

## Ustasa

("insurgent," in plural *ustase*), Croatian nationalist, fascist, terrorist movement created in 1930. *Ustasa* was led by Ante Pavelic.

The *Ustasa* opposed Yugoslavia as a national entity, which was ruled by a Serb royal family, as *Ustasa* members fiercely hated Serbs. They also hated Jews, Communists, and non-Catholics. Until 1941, Fascist Italy acted as the group's political sponsor. In the mid-1930s the *Ustasa* began to woo Nazi Germany by adopting various aspects of Nazi ideology, including its anti-Jewish sentiments. When World War II broke out, the *Ustasa* began hating Jews as much as they hated Serbs. However, the Germans ignored the *Ustasa* until their invasion of Yugoslavia in April 1941.

At that point, the Nazis created a Croatian satellite state, and allowed the *Ustasa* to run a puppet government with Pavelic at its head. During their four years in power, the *Ustasa* carried out a Serb genocide, exterminating over 500,000, expelling 250,000, and forcing another 250,000 to convert to Catholicism. The *Ustasa* also killed most of Croatia's Jews, 20,000 Gypsies, and many thousands of their political enemies.

The *Ustasa* government was dissolved in May 1945. After the war, most of the *Ustasa* leaders escaped to South America and Spain.