

Rasch, Emil Otto

(1891-1948)

Commander of *Einsatzgruppe C*, a mobile killing unit that helped carry out the mass extermination of hundreds of thousands of Jews and other Soviet civilians and prisoners of war after Germany invaded the Soviet Union in mid-1941.

Rasch joined the Nazi Party in 1931 and the SS in 1933. When the Nazis rose to national power, Rasch was made mayor of Radeberg and then of Wittenberg. For the next few years he moved up the Nazi hierarchy, holding posts in the Reich Security Main Office, the State Police, the Security Police, and the Security Service (SD).

In May 1941 Rasch was named commander of *Einsatzgruppe C*, which was attached to Army Group South and covered the northern and central Ukraine. Rasch and his unit were responsible for many *aktionen*, in which tens of thousands of Jews were massacred. The most notorious *aktion* carried out by Rasch's *Einsatzgruppe* was in Babi Yar, where over 33,000 Jews were killed in two days of shooting.

In September 1941 Rasch was ordered to return to Berlin. After the war, he was arrested and tried in the *Einsatzgruppen* case at the Nuremberg trials. He died before the case ended.