

# Fascism

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## What is Fascism?

•The word *Fascism* comes from the Latin word *fascēs*. *Fascēs* was a Roman symbol of *power* and *authority*. It also suggested *unity*. It was a bundle of wooden rods tied together around an axe. The Italian fascists weren't the only ones using the *fascēs* symbol... it appeared on the back of a United States mercury dime as early as 1916.



•Fascism is a political movement that developed after the first World War. Typically, it is a very nationalistic, non-democratic movement in which the state (or government) is seen as supreme.

## The Rise of Fascist Dictatorships

•Although many nations in Europe turned to dictators to solve their growing economic problems, three nations, *Italy*, *Germany* and *Spain*, saw the rise of *Fascist* dictators.

•The difference between a dictatorship and a *fascist* dictatorship? It is the degree of control. A dictator, by definition, exerts total control over the political structure of a state or nation. A *fascist* dictator establishes a *totalitarian* state, in which he attempts to exert total control over not just the government, but society as well.

•This type of control is typically accomplished through an extensive police force – including secret police. It is also accomplished through the use of propaganda, and censorship of the media in order to control what people see hear and think. This results in a society ruled by fear and force.



## Characteristics of Fascism

•Fascist movements (in Italy, Spain or Germany) had several characteristics in common.



### 1) The State is Supreme!

•The State, or government was considered more important than the individual. This was anti-liberal – that is, it was against individual rights and freedoms. The feeling was that the rights of the individual had grown to the point where they hampered the effectiveness of the state.

•Fascism was also anti-democratic. Fascists did not believe everyone was equal, nor did they believe people should have the right to tell the state what to do. Individuals had no significance outside of the state.

### 2) Hyper-Nationalistic!

•Fascists glorified the state, and engaged in almost constant flag waving.

•There were flags displayed everywhere, parades, party rallies, and nationalistic mottos, slogans or symbols.



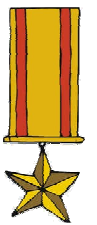
### 3) Discriminatory!

•Fascism was highly *stratified* – it had many layers. Some people were superior to others; fascists were the most superior.

•Those deemed inferior (based on race, religion, politics) were made the scapegoat for all problems.

### 4) Militaristic!

•The military was glorified and honored. Uniforms were important in fascist culture, both because of the militaristic importance, and because uniforms denoted *rank*.



•Even before fascist dictators attained power, they usually recruited militias. This made fascists threatening to all.

## Origins & Benito Mussolini

•Fascism is a political movement that originated after World War I. Benito Mussolini is generally credited as being one of the founders of the movement.

•Mussolini was originally a communist, but he changed his political views after World War I (the working class killed members of the working class from other countries... Mussolini became disillusioned.)

•He joined the fascist party like many other WWI veterans, and quickly rose to power as a forceful and inspirational leader.



## The March on Rome

•**October 1922:** Many of the leaders of the fascist party thought that they had grown strong enough to overthrow the government. Mussolini was actually against this decision, because he knew the Italian army would crush his Black Shirts. However, he felt he had to go along with the coup in order to maintain his control of the party.

•To Mussolini's surprise, King Victor Emmanuel III refused to sign the order for martial law. Thus the army was not called out to defend the government.

•King Victor Emmanuel cut a deal with the fascists, and in October 1922, Mussolini found himself the Prime Minister of Italy.

•Although Mussolini was the Prime Minister by 1922, his fascist party held almost NO seats in the Parliament. He had to work hard to get his party into power. It would take four years before Mussolini could claim total control.



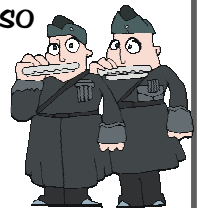
## The Squadristi

•The *Squadristi* was the militia of the Italian Fascist party. Basically, it was a thug squad. They were also known as the *Black Shirts*, because they wore a black shirted uniform.

•World War I veterans poured into the ranks of the squadristi. Veterans were members of the "Lost Generation", and they had difficulty assimilating back into society after the war. All they knew was a life of violence, and as members of the squadristi, they were offered many opportunities to be violent. It felt familiar and comfortable.

•In Italy, the squadristi spent most of their time drinking and beating up communists. Their efforts were not very organized, and their bouts of violence generally followed bouts of drinking at the local bar.

•The fact that fascists were violently anti-communist gave them support from the middle and upper classes (who also hated communism). This allowed the fascists to have a powerful and wealthy base of support.



