

Pavelic, Ante

(1889-1959), Leader of the fascist puppet state in Croatia from 1941-1945. Pavelic began his political career as a member of the Croatian Justice Party. In 1929 he was elected to the Yugoslav government. However, when King Alexander instituted a dictatorship in Yugoslavia that same year, Pavelic escaped to Italy, where he founded an underground nationalist organization called *Ustasa*. *Ustasa's* goal was to achieve Croatia's independence from Yugoslavia. Pavelic directed the terrorist activities of his followers in Croatia from Italy. He modeled *Ustasa* on the Italian Fascist movement, and when Adolf Hitler rose to power in Germany in 1933, Pavelic added antisemitism to *Ustasa's* platform.

Yugoslavia was conquered by Germany in 1941. The regions of Croatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina were united into the Independent State of Croatia. Pavelic was appointed *poglavnik*, or leader, of Croatia's government. Pavelic set up a fiercely cruel regime: hundreds of thousands of Serbs and tens of thousands of Jews were murdered in death camps and in other awful ways such as being thrown off cliffs or burned alive in their homes.

After the war, Pavelic escaped to Argentina, where he continued to advocate Croatian independence. In 1957 he was hurt in an assassination attempt, and died two years later from his injuries.