

= Adolf Eichmann =

Otto Adolf Eichmann ( pronounced [ ʔto ʔaʔdʔlf ʔaʔ ʔ çman ] ; 19 March 1906 ? 1 June 1962 ) was a German Nazi SS @-@ Obersturmbannführer ( lieutenant colonel ) and one of the major organisers of the Holocaust . Eichmann was tasked by SS @-@ Obergruppenführer ( general / lieutenant general ) Reinhard Heydrich with facilitating and managing the logistics of mass deportation of Jews to ghettos and extermination camps in German @-@ occupied Eastern Europe during World War II . In 1960 , he was captured in Argentina by Mossad , Israel 's intelligence service . Following a widely publicised trial in Israel , he was found guilty of war crimes and hanged in 1962 .

After an unremarkable school career , Eichmann briefly worked for his father 's mining company in Austria , where the family had moved in 1914 . He worked as a travelling oil salesman beginning in 1927 , and joined the Nazi Party and SS in 1932 . After returning to Germany in 1933 , he joined the Sicherheitsdienst ( SD ; Security Service ) , where he was appointed head of the department responsible for Jewish affairs ? especially emigration , which the Nazis encouraged through violence and economic pressure . After the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 , Eichmann and his staff arranged for Jews to be concentrated into ghettos in major cities with the expectation they would be transported farther east or overseas . Eichmann drew up plans for a Jewish reservation , first at Nisko in south @-@ east Poland and later in Madagascar , but neither of these plans were ever carried out .

As the Nazis began the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 , their Jewish policy changed from emigration to extermination . To co @-@ ordinate planning for the genocide , Heydrich hosted the regime 's administrative leaders at the Wannsee Conference on 20 January 1942 . Eichmann collected information for Heydrich , attended the conference , and prepared the minutes . Eichmann and his staff became responsible for Jewish deportations to extermination camps , where the victims were gassed . After Germany invaded Hungary in March 1944 , Eichmann oversaw the deportation of much of that country 's Jewish population . Most of the victims were sent to Auschwitz concentration camp , where 75 to 90 per cent were murdered upon arrival . By the time the transports were stopped in July 1944 , 437 @,@ 000 of Hungary 's 725 @,@ 000 Jews had been killed . Historian Richard J. Evans estimates that between 5 @.@ 5 and 6 million Jews were killed by the Nazis . Eichmann said towards the end of the war that he would " leap laughing into the grave because the feeling that he had five million people on his conscience would be for him a source of extraordinary satisfaction . "

After Germany 's defeat in 1945 , Eichmann fled to Austria . He lived there until 1950 , when he moved to Argentina using false papers . Information collected by the Mossad , Israel 's intelligence agency , confirmed Eichmann 's location in 1960 . A team of Mossad and Shin Bet agents captured Eichmann and brought him to Israel to stand trial on 15 criminal charges , including war crimes , crimes against humanity and crimes against the Jewish people . Found guilty on many of these charges , he was sentenced to death by hanging and executed on 1 June 1962 . The trial was widely followed in the media and was later the subject of several books , including Hannah Arendt 's work Eichmann in Jerusalem , in which Arendt coined the phrase " the banality of evil " to describe Eichmann .

= = Early life and education = =

Otto Adolf Eichmann , the eldest of five children , was born in 1906 to a Calvinist Protestant family in Solingen , Germany . His parents were Adolf Karl Eichmann , a bookkeeper , and Maria ( née Schefferling ) , a housewife . The elder Adolf moved to Linz , Austria , in 1913 to take a position as commercial manager for the Linz Tramway and Electrical Company , and the rest of the family followed a year later . After the death of Maria in 1916 , Eichmann 's father married Maria Zawrzel , a devout Protestant with two sons .

Eichmann attended the Kaiser Franz Joseph Staatsoberrealschule ( state secondary school ) in Linz , the same high school Adolf Hitler had attended some 17 years before . He played the violin

and participated in sports and clubs , including a Wandervogel woodcraft and scouting group that included some older boys who were members of various right @-@ wing militias . His poor school performance resulted in his father withdrawing him from the Realschule and enrolling him in the Höhere Bundeslehranstalt für Elektrotechnik , Maschinenbau und Hochbau vocational college . He left without attaining a degree and joined his father 's new enterprise , the Untersberg Mining Company , where he worked for several months . From 1925 to 1927 he worked as a sales clerk for the Oberösterreichische Elektrobau AG radio company . Next , between 1927 and early 1933 , Eichmann worked in Upper Austria and Salzburg as district agent for the Vacuum Oil Company AG .

