

and political events for centuries, started World War I to realize their raw imperialistic concept of "Greater Serbia"—a country formed from Serbia and all the neighboring countries, where Serbians should be the sovereign rulers and all the others just the slaves. In the spirit of such a political concept, they ruled that kingdom as their colony from the beginning until the last day of its existence. Croatian and Slovenian goods were plundered, the economy destroyed, and over 80,000 Croats died as direct victims of the Serbian dictatorship. Independent movements in Croatia and other oppressed parts of Yugoslavia grew stronger, and finally they destroyed that odious kingdom in 1941.

Unfortunately it was the time of the Second World War and Germany had full control over Europe. Slovenia became a German protectorate, Croats established the Independent State of Croatia which was under German control (like almost all European countries, including France), and Serbia, as the only country from the former Yugoslavia, formed its Nazi Party—ruled by Milan Nedic—and was a Nazi puppet state. It is an interesting detail that the Serbian capital, Belgrade, was proclaimed the first European city "free of Jews." Only 200 out of 25,000 Belgrade Jews survived World War II.

For Croats, that war was a cruel civil war, where three factions were fighting among each other. Serbian royalist bands, known as Chetniks, were fighting on the Croatian territory against Croats, to reestablish Yugoslavia as Greater Serbia and to destroy as many Catholic and Muslim lives as possible. Their bestial crimes are still remembered, especially in eastern Bosnia. Tito's partisans, controlled by Moscow, were fighting against Chetniks and Ustashi to reestablish Yugoslavia as a Bolshevik country. Civilians were killed by all of them. When Churchill decided to support Tito and his partisans, who were useful against Germany, that faction was chosen to be the postwar ruler, and a second Yugoslavia was born. Interestingly, over 50% of Tito's soldiers were Croats who believed that they were fighting against Nazism and for western democracy. But they all were wrong.

The second Yugoslavia was a communist dictatorship, ruled by Tito and Serbian generals who took power in the postwar Yugoslav army. In that severe war over 1 million Croats died (about 400,000 were massacred at the Austrian border when Britain purposely returned 150,000 Croatian soldiers and over 200,000 civilians to Tito's murder squads a week after the war was over).

Croats were betrayed again. Freedom was lost and the Serbians who infiltrated the Communist Party started plundering Croatia once more. Hundreds of thousands of Croats left their homeland, hundreds of thousands became political prisoners, thousands were killed as "state enemies." Rich Croatia was a Serbian colony once again.

After Tito's death, and the complete collapse of the Yugoslav economy, destroyed by Serbo-communist greediness

## Croatia's political benchmarks

<b>A.D. 879</b>	Croatia is first recognized to be a sovereign state. 1776: Croatian republic of Dubrovnik becomes the second country to recognize U.S. independence. 1918: Austro-Hungarian Empire breaks apart and Croatia is forced to join the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. This union was never ratified by the Croatian Parliament.
<b>1945</b>	Communists form the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and outlaw all competing political parties. The S.F.R.Y.'s capital is located in the Serbian city of Belgrade.
<b>1990 April 30</b>	Free elections held in Croatia for the first time since World War II. Eight political parties competed in elections certified by international observer teams.
<b>May 19</b>	Referendum held allowing the Croatian people to endorse the new government's program of independence. Referendum passes with 94% of the ballots cast (80% of electorate eligible votes in election).
<b>1991 June 25</b>	Croatian Declaration of Independence.
<b>July 7</b>	Croatia agrees to a three-month moratorium on its independence.
<b>July 30</b>	First accounts of Federal Army MiG jets destroying civilian targets such as hospitals and schools.
<b>Aug. 1</b>	First accounts of heavy losses of Croatian police to Army tanks.
<b>Sept. 16</b>	Zagreb, Croatia's capital, comes under attack for the first time in its 900-year history.
<b>Oct. 7</b>	Croatian Parliament ratifies the May referendum despite threats from Federal Army.