## Solidification of Power

•The first thing Mussolini did was get his Black Shirts appointed as part of the official police force. He then could use the "police" to threaten and intimidate people into supporting the fascists.

•Next, he had to work his party into power. He was able to pass a law for the next elections. The party that received the most votes got 2/3 of the seats in Parliament.

•In the 1924 elections, the fascists received the most votes. Solidifying power now was easy. In 1926 Mussolini had total power and gave himself the title *Il Duce* (the Leader).

# Nazism in Germany

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## The NSDAP

•Hitler was inspired by Mussolini and the fascist movement in Italy. He imitated many aspects of Mussolini's rise to power, but he took the movement and made it his own. Hitler added a German flair to fascism, and the result was Nazism.

•The Nazi party's official name was the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP).

•Hitler's Nazi party was *fascist*, and therefore was neither *socialist*, nor a *workers* party. However, the name suggested it was both, and therefore, the Nazis got some worker support.



## The Beer Hall Putsch

•The S.A. was Hitler's militia. They were also known as *Stormtroopers* or *Brown Shirts*.

•Much like Mussolini's Black Shirts, Hitler's Brown Shirts were comprised of disgruntled war veterans, young college students, and other men who were seeking an exciting, physical existence.

•By 1923, the Nazi party had grown to 55,000 members with 15,000 S.A.

•Hitler decided it was time to seize power. He planned the coup d'état with Nazi party leadership in a beer hall, and thus, the coup is known to history as the Beer Hall Putsch (rebellion).

•The Putsch was unsuccessful. Hitler was arrested and tried for treason. He was able to get a light sentence, and was out in 9 months, but when he got out of prison in 1925, the Nazi party was in shambles. Enrollment dropped to 25,000, and seemingly, the opportunity for power was gone.



## The Appeal of Nazism

•There were several aspects of Nazism that were appealing to the German people.

### 1) Vigorous Movement

•This was a young man's movement that was action oriented and military based. Many felt the Nazis would move to solve economic problems, AND military was appealing.

### 2) Alternative to Communism

•Many Germans feared a Communist takeover. In the elections of 1930 they had received 15% of the vote, a significant minority.

### 3) Offered Pride & Nationalism

•The German people were desperate to regain a sense of pride after being crushed by the Treaty of Versailles.



## Rise to Power

•After his stint in prison, Hitler was obsessed with obtaining power legally – through election.

•Once he exited prison, Hitler started to rebuild the party. He was a charismatic speaker, and by 1928, membership was up to 108,000.

This was not enough to win an election, and he began to grow depressed.

•But then... the U.S. stock market crashed in 1929 plunging the world into depression. The German economy tanked, and Hitler rejoiced. People flocked to his party. By 1932, party enrollment topped 800,000!

•In 1932, Hitler lost the election for presidency to Hindenburg, but his party got 33% of the seats in the Reichstag (parliament), and therefore he was made Chancellor (Prime Minister).

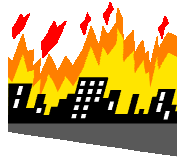


# The Nazi State

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## Solidification of Power

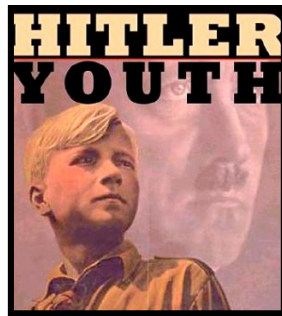
•In 1933, a mysterious fire burned down the Reichstag (parliament) building. A communist was blamed, and Germans feared that the communists were attempting a revolution. Hitler was granted dictatorial powers.



•Hitler began to create a Totalitarian State. He started to restrict rights and freedoms, promote his ideas through propaganda, and enforce his policies through the use of violence and secret police. The new Nazi state was named the *Third Reich* (Empire).

## The Hitler Youth

•Hitler organized youth organizations (like boy or girl scouts) to indoctrinate children into nazism. This was really the ultimate form of propaganda. He believed that if he could brainwash children at a young age, he would have devoted followers for life.



•The Hitler Youth spent most of the time doing fun things – like hiking or playing sports – athletic, action oriented things.

•Education in the Third Reich changed dramatically. Again, the focus was on indoctrination...