During this time , he joined the Jungfrontkämpfervereinigung , the youth section of Hermann Hiltl 's right @-@ wing veterans movement , and began reading newspapers published by the Nazi Party ( NSDAP ) . The party platform included removal of the Weimar Republic in Germany , rejection of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles , radical antisemitism , and anti @-@ Bolshevism . They promised a strong central government , increased Lebensraum ( living space ) for Germanic peoples , formation of a national community based on race , and racial cleansing via the active suppression of Jews , who would be stripped of their citizenship and civil rights .

= = Early career = =

On the advice of family friend and local Schutzstaffel ( SS ; protection squadron ) leader Ernst Kaltenbrunner , Eichmann joined the Austrian branch of the NSDAP , member number 889 @,@ 895 . He joined the Nazi Party on 1 April 1932 , and his membership in the SS was confirmed seven months later ( SS member number 45 @,@ 326 ) . His regiment was SS @-@ Standarte 37 , responsible for guarding the party headquarters in Linz and protecting party speakers at rallies , which would often become violent . Eichmann pursued party activities in Linz on weekends while continuing in his position at Vacuum Oil in Salzburg .

A few months after the Nazi seizure of power in Germany in January 1933 , Eichmann lost his job due to staffing cutbacks at Vacuum Oil . The Nazi Party was banned in Austria around the same time . These events were factors in Eichmann 's decision to return to Germany .

Like many other National Socialists fleeing Austria in the spring of 1933 , Eichmann left for Passau , where he joined Andreas Bolek at his headquarters . After he attended a training programme at the SS depot in Klosterlechfeld in August , Eichmann returned to the Passau border in September , where he was assigned to lead an eight @-@ man SS liaison team to guide Austrian National Socialists into Germany and smuggle propaganda material from there into Austria . In late December , when this unit was dissolved , Eichmann was promoted to SS @-@ Scharführer ( squad leader , equivalent to corporal ) . Eichmann 's battalion of the Deutschland Regiment was quartered at barracks next door to Dachau concentration camp .

By 1934 , Eichmann requested transfer to the Sicherheitsdienst ( SD ; Security Service ) of the SS , to escape the " monotony " of military training and service at Dachau . Eichmann was accepted into the SD and assigned to the sub @-@ office on Freemasons , organising seized ritual objects for a proposed museum . After about six months , Eichmann was invited by Leopold von Mildenstein to join his Jewish Department , Section II / 112 of the SD , at its Berlin headquarters . Eichmann 's transfer was granted in November 1934 . He later came to consider this as his big break . He was assigned to study and prepare reports on the Zionist movement and various Jewish organisations . He even learned a smattering of Hebrew and Yiddish , gaining a reputation as a specialist in Zionist and Jewish matters . On 21 March 1935 Eichmann married Veronika ( Vera ) Liebl ( 1909 ? 93 ) . The couple had four sons : Klaus ( b . 1936 in Berlin ) , Horst Adolf ( b . 1940 in Vienna ) , Dieter Helmut ( b . 1942 in Prague ) and Ricardo Francisco ( b . 1955 in Buenos Aires ) . Eichmann was promoted to SS @-@ Hauptscharführer ( head squad leader ) in 1936 and was commissioned as an SS @-@ Untersturmführer ( second lieutenant ) the following year .

Nazi Germany used violence and economic pressure to encourage Jews to leave Germany of their own volition ; around 250 @,@ 000 of the country 's 437 @,@ 000 Jews emigrated between 1933 and 1939 . Eichmann travelled to British Mandatory Palestine with his superior Herbert Hagen in

1937 to assess the possibility of Germany 's Jews voluntarily emigrating to that country , disembarking with forged press credentials at Haifa , whence they travelled to Cairo in Egypt . There they met Feival Polkes , an agent of the Haganah , with whom they were unable to strike a deal . Polkes suggested that more Jews should be allowed to leave under the terms of the Haavara Agreement , but Hagen refused , surmising that a strong Jewish presence in Palestine might lead to their founding an independent state , which would run contrary to Reich policy . Eichmann and Hagen attempted to return to Palestine a few days later , but were denied entry after the British authorities refused them the required visas . They prepared a report on their visit , which was published in 1982 .

In 1938 , Eichmann was posted to Vienna to help organise Jewish emigration from Austria , which had just been integrated into the Reich through the Anschluss . Jewish community organisations were placed under supervision of the SD and tasked with encouraging and facilitating Jewish emigration . Funding came from money seized from other Jewish people and organisations , as well as donations from overseas , which were placed under SD control . Eichmann was promoted to SS @-@ Obersturmführer ( first lieutenant ) in July 1938 , and appointed to the Central Agency for Jewish Emigration in Vienna , created in August . By the time he left Vienna in May 1939 , nearly 100 @,@ 000 Jews had left Austria legally , and many more had been smuggled out to Palestine and elsewhere .

= = Second World War = =

= = = Transition from emigration to deportation = = =

Within weeks of the invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 , Nazi policy toward the Jews changed from voluntary emigration to forced deportation . After discussions with Hitler in the preceding weeks , on 21 September SS @-@ Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich , head of the SD , advised his staff that Jews were to be collected into cities in Poland with good rail links to facilitate their expulsion from territories controlled by Germany , starting with areas that had been incorporated into the Reich . He announced plans to create a reservation in the General Government ( the portion of Poland not incorporated into the Reich ) , where Jews and others deemed undesirable would await further deportation . On 27 September 1939 the SD and Sicherheitspolizei ( comprising the Gestapo and Kripo police agencies ) were combined into the new SS @-@ Reichssicherheitshauptamt ( RSHA ; Reich Main Security Office ) , which was placed under Heydrich 's control .

After a posting in Prague to assist in setting up an emigration office there , Eichmann was transferred to Berlin in October 1939 to command the Central Office for Jewish Emigration for the entire Reich under Heinrich Müller , head of the Gestapo . He was immediately assigned to organise the deportation of 70 @,@ 000 to 80 @,@ 000 Jews from Ostrava district in Moravia and Katowice district in the recently annexed portion of Poland . On his own initiative , Eichmann also laid plans to deport Jews from Vienna . Under the Nisko Plan , Eichmann chose Nisko as the location for a new transit camp where Jews would be temporarily housed before being deported elsewhere . In the last week of October 1939 , 4 @,@ 700 Jews were sent to the area by train and were essentially left to fend for themselves in an open meadow with no water and little food . Barracks were planned but never completed . Many of the deportees were driven by the SS into Soviet @-@ occupied territory and others were eventually placed in a nearby labour camp . The operation soon was called off , partly because Hitler decided the required trains were better used for military purposes for the time being . Meanwhile , as part of Hitler 's long @-@ range resettlement plans , hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans were being transported into the annexed territories , and ethnic Poles and Jews were being moved further east , particularly into the General Government .

On 19 December 1939 , Eichmann was assigned to head RSHA Referat IV B4 ( RSHA Sub @-@ Department IV @-@ B4 ) , tasked with overseeing Jewish affairs and evacuation . Heydrich announced Eichmann to be his " special expert " , in charge of arranging for all deportations into

occupied Poland . The job entailed co-ordinating with police agencies for the physical removal of the Jews , dealing with their confiscated property , and arranging financing and transport . Within a few days of his appointment , Eichmann formulated a plan to deport 600 ,000 Jews into the General Government . The plan was stymied by Hans Frank , governor-general of the occupied territories , who was disinclined to accept the deportees as to do so would have a negative impact on economic development and his ultimate goal of Germanisation of the region . In his role as minister responsible for the Four Year Plan , on 24 March 1940 Hermann Göring forbade any further transports into the General Government unless cleared first by himself or Frank . Transports continued , but at a much slower pace than originally envisioned . From the start of the war until April 1941 , around 63 ,000 Jews were transported into the General Government . On many of the trains in this period , up to a third of the deportees died in transit . While Eichmann claimed at his trial to be upset by the appalling conditions on the trains and in the transit camps , his correspondence and documents of the period show that his primary concern was to achieve the deportations economically and with minimal disruption to Germany 's ongoing military operations .

Jews were concentrated into ghettos in major cities with the expectation that at some point they would be transported further east or even overseas . Horrendous conditions in the ghettos ? severe overcrowding , poor sanitation , and a lack of food ? resulted in a high death rate . On 15 August 1940 , Eichmann released a memorandum titled Reichssicherheitshauptamt : Madagaskar Projekt ( Reich Main Security Office : Madagascar Project ) , calling for the resettlement to Madagascar of a million Jews per year for four years . When Germany failed to defeat the Royal Air Force in the Battle of Britain , the invasion of Britain was postponed indefinitely . As Britain still controlled the Atlantic and her merchant fleet would not be at Germany 's disposal for use in evacuations , planning for the Madagascar proposal stalled . Hitler continued to mention the Plan until February 1942 , when the idea was permanently shelved .

= = = Wannsee Conference = = =

From the start of the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 , Einsatzgruppen ( task forces ) followed the army into conquered areas and rounded up and killed Jews , Comintern officials , and ranking members of the Communist Party . Eichmann was one of the officials who received regular detailed reports of their activities . On 31 July , Göring gave Heydrich written authorisation to prepare and submit a plan for a " total solution of the Jewish question " in all territories under German control and to co-ordinate the participation of all involved government organisations . The Generalplan Ost ( General Plan for the East ) called for deporting the population of occupied Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to Siberia , for use as slave labour or to be murdered .

Eichmann stated at his later interrogations that Heydrich told him in mid-September that Hitler had ordered that all Jews in German-controlled Europe were to be killed . The initial plan was to implement Generalplan Ost after the conquest of the Soviet Union . However , with the entry of the United States into the war in December and the German failure in the Battle of Moscow , Hitler decided that the Jews of Europe were to be exterminated immediately rather than after the war , which now had no end in sight . Around this time , Eichmann was promoted to SS-Obersturmbannführer ( lieutenant colonel ) , the highest rank he achieved .

To co-ordinate planning for the proposed genocide , Heydrich hosted the Wannsee Conference , which brought together administrative leaders of the Nazi regime on 20 January 1942 . In preparation for the conference , Eichmann drafted for Heydrich a list of the numbers of Jews in various European countries and prepared statistics on emigration . Eichmann attended the conference , oversaw the stenographer who took the minutes , and prepared the official distributed record of the meeting . In his covering letter , Heydrich specified that Eichmann would act as his liaison with the departments involved . Under Eichmann 's supervision , large-scale deportations began almost immediately to extermination camps at Bełżec , Sobibor , Treblinka and elsewhere . The genocide was code-named Operation Reinhard in honour of Heydrich , who died in Prague in early June from wounds suffered in an assassination attempt . Kaltenbrunner succeeded him as head of the RSHA .

Eichmann did not make policy , but acted in an operational capacity . Specific deportation orders came from Himmler . Eichmann 's office was responsible for collecting information on the Jews in each area , organising the seizure of their property , and arranging for and scheduling trains . His department was in constant contact with the Foreign Office , as Jews of conquered nations such as France could not as easily be stripped of their possessions and deported to their deaths . Eichmann held regular meetings in his Berlin offices with his department members working in the field and travelled extensively to visit concentration camps and ghettos . His wife , who disliked Berlin , resided in Prague with the children . Eichmann initially visited them weekly , but as time went on his visits tapered off to once a month .

= = = Hungary = = =

Germany invaded Hungary on 19 March 1944 . Eichmann arrived the same day , and was soon joined by top members of his staff and five or six hundred members of the SD , SS , and Sicherheitspolizei ( SiPo ; security police ) . Hitler 's appointment of a Hungarian government more amenable to the Nazis meant that the Hungarian Jews , who had remained essentially unharmed until that point , would now be deported to Auschwitz to serve as forced labour or be gassed . Eichmann toured northeastern Hungary in the last week of April and visited Auschwitz in May to assess the preparations . Round @-@ ups began on 16 April , and from 14 May , four trains of 3 @,@ 000 Jews per day left Hungary and travelled to the camp at Auschwitz II @-@ Birkenau , arriving along a newly built spur line that terminated a few hundred metres away from the gas chambers . Only between 10 and 25 per cent of the people on each train were chosen as forced labourers ; the rest were killed within hours of arrival . Under international pressure , the Hungarian government halted deportations on 6 July 1944 , by which time over 437 @,@ 000 of Hungary 's 725 @,@ 000 Jews had died . In spite of the orders to stop , Eichmann personally made arrangements for additional trains of victims to be sent to Auschwitz on 17 and 19 July .

In a series of meetings beginning on 25 April , Eichmann met with Joel Brand , a Hungarian Jew and member of the Relief and Rescue Committee ( RRC ) . Eichmann later testified that Berlin had authorised him to allow emigration of a million Jews in exchange for 10 @,@ 000 trucks equipped to handle the wintry conditions on the Eastern Front . Nothing came of the proposal , as the Western Allies refused to consider the offer . In June 1944 Eichmann was involved in negotiations with Rudolf Kasztner that resulted in the rescue of 1 @,@ 684 people , who were sent by train to safety in Switzerland in exchange for three suitcases full of diamonds , gold , cash , and securities .

Eichmann , resentful that Kurt Becher and others were becoming involved in Jewish emigration matters , and angered by Himmler 's suspension of deportations to the death camps , requested reassignment in July . At the end of August he was assigned to head a commando squad to assist in the evacuation of 10 @,@ 000 ethnic Germans trapped on the Hungarian border with Romania in the path of the advancing Red Army . The people they were sent to rescue refused to leave , so instead the soldiers helped evacuate members of a German field hospital trapped close to the front . For this Eichmann was awarded the Iron Cross , Second Class . Throughout October and November , Eichmann arranged for tens of thousands of Jewish victims to travel by forced marches in appalling conditions from Budapest to Vienna , a distance of 210 kilometres ( 130 mi ) .

