The Rise of Fascism

AP World History
Chapter 21
“The Collapse and Recovery of Europe”
(1914 - 1970s)
New Forms of Government

After WWI: Germany, Italy, and Russia turned to a new form of dictatorship = totalitarianism

- Government has total control over every aspect of the people’s lives
- The individual is a servant of the state
- Books, radio, films, and schools used to promote the government’s philosophy
New Forms of Government

- Fascism grew in Italy and Germany
- Fascism = a political philosophy that advocates the glorification of the state
  - Single-party system
  - One ruler
  - Aggressive nationalism
  - The state has absolute authority
Factors Explaining the Fascist Rise to Power in Italy

1. Economic Distress
   - Inflation and high prices
   - Heavy taxes to pay for war costs
   - Widespread unemployment
   - Returning war vets couldn’t find work
   - Fascists promised to improve economic conditions
Factors Explaining the Fascist Rise to Power in Italy

2. Fear of Communism
- Italian workers started taking over factories
- Italian peasants started seizing land
- This is similar to how the Russian Revolution started that brought Communism to Russia
- Fascists promised to stop the Socialists & the Communists
- Factory & land owners now supported the Fascists
Factors Explaining the Fascist Rise to Power in Italy

3. Appeal to Nationalism
- Italy was upset that it didn’t get more land in peace treaties after WWI
- Fascists said they’d get more land and restore the Roman Empire
- This appealed to the youth, veterans, and military people
Factors Explaining the Fascist Rise to Power in Italy

4. Weak Government After WWI
   - Couldn’t solve Italy’s problems
   - No political party had a majority in the Parliament

5. Lack of Democratic Tradition
   - Democracy = not a part of Italy’s history
   - People more concerned with making ends meet, not defending democracy
Benito Mussolini

- Came from a working-class family
- Ambitious and determined
- Became an extreme nationalist during WWI
- 1919 = created Fascist Party in Italy
- Black Shirts = Mussolini’s private military band
- Used violence and brutality to stop opponents and gain support for the Fascists
Mussolini Seizes Power

- Fascist Party gained more & more support
- Result = Mussolini got stronger & bolder
- 1922 = the Fascists staged a “march on Rome”
- King Victor Emmanuel III refused to declare martial law
- Unopposed by the army, Black Shirt bands poured into Rome
Mussolini Seizes Power

- The King told Mussolini to form a new government
- Mussolini took over power without a popular vote or Parliament’s consent
- Made himself dictator and turned Italy into a fascist nation
Italy Under Mussolini (1922-1943)

- **Government**
  - Totalitarian dictatorship led by *IL DUCE* = means “The Leader”
  - One political party = Fascist party
  - People denied civil liberties
  - Black Shirts and secret police used to stop opposition
Italy Under Mussolini (1922-1943)

- **Economy**
  - Government determined wages, hours, and working conditions
  - Left most industries under private ownership, but controlled production and prices
  - Set up more armament plants
  - Italian efficiency – he “made the trains run on time”
Italy Under Mussolini (1922-1943)

- Militarism
  - Drafted men to 4 years of service followed by 11 years on reserve
  - Required military training in schools and Fascist youth groups
  - Built more military weapons, tanks, etc.
Italy Under Mussolini (1922-1943)

- Most Italians supported Mussolini
- He brought order back to Italy
- Solved the unemployment problem
- Brought feelings of patriotism & nationalism back to the people
- Promised to bring back the glory of ancient Rome
Weimar Republic in Germany 1919-1933

- After WWI: Germany set up a democratic government called the Weimar Republic.

- New constitution created 2 major positions:
  - President = weak; elected by the people
  - Chancellor = powerful; elected by the majority party in the Reichstag (like Germany’s Senate)

- President from 1919-1933 = President Hindenburg
Problems with Weimar Republic

- Weak and unstable
- Couldn’t solve Germany’s problems after WWI
- Political parties could not cooperate
Fascism in Germany: The Nazis

- After WWI: small group of nationalists formed the National Socialist (Nazi) Party
- Attacked democracy
- Promised to save Germany from Communism
- Advocated extreme nationalism
- Wanted dictatorship
Factors Explaining the Nazi Rise to Power

1. Economic Distress

- Germany had to pay reparations of $35 billion after WWI to France and Great Britain
- Government printed more money to do this = caused inflation
  - In 1932 = it took 4 trillion marks to equal 1 U.S. dollar
  - Middle class lost savings and retirement accounts
- Unemployment
  - In 1932 = 6 million Germans unemployed
- Nazis promised to save the economy
Factors Explaining the Nazi Rise to Power