-Much focus was placed on **Physical Education**

-**Math** - Calculated airplane bombings

-**Chemistry** - Making poison gas & bombs

-**Biology** - Aryan biology & physiology

-**History** - Re-written to emphasize Aryan history

## The S.S. and Gestapo

•Heinrich Himmler became the head of the S.S. in 1929. The *S.S.* was originally a smaller, subordinate branch of the S.A.

•Unlike the S.A., the S.S. was very elite. They were only interested in the best physical specimens, the purest aryan blood, and the most committed ideologues (people devoted to an ideology or philosophy).

•The S.S. soldier had to *look* the part. He needed to have classic aryan looks – blonde hair & blue eyes.

•The S.S. required any potential soldier to prove the purity of their Aryan blood back to 1750 – almost 200 years!

•The S.S. became almost cult-like. They developed their own religious ceremonies and altars. Soldiers were married and baptized by S.S. priests in special consecrated blood ceremonies.

•The *Gestapo* was the Nazi secret police. It was part of the S.S.



## Propaganda

•Hitler placed Josef Goebbels in charge of the *Ministry for Enlightenment* – or the Ministry of Propaganda. Goebbels was highly educated, with a PhD in literature.

•Nazi propaganda contained images of the ideal aryan, and slogans of the latest campaign.

•**The Big Lie.** Goebbels believed that any lie, if stated with authority and guarded from criticism, could and would be believed. The Nazis circulated the most outrageous lies, but guarded them from criticism by censoring the press.



# Nazis On the Move

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## Appeasement

•France and Britain were both tired of war, and in the 1930s, they had their own problems to deal with (economy). The people of both nations were *NOT* interested in engaging in another war.



•The United States had lapsed back into its traditional policy of isolationism. The people of the United States did not want to entangle themselves in European affairs, much less in another European war.

•Thus the policy of *appeasement* was born. France and Britain began giving in to Hitler's demands in order to preserve the peace in Europe.

## Hitler's Mentality

•Hitler's mentality was that of a bully. Like most bullies, Hitler wanted to push the edge of the envelope a little to see how far he could go before other countries



stopped him. Also like many bullies, Hitler was mostly a lot of bluff and bravado (at least at first).

•When countries gave in to him, Hitler viewed this as weakness, and began to make more and more outrageous demands. He had no respect for weakness, and would continue to pursue his policies until some nation stepped up to stop him.

## Testing the Waters...

•In 1935, Hitler withdrew from the League of Nations, and announced his intention of rearming Germany. The League did nothing.

•In 1936, Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland. This was an area in Germany that lay alongside the French border. According to the



Treaty of Versailles, this area was forbidden to have any military presence in it. Yet again, the League did nothing.

•Next, Hitler moved to annex (adjoin or add) the country of Austria. In March of 1938, Hitler declared the Anschluss (unification) with Austria complete. Again, the League of Nations did nothing.

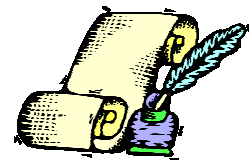
•By the summer of 1938, Hitler began to demand possession of the *Sudetenland*, the NW part of *Czechoslovakia*. Western nations were now very alarmed at Hitler's moves.

## Continued Aggression

•A meeting was set up in Munich to discuss the *Czech* question. The *Munich Conference* represents the high point of *appeasement*, and it was determined that the *Sudetenland* would be given to Hitler. The *Czech* government was not invited to attend the conference.

•In October 1938, Hitler took the *Sudetenland*, and in March 1939, he took the rest of *Czechoslovakia*. The Western nations did nothing.

•On August 23, 1939, Hitler and Stalin came to an agreement. They agreed to *not* attack each other, and they secretly divided the country of *Poland*. This was known as the *Non-Aggression Pact*.



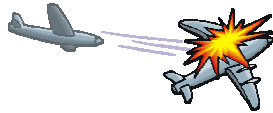
•On September 1, 1939 Hitler invaded *Poland*. This was the last straw for *Britain & France*. They declared war on *Germany* on September 3. *World War II* had begun.

# Turning Points of World War II

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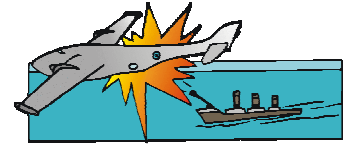
## Battle of Britain

- The first major turning point of the war was the Battle of Britain (1940).
- After rolling through western Europe in the Spring of 1940 and successfully knocking France out of the war, Hitler turned his attention to the last remaining ally – Britain.
- Hitler's plan for invading Britain was called *Operation Sealion*. But before Hitler could land troops in Britain, he needed to control the English Channel, and in order to do that, he had to control the airways.
- In July, the German Luftwaffe (air force) began aerial battles with the Royal Air Force (RAF), and intense bombing of British cities and RAF bases. The cities of London, Plymouth and Coventry sustained heavy damage, and 6 out of 7 RAF fighter bases were destroyed. Still, the British fought on.
- By mid-September, Hitler postponed his invasion plans indefinitely. This was a significant point in the war, because had Britain fallen, the war would have ended – with German victory.



## Pearl Harbor

- On December 7, 1941, a date which, according to President FDR, "will live in infamy", the Japanese launched a surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
- The Japanese were hoping to damage and thus neutralize U.S. presence in the Pacific. Japan had been expanding into areas of Southeast Asia, and the U.S. was growing concerned.
- Early in 1941, President FDR moved the bulk of the U.S. naval presence from San Diego to Pearl Harbor, and ordered a military build-up in the Philippines.
- In July 1941, the U.S. stopped oil shipments to Japan. This prompted further Japanese aggression to secure needed resources.
- Bringing the U.S. into the war was a significant turning point for the Allies.



## Battle of Midway

- The Battle of Midway occurred 6 months after Pearl Harbor, and is sometimes called the "turning point of the war in the Pacific".
- The battle was a naval and aerial battle near the island of Midway. It was the first decisive victory for the Allied forces in the war in the Pacific.
- After this battle, the Allied forces would increasingly be on the offensive, while the Japanese were basically on the defensive.



## Battle of Stalingrad

- Most historians consider the Battle of Stalingrad (1942-43) to be the turning point of the war in Europe. After this battle, the Germans were in retreat, as the allies pushed toward Germany.
- The battle lasted from August 1942 until February 1943, and was one of the bloodiest battles in *history*. Casualties from both sides totaled nearly 2 million.
- This battle was characterized by urban warfare – where every street, house, factory and basement was contested. Neither army was allowed to retreat, and often territory was conquered foot by foot through hand to hand combat.



# The Holocaust

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## The Final Solution

•The term "Final Solution" referred to the extermination of the Jews, or Hitler's *final solution* to the Jewish problem. Hitler implemented this solution in phases or stages.

•**Phase I (1933-34):** Between April & October of 1933, laws were enacted to prevent anyone of Jewish descent from holding positions in the civil service, the legal profession, the teaching profession, the medical profession and in the press. Basically Jews were eliminated from the most visible positions of power.

•The laws also began to restrict Jews from attending German high schools and universities.



## Phase II (1935)

•At first, German people were outraged, but as time went by and nothing worse seemed to happen, they deluded themselves into believing that perhaps the worst was over.

•Then in March 1935, the boycotts of Jewish businesses began again, and by September, the Nuremberg Laws were passed. The laws specifically:

-Denied Jews the right to German citizenship

-Forbid marriage between Germans and Jews

•After the implementation of the anti-semitic laws, Hitler began to tone it down. The world was coming to visit Germany in the summer of 1936. Berlin was hosting the Olympics.



## Phase III (1938-39)

•After the lull created by the Olympics, this phase was marked by an increase in violence.

•In May of 1938, thousands of Jews were arrested and sent "temporarily" to concentration camps.

•By July 1938, Jews were required to carry a special identification card. This made it easier for the police to control the Jews.

•November 9 & 10, 1938 has come to be known as **Kristallnacht** – Crystal night (or the night of broken glass).

For two nights the fury of the anti-semitic S.A. was let loose.

•By November 28, 1938, Jews were barred from attending schools, excluded from public places, and had curfews.



## Phase IV (1939-45) Death Camps

•Death Camps were placed in Poland, out of view of most Germans' eyes. Some of the most infamous camps were Auschwitz, Treblinka & Belzec. Jews were shipped by railway from their homes to the camps.

•Once at the camp (if they survived the train trip), Jews were herded in a long line toward the Director. They were selected for work or for death. Those selected for death were sent to the *showers* where they were executed using *Zyklon B* gas. The bodies were then cremated in large ovens.

•Those chosen for work had their heads shaved, were tattooed with a number, and were given a uniform. They were de-humanized, forced to do hard labor and given very little to eat. Six million died.



# War in Asia

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## Japanese Aggression

•The Japanese grew increasingly aggressive. The Great Depression had hit them hard, and they were desperate for sources of raw materials.

