

# **CROAT ACCUSED OF WAR CRIMES IS ORDERED DEPORTED**

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## **Body**

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A Department of Justice official said today that the Government would move quickly to deport a person who as Interior Minister of the Nazi German puppet state of Croatia in World War II purportedly ordered the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people.

An order of the Board of Immigration Appeals overturned a stay of deportation granted to the former Croatian official, Andrija Artukovic, in 1959 on the ground that he would be subject to "political persecution" if returned to Yugoslavia. Mr. Artukovic, 81 years old, lives in southern California and has successfully resisted deportation and extradition for 30 years.

Allan A. Ryan, Jr., the director of the Office of Special Investigations of the Justice Department, said that the Immigration and Naturalization Service, in a letter delivered today, had directed Mr. Artukovic to report to its regional office in Los Angeles by next Wednesday to be handed a deportation order.

He could legally be deported within 72 hours of his appearance at the regional office, but he may file a petition requesting a review of the order by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Judicial Circuit, which includes California. Such a petition would automatically stay the deportation order.

US Government plans to deport Andrija Artukovic for war crimes committed in Croatia during World War II

Mr. Ryan expressed the opinion that Mr. Artukovic would have "only very narrow legal grounds" for an appeal. A 1953 decision by the immigration board determined that Mr. Artukovic "was a leading Nazi criminal during the Second World War" and a 1978 law says that Nazi war criminals cannot claim deportation stays on the ground that they would be subject to persecution.

A spokesman for the Yugoslav Embassy said today his Government regarded Mr. Artukovic as a "war criminal" and he would be tried if deported.

Justice Department officials said the action in the Artukovic case had nothing to do with the indictment last month of a group of eight Croatian nationalists. Mr. Artukovic, who came to the United States in 1948 under a false name and with an Irish passport, was a leading figure in the Ustashi movement, which has long been struggling for the independence of Croatia from Yugoslavia.

When Hitler dismembered Yugoslavia in 1941, Ante Pavelic, the Ustashi leader, formed a Croatian state under German tutelage and made Mr. Artukovic the Interior Minister.

Croatia proclaimed a policy of persecution against various ethnic groups, mainly Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. Journalistic and historical accounts say that more than 300,000 people, including 30,000 Jews, were executed.

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The 1953 decision of the Board of Immigration Appeals, which was in effect affirmed today, said: "There appears to be little doubt that the new Croatian state, at least on paper, pursued a genocidal policy in Croatia with regard to Jews and Serbs; that Artukovic helped execute this policy in that, as Minister of Interior, he had authority and control over the entire system of public security and internal administration."

A witness at the 1961 trial in Israel of Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi who oversaw the German effort to exterminate European Jews, testified that Mr. Artukovic was "recognized by the Nazis as a leader in the anti-Jewish pogroms."

Mr. Pavelic and Mr. Artukovic vanished when the Croatian state collapsed at the end of World War II in 1945. Mr. Pavelic reached Argentina, where he was wounded in an apparent assassination attempt in 1957. He disappeared again when Argentina agreed later that year to consider a Yugoslav extradition request and he was reported to have gone to Paraguay. Subsequently he moved to Madrid, where he died in December 1959 at the age of 70.

Mr. Artukovic worked, until retirement, as a bookkeeper and resides in Surfside, Calif., south of Long Beach.

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