

## Tiso, Jozef

(1887--1947), Slovak politician and Catholic priest who ran Slovakia from 1939 to 1945. After Czechoslovakia became independent in 1918, Tiso began calling for an independent Slovakia under an authoritarian, Catholic government. In 1925 he was elected to Czechoslovakia's parliament and in 1927 was named Minister of Health. However, his ideology was so radical that he was dismissed from his post.

Tiso was a member of the Slovak People's Party, run by Andrej Hlinka. After Hlinka's death in 1938, Tiso became the party's leader. A few weeks later, the Munich Conference took place, in which Western leaders allowed Hitler to occupy parts of Czechoslovakia. Subsequently, Slovakia was awarded autonomy, and Tiso became its president.

In March 1939 Tiso declared Slovakia an independent country and made it a satellite of the Nazi regime. Even after the Slovak National Uprising in 1944, in which thousands of Slovaks rebelled against the Nazis, Tiso stayed loyal to Hitler and his murderous activities. He had the ability to exempt people from deportations, but he only used this to help some 1,100 wealthy Jews or Jews-turned-Catholics.

In April 1945 Tiso escaped to Austria. He was caught and sent back to Czechoslovakia, where he was tried and executed.