2. Fear of Communism
- Germans feared a Communist revolution due to bad economy
- Nazis promised to save Germany from Communism

3. Lack of Democratic Tradition
- German heritage = autocracy, not democracy
  - Otto von Bismarck
  - Kaisers
- Autocracy meant success and democracy meant failure
Factors Explaining the Nazi Rise to Power

4. Appeal to Nationalism

- Many Germans unable to accept defeat in WWI
- Nazis pledged to tear up Treaty of Versailles and denounce war-guilt clause
- Nazis demanded return of German territories and colonies
- Nazis defended Germany’s right to rearm
- Nazis claimed Germany had been “stabbed in the back” by Jews and Communists
- Promised to create a powerful German Empire
Adolf Hitler

- Leader of Nazi Party
- Austrian
- Failed artist
- Decorated WWI veteran
- Brilliant organizer and speaker
- Used propaganda and mass rallies to gain support and persuade people
Nazi Rally in Nuremburg
Beer Hall Putsch

- In Munich in 1923
- Nazi attempt at a revolution
- Hitler led a surprise attack and tried to kill top leaders of the Weimar Republic in a beer hall
- Failed
- Hitler went to jail for about a year

Leaders of the Beer Hall Putsch
“Mein Kampf”

- Book written by Hitler while in jail
- “Mein Kampf” = “My Struggle”
- Outlined Hitler’s plans for Germany
  - Blamed the Jews & Communists for Germany’s defeat in WWI
  - Said Germans were a “master race” that should rule the world
  - Said Germans needed “Lebensraum” = living space
  - Explained his plan for the extermination of the Jewish race
Nazis Gain Power

- Nazis gained support as economy kept getting worse in Germany
- 1932 election = Nazis got 37% of the popular vote
  - Made them the largest party in the Reichstag
- 1933 = Hitler appointed Chancellor by President Hindenburg
Nazis Gain Power

- 1933 = Hitler calls for new elections
- Voting = marked by intimidation & violence
- Reichstag building mysteriously burned down
  - Hitler blamed the Communists
  - Nazis got more support because people were so afraid
  - Nazis got even more seats in the Reichstag in 1933 election
Nazis Gain Power

- Hitler pushed for the **Enabling Act** = made him absolute dictator for 1 year
  - Could pass laws without the Reichstag or the President

- 1934 = President Hindenburg died
  - Hitler blended the positions of President and Chancellor
  - Now just 1 leader = Der Führer
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Government
  - Nazi Party controlled everything
  - All other political parties outlawed
  - Under Heinrich Himmler, the Gestapo (secret police) brutally oppressed anti-Nazis
  - Torture, death, sent to concentration camps
  - Brown Shirts = army members loyal to Hitler
  - SS = Nazi elite; most trusted guards
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Propaganda
  - Propaganda Ministry led by Joseph Goebbels
  - Used movies, radio, press, etc. to flood Germany with the Nazi cause
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

Education

- Used schools to influence the youth
- Only Nazis could teach
- Nazi textbooks
- Classes focused on Nazi goals
  - Chemistry = kids learned how to make poison gas
  - Social Studies = kids learned evils of democracy
  - Math = kids calculated bomb distances
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Hitler Youth
  - Organizations set up for young people between ages of 6 and 18
  - Molded German youth to accept Nazi ideas
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Science and Culture
  - Scientists worked on war weapons
  - All books, movies, etc. that were anti-Nazi were burned and banned
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Women
- Inferior social status in Germany
- Excluded from politics
- Major purpose = to have children and increase the population of the “master race”
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Economy
  - Nazi regime set wages, hours, and working conditions
  - Eliminated unemployment
  - Public works projects - like the Autobahn, bridges, canals, public buildings, etc.
  - Increased production of arms
  - “Make guns, not butter”
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Militarism
  - Used draft to create a large army
  - Remilitarized the Rhineland
  - Shifted German industry to war production
  - Gave military training to youth in schools & youth organizations
  - This violated the Treaty of Versailles, but the Allies did nothing
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Persecution of the Jews
  - Ousted from jobs, businesses, and homes
  - 1935 = Nuremberg Laws passed
    - Said anyone with at least 1 Jewish grandparent was Jewish & couldn’t be a German citizen
  - Placed limits on leaving Germany
  - Jewish people required to wear identification badges = Stars of David
The Third Reich: 1933-1945

- Persecution of the Jews
- November 1938 = Kristallnacht = Night of Broken Glass
- Organized attacks on Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues