

= Joseph Berchtold =

Joseph Berchtold (6 March 1897 ? 23 August 1962) was an early senior Nazi Party member and a co @-@ founder of both the Sturmabteilung (SA) and Schutzstaffel (SS) .

Berchtold served in World War I and upon Germany 's defeat joined the German Workers ' Party (DAP) a small right @-@ wing extremist organization at the time . He remained in the party after it became known as the National Socialist German Workers ' Party (Nazi Party ; NSDAP) and went on to become the second commander of the Schutzstaffel (SS) from April 1926 to March 1927 .

After resigning as the SS leader , Berchtold spent much of his time writing for Nazi magazines and journals . He survived the war , but was arrested by the Allies . Berchtold was later released and died on 23 August 1962 . He was the last surviving person to hold the rank of Reichsführer @-@ SS and the only one to survive under it during the Second World War .

= = Early life = =

Born on 6 March 1897 in Ingolstadt , Berchtold attended school in Munich from 1903 to 1915 . He went on to serve in the Royal Bavarian Army during World War I (1914 @-@ 18) and held the rank of second lieutenant at the wars end . After the war , he studied economics at the University of Munich and gained employment as a journalist . In early 1920 , he joined the small right @-@ wing extremist group the German Workers ' Party (DAP) . He remained in the party after it became known as the National Socialist German Workers ' Party (Nazi Party ; NSDAP) . Berchtold became the treasurer of the Nazi Party , until he resigned at the end of July , 1921 .

= = SA Career = =

Upon re @-@ joining the party in 1922 , Berchtold became a member of the Sturmabteilung (" Storm Detachment " ; SA) , a paramilitary wing formed to protect its speakers at rallies , and to police Nazi meetings . Adolf Hitler , leader of the party since 1921 , ordered the formation of a small separate bodyguard dedicated to his protection only instead of a suspected mass of the party in 1923 . Originally the unit was composed of only eight men , commanded by Julius Schreck and Berchtold . It was designated the Stabswache (" Staff Guard ") . Later that year , the unit was renamed Stoßtrupp @-@ Hitler (" Shock Troop @-@ Hitler ") .

On 9 November 1923 the Stoßtrupp , along with the SA and several other paramilitary units , took part in what would become known as the Beer Hall Putsch . The plan was to take control of Munich and then seize total power in Berlin . The coup d 'état failed and resulted in the death of 16 Nazi supporters and 4 police officers . In the aftermath of the putsch both Hitler and other Nazi leaders were incarcerated at Landsberg Prison . The Nazi Party and all associated formations , including the Stoßtrupp , were officially disbanded . Berchtold then left Germany and fled to Tirol , Austria . Berchtold was tried in absentia before the special People 's Court in Munich in 1924 for his role in the Beer Hall Putsch and sentenced to a prison term . During his time in Austria , Berchtold continued to be involved with Nazi Party activities , even though it was illegal .

When Hitler was released from prison on 20 December 1924 , Berchtold was District Director of the Nazi Party in Carinthia , Austria and was leader of the SA there . After the re @-@ formation of the Nazi Party on 20 February 1925 , he again joined the party , documented as member # 964 . In March 1926 , Berchtold returned to Munich from Austria . He became chief of the SA in Munich .

= = SS Career = =

On 15 April 1926 , Berchtold became the successor to Schreck as chief of the Schutzstaffel (" Protection Squadron " ; SS) , a special elite branch of the party under the control of the SA . Berchtold changed the title of the office position which became known as the Reichsführer @-@ SS . He issued new rules to establish the position of the SS . The rules stated the unit was " ... neither a military organisation nor a group of hangers @-@ on , but a small squad of men that our movement

and our Führer can rely on . " He further stressed that the men must follow " only party discipline " . He was considered to be more dynamic than his predecessor , but was still unable to keep the party organizers at bay . He was frustrated in his efforts to have a more independent unit and became disillusioned by the SA 's authority over the SS . On 1 March 1927 , he handed over leadership of the SS to his deputy Erhard Heiden .

= = After the SS = =

In 1927 , he became a lead writer for Völkischer Beobachter , the Nazi Party newspaper . From 1928 to 1945 , Berchtold was a SA leader on the staff of the Supreme SA leadership (OSAF) . In 1934 , he became the permanent deputy editor @-@ in @-@ chief of the Völkischer Beobachter newspaper . In the following years , he operated primarily as a journalist and propagandist . In 1928 , Berchtold founded the newspaper SA @-@ Mann (" SA Man ") . Until January 1938 , he was the main writer of the paper , which was published by the OSAF . Berchtold was also the author of various Nazi publications and staff of additional magazines .

Additional posts in Nazi Germany were of secondary importance to Berchtold . From March 1934 to the end of the war , Berchtold was city councilman of the town councilor in Munich . On 15 November 1935 , Berchtold was appointed to the Reich Culture Senator . Furthermore , he belonged to the " Cultural Circle of the SA " since 6 March 1936 . He belonged to the Reichstag from 29 March 1936 , forward . From 29 April 1940 , Berchtold served as a captain of the reserve on a temporary basis in the Wehrmacht .

= = Post @-@ war = =

After World War II in Europe ended in early May 1945 , Berchtold was temporarily in Allied detention . He was released and later died on 23 August 1962 .

= = SA promotions = =

= = Awards and decorations = =

Iron Cross (1914) 2nd Class

The Honour Cross of the World War 1914 / 1918

Blood Order

Honour Chevron for the Old Guard

Golden Party Badge

Nazi Party Long Service Award (bronze , silver , gold)