from 1931 to 1940. From 1940 until the end of the war, he was the district leader and Reich governor of Vienna, Austria. Schirach joined the Nazi Party at the age of 18 and was awarded as national youth leader of the party in 1931. One of his notable operations was carrying out the deportation of 65,000 Viennese Jews to concentration camps in Germany.

In 1940, Schirach volunteered for the Wehrmacht, participating in fighting action on the front lines of France. He was promoted to Lieutenant and awarded the Iron Cross 2nd class. After his military service, Adolf Hitler appointed Schirach as district leader and Reich governor.

Schirach was very culturally influenced. He stole and looted art and treasures from Jewish people. He was described as a flamboyant poet, a prima donna, and a man of great cultural pretensions but lacking political ambitions. It was concerning how Schirach had the position he did without being fully invested and important in politics. Even the bunker Schirach hid in was decorated with lavish rugs and numerous paintings of military generals.

As a strong antisemite, Schirach facilitated the deportation of thousands of Jews, ensuring to loot their belongings and money. Schirach felt he had succeeded after fully ridding Vienna of Jewish individuals. His career as an antisemite interfered with his personal hobbies. Schirach feared ridding the Jews from Vienna and reciting a celebratory speech would expel him from his glorious cultural art circles.

In 1946, Schirach was placed on trial. He was the youngest of the 22 Nazis at age 38. Avoiding heavy prosecution, Schirach claimed his antisemitism rose from American businessman, Henry Ford's *The International Jew*. Additionally, he asserted the Hitler Youth he was the head of was merely an organization like the Boy Scouts, not a representation of Hitler's war ideology.



Ultimately, Schirach was sentenced to 20 years of prison at Spandau Prison in West Berlin, Germany. In 1966, Schirach was released after serving his full sentence. He was interviewed and gave multiple statements regarding his view of the Nazi Party and his participation. Schirach expressed he regret had not done enough to prevent the atrocities committed. Additionally, he claimed he had no knowledge that the exterminations took place. Schirach lived with multiple family members and adopted excessive alcoholism. He died from health complications in 1974 at age 67.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Baldur von Schirach](#)



Arthur Seyss-Inquart (1892-1946)



Arthur Seyss-Inquart on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1945.

Arthur Seyss-Inquart held multiple positions in the Nazi Party. Notably, he was Chancellor of Austria for two days before the March 1938 Anschluss. Additionally, Seyss-Inquart was Deputy Governor to Hans Frank and Reichskommissar in German-occupied Netherlands.

In World War I, Seyss-Inquart enlisted in the Austrian Army. He was decorated for his bravery and received a degree in law which he had been working towards before the start of the war.

Prior to the Anschluss, Seyss-Inquart followed Heinrich Himmler's concept of racial purity, exploring the ideologies of Aryan racial theories. In 1938, Seyss-Inquart became an active member for the Austrian National Socialists.

The growing pressure the Chancellor of Austria, Kurt Schuschnigg faced quickly led to his resignation. President Wilhelm Miklas hesitated to appoint Seyss-Inquart, but the choice was impending. For nearly two days, Seyss-Inquart was the Chancellor of Austria before German troops crossed the border, instilling the plebiscite and annexing Austria. Two days later, Seyss-Inquart joined the Nazi Party.

Seyss-Inquart's operations in the Netherlands did not create popularity with the public. Many Dutch people mocked him and detested the Nazi Party. On the other hand, the Dutch National Socialist Movement in the Netherlands allowed Seyss-Inquart and the Nazis to create an auxiliary police force.

A dedicated antisemite, Seyss Inquart removed Jews from positions of government in the Netherlands, established the Westerbork transit camp, and deported Jews to concentration camps in Germany.

Seyss-Inquart was deemed a suitable replacement for Joachim von Ribbentrop by Adolf Hitler despite his failures to meet successes in the later half of the war.



Eventually, Seyss-Inquart was arrested by English soldiers, one of whom was a German Jew who escaped to Britain via the Kindertransport. In 1946, Seyss-Inquart was put on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany where he was convicted of multiple counts and executed by hanging in 1946. He died at age 54.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Seyss-Inquart](#)



Albert Speer (1905-1981)



Albert Speer on trial at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, 1946.

German architect Albert Speer was the Minister of Armaments and War Production for the Nazi Party during World War II. He was a close friend of Adolf Hitler and an early member of the then NSDAP.

In 1924, Speer studied architecture in Munich where he received an architecture license. After moving to Mannheim, Speer failed to acquire a job in which he could provide for himself. Speer moved home to work part time for his father, when he joined the Nazi Party in 1931.

Speer was introduced to Joseph Goebbels by a friend who recommended him to help renovate the Berlin headquarters. Speer completed the commission and returned to Mannheim. When Hitler took office in 1933, Speer was asked to submit designs for the Nuremberg Rally. Speer's design work won over Hitler and the Nazi Party, and he was appointed Commissioner for the Artistic and Technical Presentation of Party Rallies and Demonstrations.

Through his career, Speer became a close member of Hitler's inner circle, much to his surprise. Speer replaced Paul Troost as the Chief Architect following his death. Furthermore, Hitler appointed Speer as the Chief Office for Construction.

Speer had worked on prestigious projects such as the Zeppelinfeld stadium in Nuremberg and the Olympiastadion, the site for the 1936 Summer Olympics.

