

PRESS RELEASE

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Generaloberst Erich Hoepner

Panzer Commander and Anti-Hitler Plotter

Author: Philip Kay-Bujak

Highlights

- **First new biography of Hoepner for nearly half a century**
- **Hoepner was a leading panzer commander and practitioner of blitzkrieg, commanding with distinction in the invasion of Czechoslovakia and France, notably at Dunkirk, and at Leningrad and the advance to Moscow**
- **Interesting case study of the conflicted attitudes of Heer officers; he opposed SS atrocities in France but supported the policy of annihilation and the war on so-called Jewish Bolshevism in Russia, cooperating with Einsatzgruppen death squads.**
- **Sacked and disgraced by Hitler for a strategic withdrawal on his own initiative, he plotted against Hitler for a second time (he had been involved in a 1938 conspiracy)**
- **Arrested after the 20 July assassination attempt he was executed and his family executed or sent to concentration camps.**

Erich Hoepner was a talented officer during World War One and a leading panzer commander during World War Two. Rising through the traditional Prussian roots of the Imperial Army and indoctrinated by loyalty, he became a committed supporter of Guderian's new tank strategy of the 1920s and 30's. By 1939 he was a corps commander, spearheaded the invasion of Czechoslovakia and played leading roles in the battles of Poland and France. At Dunkirk he protested against atrocities by the SS-Division Totenkopf, calling their commander, Theodor Eicke, 'a butcher'.

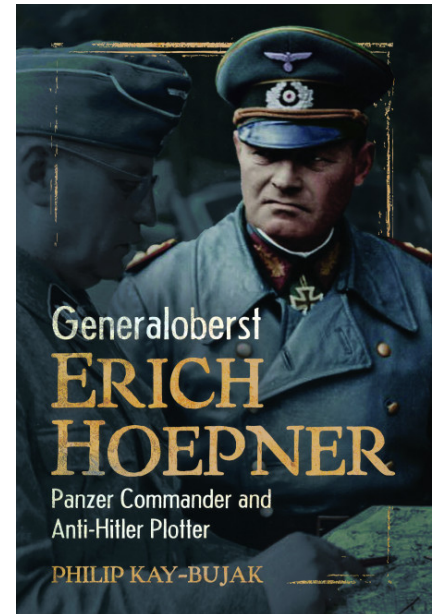
In February 1941, Hoepner commanded 4th Panzer Group in Barbarossa and played a leading role in the early victories of 1941. An advocate of the war against Jewish Bolshevism, Hoepner supported the Commissar Order issued by OKW. Fighting throughout the Leningrad campaign, Hoepner became conflicted by the military decisions taken by Adolf Hitler which robbed the High Command of its ability to act independently. Kay-Bujak continues his search to examine how these conflicts of conscience affected senior officers of the Wehrmacht.

In the crucial Battle of Moscow, Hoepner clashed with both von Kluge and Hitler and was dismissed from his post. Despite his personal battle with loyalty and conscience, between 1942 and 1944, Hoepner became part of the military resistance against Hitler. He was arrested after Stauffenberg's failed assassination attempt and was given a public trial. Brutally hanged on 8 August 1944, and his family sent to concentration camps, Hoepner stands out both as one of the most talented and loyal servants of the German military and one of the most ruthlessly treated by Adolf Hitler.

About the Author

After graduating in European History from The University of East Anglia, Philip Kay-Bujak spent ten years in the Royal Anglian Regiment as a TA officer and twenty-three years teaching history and classics in the independent sector. He was a Housemaster at Langley School, Norfolk and Headmaster of Stover School in Devon. An Associate of The Royal Historical Society, he is now retired and is a full-time writer. His previous works include *Undeclared* (2008), *The Bravest Man in The British Army* (2018), *The Life of Cicero* (2023), *The Roman Province of Gallia Narbonensis* (2024) *Empire Javelin, D-Day Assault Ship* (2024) and *Hermann Balck: Hitler's Forgotten General* (2025) He lives in East Sussex.

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