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# Unraveling the Truth: The Wannsee Conference and Holocaust Denial

By: Howie Parkes Advisor: Christoph Schiessl, Ph.D.



The house of the Wannsee conference; currently a museum

## Conspiracy (2001)

*Conspiracy*, directed by Frank Pierson, portrays the Wannsee Conference. The movie starkly portrays the officials' indifference to human life and bureaucratic approach to mass murder. The performances by the cast were widely praised for their chilling authenticity, and the movie is an important contribution to the representation and historical memory of the Holocaust.



Left: Adolf Eichmann

Right: Reinhard Heydrich

## What was the The Wannsee Conference?

The Wannsee Conference was a meeting of senior Nazi officials in January 1942, where they planned the Final Solution, the extermination of Europe's Jews.

The officials discussed the logistics of transporting Jews to concentration camps and killing centers, and how to manage the deportation and extermination process. This conference was a pivotal moment in the Holocaust, as it marked the point at which the Nazi regime made the decision to implement the systematic genocide of European Jews on an industrial scale.

## Role in Holocaust Denial

Holocaust deniers use the Wannsee Conference to argue that it did not discuss the extermination of Jews, that the number of Jewish deaths during the Holocaust was exaggerated, or that the conference itself never took place.



Scene from the film of Reinhard Heydrich

## Post WWII Impact

The conference transcript revealed the extensive collaboration between various Nazi agencies and departments in the implementation of the Final Solution. Additionally, it served as a critical piece of evidence during the Nuremberg Trials and other post-war trials of Nazi war criminals. It helped to establish the defendants' knowledge of, and participation in the extermination of the Jews, leading to the conviction of many high-ranking Nazi officials.

## Findings

Deniers point to the Wannsee protocol as evidence that no explicit plan from the Nazis to exterminate all the Jews in Europe existed. The movie highlights this key issue by focusing on the conversations and precise use of language and innuendos.

"He [Dr. Bühler] had only one request, to solve the Jewish question in this area as quickly as possible."

"In conclusion, the different types of possible solutions were discussed..."

## Works Cited

Pierson, Frank R., Director. *Conspiracy*. 2001.

*Wannsee-Konferenz (1942 : Berlin, Germany). The Wannsee Protocol and a 1944 Report on Auschwitz by the Office of Strategic Services. New York: Garland Pub., 1982.*