During World War II, Speer created plans for the Reich Capital, overseeing the building's management. Additionally, Speer oversaw the labor for construction of various concentration camps in Germany. Later



on, Speer's responsibilities spanned to the German military, designing submarines and aircrafts. Moreover, Speer facilitated the transportation of prisoners from concentration camps to work areas where construction and labor was required to fulfill his architecture concepts.

In 1945, Speer was arrested by the British Army in Flensburg. On trial in 1946, Speer was found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity with the emphasis on forced labor and slave labor. Yet, Speer claimed he was unaware of the Nazi extermination plans and the Allies lacked evidence to prosecute him. He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.

Speer served his full term and was released at midnight on October 1, 1966. Speer was consistently interviewed about his experiences with the Nazi regime. The public's fascination with the Nazi Party piqued interest upon the release of Speer and other notable figures. Speer spoke to BBC and other major media outlets. He spent the rest of his life constructing an image of himself as a "good Nazi" who was unaware of Hitler's full plans and atrocities.

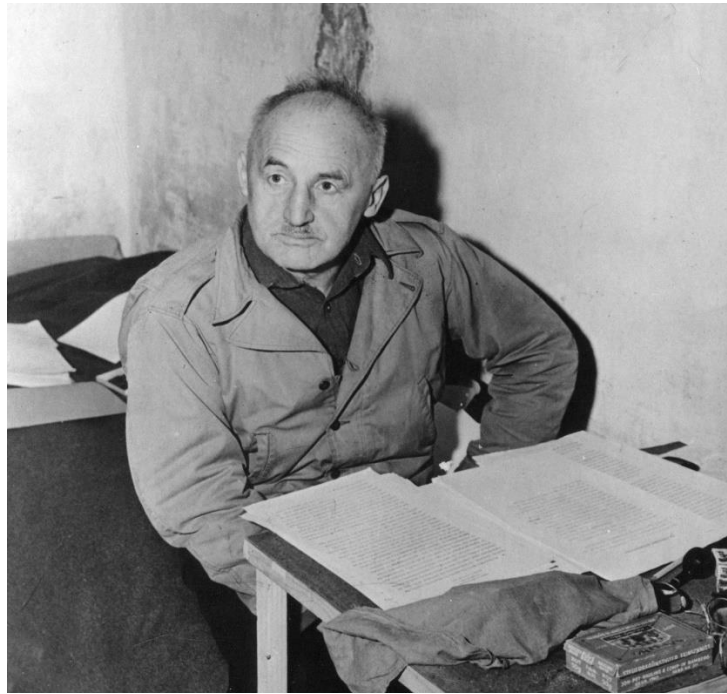
Speer died in 1981 after suffering a stroke. After his death, he was widely detested as a "good Nazi" and through historians' examinations, debunked as an unknowing member of the Nazi Party.

Sources:

[Wikipedia | Albert Speer](#)



Julius Streicher (1885-1946)



Julius Streicher in his prison cell at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, Germany, c.1946.

Former Regional Leader of Franconia and a member of the Reichstag, Julius Streicher maintained a vital role in the Nazi Party. Streicher is notable for the creation of incredibly antisemitic newspaper *Der Stürmer*. The publication of the newspaper brought immense wealth to Streicher, profiting off of his hatred of Jewish people.

In 1914, Streicher joined the Imperial German Army and was awarded the Iron Cross 1st and 2nd Class. Yet, Streicher displayed poor behavior while he was enlisted, with officers and leadership being aristocratic compared to his children as one of nine children to an elementary school teacher and his wife. Arguably, Streicher's influence for *Der Stürmer* includes his desire for wealth and respect.

In November 1919, Streicher joined the Deutschsozialistische Partei (DSP), an organization similar to the NSDAP. Although an active member, Streicher was unimpressed with the lack of antisemitism. He pushed other members to adopt antisemitic ideology, though plenty of opposition was expressed. In 1921, Streicher joined the Deutsche Werkgemeinschaft (DWG) and hoped they would be united in antisemitism. Yet, it prevailed he was criticized for his beliefs. Ultimately, Streicher joined the Nazi Party in 1922, bringing members from his previous organizations.

After hearing Adolf Hitler speak in Munich, Streicher described it as a religious experience and that he felt destined to serve Hitler. Unwavering devotion, Streicher continued to develop *Der Stürmer* gaining attention from the Nazi Party and Streicher was elected as deputy of the Reichstag. Additionally, Streicher became a member of the Sturmabteilung (SA) in 1934. A year later, Hitler named Streicher to the Academy of German Law.



Streicher had a close relationship with Hitler, but not everyone in his close circle considered Streicher intellectual or a friend. Hermann Göring disliked Streicher and forbade his staff from reading *Der Stürmer*. In 1938, Streicher was accused of keeping Jewish property following Kristallnacht. Moreover, he was exposed for spreading false rumors about Göring, one namely that he was impotent. Hitler himself was loyal to Streicher, considering him a good friend never minding the others who disliked him.

In 1945, Streicher was captured by the Allies and transported to Nuremberg, Germany where he would undergo trial. Streicher's reputation as a lewd and sick man preceded him. Majority of the prisoners at the Palace of Justice refused to speak or eat with him. The Nuremberg psychiatrist Douglas Kelley claimed Streicher was obsessed with "the Jewish problem" and would speak about it for 24 hours a day, it consumed his every thought.

Streicher was sentenced to death on October 1, 1946 and 15 days later Streicher was executed by hanging for being found guilty of crimes against humanity.

