



17 DPA SERIES: THE NAZI HOLOCAUST - SERIES II — Reich Commissar for the Consolidation of German Nation-hood Heinrich Himmler was commander of the SS (Schutzstaffel; Elite Guard) and the Gestapo (Geheime Staatspolizei; Secret State Police). He was also the supreme commander of the Nazi death camps. Himmler was responsible for eliminating the "racial degenerates" who stood in the way of Germany's rise to power. His feelings for the victims of his murder machine were expressed in a speech he made to SS leaders in Poznan, Poland on October 4, 1943: "We shall never be rough or heartless where it is not necessary; that is clear. We Germans, who are the only people in the world who have a decent attitude to animals, will also adopt a decent attitude to these human animals, but it is a crime against our own blood to worry about them and to bring them ideals . . . Most of you know what it means to see a hundred corpses lying together, five hundred, or a thousand. To have gone through this and yet have remained decent, this has made us hard." In the above photo aid, Himmler (right) and Von Ribbentrop chat during a Nazi rally.

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