

Otto Wächter, Dr., Freiherr von (1901-1949)



Doctor of laws, District Governor Galicia

1923: SA; 1930: NSDAP; 1935: SS

1931: Gauamtsleiter, party lawyer

1934: commands the attack in the assassination of the Austrian chancellor Dollfuß

1938: as state commissioner he "cleans up" the Austrian civil service apparatus

1939: Governor of Krakow District; in 1941 declares a radical solution to the Jewish question inevitable

1942: Governor District Galicia; he rejects Himmler's offer for a position in Vienna, because he wants to finish the murder of the Jews in Galicia

1944: Head of Military Administration in Italy

1945: Faked death. Under the alias Alfredo Reinhardt shelter with Bishop Alois Hudal in Rome. Died there in 1949

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When Governor Hans Frank, in an infamous speech on 16 December 1941, announced the murder of the Jews in the Generalgouvernement, Wachter fully agreed with him:

"Any action conducive to the widespread elimination of Judaism must be taken at all costs. He had taken appropriate measures within the scope of the district and in cooperation with the SS and police leader, but such measures could only help locally, but could not solve the problem decisively."

In the ongoing conflict between his promoter, General Governor Hans Frank, and the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) F.-W. Krüger, Wächter is also in the line of fire. He then cowardly complains about Frank's "fruitless fight against SS and police". Himmler then wrote him on 18 January 1943:

"At the end of 1942, I would like to confirm one thing: Galicia has remained peaceful and in perfect order. That is your great merit and is not least due to your harmonious work with the capable Katzmann and ... to the true cooperation of the administration with the SS and the police in your district."

Sources: Klee, Personenlexikon; Musial, Zivilverwaltung; Sandkühler, „Endlösung“; Pohl, Ostgalizien