On 24 December 1944 , Eichmann fled Budapest just before the Soviets completed their encirclement of the capital . He returned to Berlin , where he arranged for the incriminating records of Department IV @-@ B4 to be burned . Along with many other SS officers who fled in the closing months of the war , Eichmann and his family were living in relative safety in Austria when the war in Europe ended on 8 May 1945 . Historian Richard J. Evans estimates that 5 @.@ 5 to 6 million Jews , representing two @-@ thirds of the Jewish population of Europe , were exterminated by the Nazi regime .

= = After the Second World War = =

At the end of the Second World War , Eichmann was captured by the Americans and spent time in

several camps for SS officers using forged papers that identified him as " Otto Eckmann " . He escaped from a work detail at Cham when he realised that his actual identity had been discovered . He obtained new identity papers with the name of " Otto Heninger " and relocated frequently over the next several months . Moving to the Lüneburg Heath , he initially got work in the forestry industry and later leased a small plot of land in Altensalzkoth , where he lived until 1950 . Meanwhile , at the Nuremberg trials of major war criminals starting in 1946 , damning evidence about Eichmann 's activities was given by former commandant of Auschwitz Rudolf Höss and others .

In 1948 Eichmann obtained a landing permit for Argentina and false identification under the name of " Ricardo Klement " through an organisation directed by Bishop Alois Hudal , an Austrian cleric then residing in Italy with known Nazi sympathies . These documents enabled him in 1950 to obtain an International Committee of the Red Cross humanitarian passport and the remaining entry permits that would allow emigration to Argentina . He travelled across Europe , staying in a series of monasteries that had been set up as safe houses . Departing via ship from Genoa on 17 June 1950 , he arrived in Buenos Aires on 14 July .

Eichmann initially lived in Tucumán Province , where he worked for a government contractor . He sent for his family in 1952 , and they moved to Buenos Aires . Eichmann held a series of low @-@ paying jobs until finding employment at Mercedes @-@ Benz , where he rose to department head . The family built a house at 14 Garibaldi Street ( now 6061 Garibaldi Street ) and moved in during 1960 .

For four months beginning in late 1956 , Eichmann was extensively interviewed by Nazi expatriate journalist Willem Sassen with the intention of producing a biography . Tapes , transcripts , and handwritten notes by Eichmann were produced . The memoirs were later used as the basis for a series of articles that appeared in Life and Der Stern magazines in late 1960 .

= = Capture in Argentina = =

Several Jews and other survivors of the Holocaust dedicated themselves to finding Eichmann and other Nazis . Among them was the Jewish Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal . Wiesenthal learned from a letter shown to him in 1953 that Eichmann had been seen in Buenos Aires , and he passed along that information to the Israeli consulate in Vienna in 1954 . When Eichmann 's father died in 1960 , Wiesenthal made arrangements for private detectives to surreptitiously photograph members of the family , as Eichmann 's brother Otto was said to bear a strong family resemblance and there were no current photos of the fugitive . He provided these photographs to Mossad agents on 18 February .

Also instrumental in exposing Eichmann 's identity was Lothar Hermann , a German half @-@ Jew who had emigrated to Argentina in 1938 . When in 1956 Hermann 's daughter Sylvia began dating a man named Klaus Eichmann who boasted about his father 's Nazi exploits , Hermann alerted Fritz Bauer , prosecutor @-@ general of the state of Hesse in West Germany . Sylvia , sent on a fact @-@ finding mission , was met at the door by Eichmann himself , who said he was Klaus 's uncle . Informed that Klaus was not home , she sat down to wait . When Klaus returned , he addressed Eichmann as ' Father ' . In 1957 Bauer passed along the information in person to Mossad director Isser Harel , who assigned operatives to undertake surveillance , but no concrete evidence was initially found . On 1 March 1960 Harel dispatched to Buenos Aires the Shin Bet chief interrogator Zvi Aharoni , who over the course of weeks of investigation was able to confirm the identity of the fugitive . As Argentina had a history of turning down extradition requests for Nazi criminals , Israeli Prime Minister David Ben @-@ Gurion made the decision that Eichmann should be captured rather than extradited , and brought to Israel for trial . Harel himself arrived in person in May 1960 to oversee the capture . Mossad operative Rafi Eitan was named leader of the eight @-@ man team , most of whom were Shin Bet agents .

The team captured Eichmann near his home on Garibaldi Street in San Fernando , Buenos Aires , an industrial community 20 kilometres ( 12 mi ) north of the centre of Buenos Aires on 11 May 1960 . The agents had arrived in Buenos Aires in April 1960 after Eichmann 's identity was confirmed . After observing the suspect 's routine for many days , they determined that he arrived home by bus

from work at around the same time every evening . They planned to seize him when he was walking beside an open field from the bus stop to his house . The plan was almost abandoned on the designated day when Eichmann was not present on the bus he usually took home . Finally , almost half an hour late , Eichmann got off a bus . Mossad agent Peter Malkin engaged him , asking him in Spanish if he had a moment . Frightened , Eichmann attempted to leave , but two more Mossad men came to Malkin 's aid ; the three wrestled Eichmann to the ground and , after a struggle , conducted him to a car where they hid him on the floor under a blanket .

Eichmann was taken to one of several Mossad safe houses that had been set up by the team . He was held there for nine days , during which time his identity was double @-@ checked and confirmed . During these days , Harel tried to locate Josef Mengele , the notorious Nazi doctor from Auschwitz concentration camp , as the Mossad had information that he was also living in Buenos Aires . He was hoping to bring Mengele back to Israel on the same flight . Mengele had already left his last known residence in the city , and Harel was unable to get any leads on where he had gone , so the plans for his capture had to be abandoned .

Near midnight on 20 May , Eichmann was sedated by an Israeli doctor on the Mossad team and dressed as a flight attendant . He was smuggled out of Argentina aboard the same El Al Bristol Britannia aircraft that had a few days earlier carried Israel 's delegation to the official 150th anniversary celebration of Argentina 's independence from Spain . After a tense delay at the airport getting the flight plan approved , the plane took off for Israel , stopping over in Dakar , Senegal , to refuel . They arrived in Israel on 22 May , and Ben @-@ Gurion announced Eichmann 's capture to the Knesset ? Israel 's parliament ? the following afternoon . In Argentina , the abduction was met with a violent wave of antisemitism carried out by far @-@ right sectors , including the Tacuara Nationalist Movement .

In June 1960 , after unsuccessful negotiations with Israel , Argentina requested an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council to protest , as they regarded the capture as a violation of their sovereign rights . In the ensuing debate , the Israeli representative Golda Meir claimed that the abductors were not Israeli agents but private individuals and so the incident was only an " isolated violation of Argentine law " . On 23 June the Council passed Resolution 138 , which agreed that Argentine sovereignty had been violated and requested that Israel should make reparations . After further negotiations , on 3 August , Israel and Argentina issued a joint statement admitting the violation of Argentinian sovereignty but agreeing to end the dispute . In Eichmann 's trial and subsequent appeal , the Israeli court determined that the circumstances of his capture had no bearing on the legality of his trial .

Central Intelligence Agency ( CIA ) documents declassified in 2006 show that the capture of Eichmann caused alarm at the CIA and West German Bundesnachrichtendienst ( BND ) . Both organizations had known for at least two years where Eichmann was hiding , but did not act , because it did not serve their interests in the Cold War to do so . Both were concerned about what Eichmann might say in his testimony about West German national security advisor Hans Globke , who had coauthored several antisemitic Nazi laws ( including the Nuremberg Laws ) . The documents also revealed that both agencies had used some of Eichmann 's former Nazi colleagues to spy on European communist countries .

= = Trial = =

Eichmann was taken to a fortified police station at Yagur in Israel , where he spent nine months . The Israelis were unwilling to take him to trial based solely on the evidence in documents and witness testimony , so the prisoner was subject to daily interrogations , the transcripts of which totalled over 3 @,@ 500 pages . The interrogator was Chief Inspector Avner Less of the national police . Using documents provided primarily by Yad Vashem and Nazi hunter Tuvia Friedman , Less was often able to determine when Eichmann was lying or being evasive . When additional information was brought forward that forced Eichmann into admitting what he had done , Eichmann would insist he had not had any authority in the Nazi hierarchy and had only been following orders . Inspector Less noted that Eichmann did not seem to realise the enormity of his crimes and showed

no remorse . His pardon plea , released in 2016 , did not contradict this : " There is a need to draw a line between the leaders responsible and the people like me forced to serve as mere instruments in the hands of the leaders " , Eichmann wrote . " I was not a responsible leader , and as such do not feel myself guilty . "

Eichmann 's trial before the Jerusalem District Court began on 11 April 1961 . The legal basis of the charges against Eichmann was the 1950 Nazi and Nazi Collaborators ( Punishment ) Law , under which he was indicted on 15 criminal charges , including crimes against humanity , war crimes , crimes against the Jewish people , and membership in a criminal organisation . The trial was presided over by three judges : Moshe Landau , Benjamin Halevy and Yitzhak Raveh . The chief prosecutor was Israeli Attorney General Gideon Hausner , assisted by Gabriel Bach of the Department of Justice and Tel Aviv District Attorney Yaakov Bar @-@ Or . The defence team consisted of German lawyer Robert Servatius , legal assistant Dieter Wechtenbruch , and Eichmann himself .

The Israeli government arranged for the trial to have prominent media coverage . Capital Cities Broadcasting Corporation of the United States obtained exclusive rights to videotape the proceedings for television broadcast . Many major newspapers from all over the globe sent reporters and published front @-@ page coverage of the story . The trial was held at the Beit Ha 'am ( today known as the Gerard Behar Center ) , an auditorium in central Jerusalem . Eichmann sat inside a bulletproof glass booth to protect him from assassination attempts . The building was modified to allow journalists to watch the trial on closed @-@ circuit television , and 750 seats were available in the auditorium itself . Israelis had the opportunity to watch live television broadcasts of the proceedings , and videotape was flown daily to the United States for broadcast the following day .

The prosecution case was presented over the course of 56 days , involving hundreds of documents and 112 witnesses ( many of them Holocaust survivors ) . Hausner 's intention was to not only demonstrate Eichmann 's guilt but to present material about the entire Holocaust , thus producing a comprehensive record . Hausner 's opening address began , " It is not an individual that is in the dock at this historic trial and not the Nazi regime alone , but anti @-@ Semitism throughout history . " Defence attorney Servatius repeatedly tried to curb the presentation of material not directly related to Eichmann , and was mostly successful . In addition to wartime documents , material presented as evidence included tapes and transcripts from Eichmann 's interrogation and Sassen 's interviews in Argentina . In the case of the Sassen interviews , only Eichmann 's hand @-@ written notes were admitted into evidence .

Some of the evidence submitted by the prosecution took the form of depositions made by leading Nazis . The defence demanded that the men should be brought to Israel so that the defence 's right to cross @-@ examination would not be abrogated . But Hausner , in his role as Attorney General , declared that he would be obliged to arrest any war criminals who entered Israel . The prosecution proved that Eichmann had visited places where exterminations had taken place , including Chełmno extermination camp , Auschwitz , and Minsk ( where he witnessed a mass shooting of Jews ) , and therefore was aware that the deportees were being killed .

When the prosecution rested , the defence opened its case with a motion to dismiss based on the trial itself being illegal . Servatius challenged Eichmann 's kidnapping and the basis for the Israeli law under which he had been indicted . He argued that if the trial were to continue , it should transfer its jurisdiction to West Germany . The prosecution countered by stating that the United Nations had endorsed Israel 's actions , and that both West Germany and Argentina had agreed that the charges against him were legitimate . The defence motion was subsequently dismissed .

The defence next engaged in a lengthy direct examination of Eichmann . Observers such as Moshe Pearlman and Hannah Arendt have remarked on Eichmann 's ordinariness in appearance and flat affect . In his testimony throughout the trial , Eichmann insisted he had no choice but to follow orders , as he was bound by an oath of loyalty to the same superior orders defence used by some defendants in the 1945 ? 1946 Nuremberg trials . Eichmann asserted that the decisions had been made not by him , but by Müller , Heydrich , Himmler , and ultimately Hitler . Servatius also proposed that decisions of the Nazi government were acts of state and therefore not subject to normal judicial proceedings . Regarding the Wannsee Conference , Eichmann stated that he felt a



sense of satisfaction and relief at its conclusion . As a clear decision to exterminate had been made by his superiors , the matter was out of his hands ; he felt absolved of any guilt . On the last day of the examination , he stated that he was guilty of arranging the transports , but he did not feel guilty for the consequences .

Throughout his cross @-@ examination , prosecutor Hausner attempted to get Eichmann to admit he was personally guilty , but no such confession was forthcoming . Eichmann admitted to not liking the Jews and viewing them as adversaries , but stated that he never thought their annihilation was justified . When Hausner produced evidence that Eichmann had stated in 1945 that " I will leap into my grave laughing because the feeling that I have five million human beings on my conscience is for me a source of extraordinary satisfaction " , Eichmann said he meant " enemies of the Reich " such as the Soviets . During later examination by the judges , he admitted he meant the Jews , and said the remark was an accurate reflection of his opinion at the time .

The trial adjourned on 14 August , and the verdict was read on 12 December . The judges declared him not guilty of personally killing anyone and not guilty of overseeing and controlling the activities of the Einsatzgruppen . He was deemed responsible for the dreadful conditions on board the deportation trains and for obtaining Jews to fill those trains . He was found guilty of crimes against humanity , war crimes , and crimes against Poles , Slovenes and Gypsies . He was also found guilty of membership in three organisations that had been deemed criminal at the Nuremberg trials : the Gestapo , the SD , and the SS . When considering the sentence , the judges concluded that Eichmann had not merely been following orders , but believed in the Nazi cause wholeheartedly and had been a key perpetrator of the genocide . On 15 December 1961 , Eichmann was sentenced to death .