•In 1931, Japan seized Manchuria (the northeast province of China). Manchuria was a region rich in natural resources. This would help provide self-sufficiency for Japanese industry.



•Manchuria was also seen as a stepping stone. From there, Japan could invade Russian Siberia – an area rich in resources, especially oil. Japan could also invade the rest of China from there. This was part of a larger goal of creating a unified Asian state headed by Japan. ('Asia for the Asians')

## Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere

•The Japanese moved quickly to dominate Southeast Asia, and to solidify their vision of a united Asia under Japanese leadership.

•Most of Southeast Asia was dominated by foreign, European nations. When the Japanese arrived, they were welcomed as liberators – at first.

•As it turned out, the Japanese were more vicious and brutal than the Europeans had been to the native populations. Support for the Japanese waned quickly.

•By 1942, Japan had taken most of Southeast Asia, including French Indochina (Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia), Thailand, Burma, the Philippines, Malaysia and most of Indonesia. Japan's Empire was called the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.



## Rape of Nanjing & Other Atrocities

•In 1937 Japan invaded southeastern China at Shanghai and began pushing inward to the capital at Nanjing, which they captured in December. The Japanese then committed horrific atrocities on the Chinese living in Nanjing – killing between 300–500,000, and raping more than 80,000 women.

•The Japanese were noted for their terrible treatment of POWs.

In the Philippines, 76,000 captured American & Filipino soldiers were marched through the tropical jungles for seven days without food and water. Nearly 11,000 died on the Bataan Death March.

•Even worse were the Japanese atrocities on the Chinese. Army Unit 731 conducted all sorts of brutal medical experiments on innocent civilians – much like the infamous Nazi experiments at Auschwitz.



## End of Warfare

•Fighting the Japanese was difficult because Southeast Asia included thousands of islands. Allied forces engaged in 'island hopping', moving from one to the next.

•American tacticians predicted that an invasion of the Japanese home islands would cost a million American lives – not to mention a huge number of Japanese lives.

•On August 6 & 9 1945, President Truman authorized the use of atomic bombs on the Japanese targets of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nearly 100,000 people died instantly, but hundreds of thousands died later from illness and radiation poisoning.





# Results of World War II

## Political Results

•The Axis powers were defeated. Germany was invaded and Berlin was captured by the Soviet Red Army. Mussolini had been overthrown by his own people, tracked down, and murdered alongside his mistress. The United States detonated two atomic bombs in Japan to force their unconditional surrender.



•In the wake of Holocaust guilt – or the guilt nations felt after details of the Holocaust came to light, a Jewish homeland was created in 1948. This was to be a place where all Jews could go to live in peace.

•For the first time ever, there were war crimes trials for those who planned or participated in the Holocaust.

•The Cold War began. The Allies (USA, USSR & Britain) experienced friction after the war. They had opposing goals, and their ideological views were opposite as well.

## Casualties

•Total War led to *many* casualties. Before World War II, the bombing of cities, or the targeting of civilian centers, was considered unthinkable. This led to more civilian casualties than military ones.

Country	Military	Civilian
USSR	14 million	15 million
China	3.5 million	10 million
Germany	3 million	5 million
Japan	1.5 million	950,000
Britain	400,000	65,000
France	200,000	170,000
USA	292,000	X

## Economic Results

•There was tremendous destruction done in World War II. Each nation incurred huge costs.

-USA —————> \$288 Billion

-Britain ———> \$117 Billion

-France ———> \$111 Billion

-USSR ———> \$93 Billion

-Germany —> \$212 Billion

-Japan ———> \$41 Billion



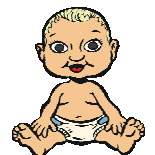
•Many nations feared a repeat of what happened after World War I. Namely, that countries would enact protective tariffs in order to rebuild their economies, and trade would grind to a halt, creating another depression.

•In order to prevent this from happening, the United States gave an enormous amount of financial aid to nations attempting to rebuild. The hope was that nations would continue to trade freely.

## Social Results

•Nearly 67% of Europe's Jewish population perished in the Holocaust. Some nations (Germany, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Baltic nations of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) lost 90%.

•In the United States, the end of the war meant the return of soldiers and a **BABY BOOM!**



•There was also an introduction of new technology after the war. Technology included: Televisions, appliances, (washers, dryers, refrigerators, dish washers... ), airplanes for travel, synthetics (plastics, polyester), new weapons (atomic then nuclear), new energy sources, and computers (not yet for personal use).