= = = Appeals and execution = = =

Servatius appealed the verdict , mostly relying on legal arguments about Israel 's jurisdiction and the legality of the laws under which Eichmann was charged . Appeal hearings took place between 22 and 29 March 1962 . Eichmann 's wife Vera flew to Israel and saw him for the last time at the end of April . On 29 May , the Israeli Supreme Court rejected the appeal and upheld the District Court 's judgement on all counts . Eichmann immediately petitioned Israeli President Yitzhak Ben @-@ Zvi for clemency . The content of his letter to the President pleading for pardon and other original court documents of the trial were made public on 27 January 2016 . Prominent people such as Hugo Bergmann , Pearl Buck , Martin Buber , and Ernst Simon spoke up on his behalf . Ben @-@ Gurion called a special cabinet meeting to resolve the issue . The cabinet decided not to recommend to President Ben @-@ Zvi to grant clemency to Eichmann . As a result , Ben @-@ Zvi rejected the appeal to commute Eichmann 's sentence . At 8 : 00 PM on 31 May , Eichmann was informed that his final appeal had been declined . His last meal was the usual prison fare of cheese , bread , olives , and tea , along with a half bottle of wine .

Eichmann was hanged at a prison in Ramla hours later ? the hanging , scheduled for midnight at the end of 31 May , was slightly delayed and thus took place a few minutes into 1 June 1962 . The execution was attended by a small group of officials , four journalists and the Canadian clergyman William Lovell Hull , who had been his spiritual counselor while in prison . His last words were :

Long live Germany . Long live Argentina . Long live Austria . These are the three countries with which I have been most connected and which I will not forget . I greet my wife , my family and my friends . I am ready . We 'll meet again soon , as is the fate of all men . I die believing in God .

Within hours Eichmann 's body had been cremated , and his ashes scattered in the Mediterranean Sea , outside of Israeli territorial waters by an Israeli Navy patrol boat .

= = = Impact = = =

The trial and the surrounding media coverage sparked renewed interest in wartime events , and the resulting increase in publication of memoirs and scholarly works helped raise public awareness of the Holocaust . The trial received widespread coverage by the press in West Germany , and many

schools added material studying the issues to their curriculum . In Israel , the testimony of witnesses at the trial led to a deeper understanding of the impact of the Holocaust on survivors , especially among younger citizens who had never suffered state @-@ sponsored oppression .

Political theorist Hannah Arendt , a Jew who fled Germany after Hitler 's rise to power , reported on Eichmann 's trial for The New Yorker . In Eichmann in Jerusalem , Arendt calls Eichmann the embodiment of the " banality of evil " , as he appeared to have an ordinary and normal personality , displaying neither guilt nor hatred . In his 1988 book Justice , Not Vengeance , Wiesenthal said : " The world now understands the concept of ' desk murderer ' . We know that one doesn 't need to be fanatical , sadistic , or mentally ill to murder millions ; that it is enough to be a loyal follower eager to do one 's duty . " In her 2011 book Eichmann Before Jerusalem , based largely on the Sassen interviews and Eichmann 's notes made while in exile , Bettina Stangneth posits that Eichmann was proud of his wartime accomplishments , remained a committed Nazi throughout his life , and intentionally built a persona as a faceless bureaucrat for presentation at the trial .

Eichmann 's youngest son Ricardo says he is not resentful toward Israel for executing his father . He does not agree that his father 's " following orders " argument excuses his actions and notes how his father 's lack of remorse caused " difficult emotions " for the Eichmann family . Ricardo is now a professor of archaeology at the German Archaeological Institute .

In 2015 the filming of the trial by producer Milton Fruchtmann and blacklisted TV director Leo Hurwitz was the subject of the UK television film The Eichmann Show , featuring Martin Freeman and Anthony LaPaglia . The film intercuts dramatic scenes with historical footage from the trial .

= = Summary of SS career = =

SS number : 45 @,@ 326

Nazi Party number : 899 @,@ 895

Primary positions : Sub @-@ Department IV @-@ B4 ( Gestapo ) , RSHA

Waffen @-@ SS service : SS @-@ Untersturmführer der Reserve ( 9 November 1944 )

= = = Links related to the trial = = =

The Trial of Adolf Eichmann : Record of Proceedings

The Eichmann Trial on YouTube

" With Me Are Six Million Accusers " an online site marking the 50th anniversary of the Eichmann Trial

" The Eichmann Trial : 50 Years After " : selected documents from the Israel State Archives

" Eichmann Prosecutor Interview : A Conversation with Justice Gabriel Bach , Senior Prosecutor in the Adolf Eichmann Trial " by Frank Tuerkheimer , Professor at the University of Wisconsin Law School

" Adolf Eichmann in Israel : Portraits of a Nazi War Criminal " , life.time.com