

Rise of Totalitarianism

I. Totalitarianism Defined

A government that controls all parts of public and private life – it “totally” controls you.

- A. Rises as a government form after WW I
- B. Is found as:
 - A. **Communism** – workers control wealth and power
 - B. **Socialism** – government controls wealth and power
 - C. **Fascism** – government may or may not control wealth, but keeps control of all the real power

II. Totalitarianism After WW I

- A. World state of affairs (conditions) after World War I were poor in many countries:
 - 1. Economic Depression
 - 2. Destruction of (or lack of) Industry
 - 3. Inflation
 - 4. Loss of national pride and territory
 - 5. **Disillusionment** with old systems
 - 6. Unstable new democracies

II. Totalitarianism After WW I

- B. Totalitarian leaders offered a solution to many of these problems.
 - 1. Promised jobs and money to rebuild industry, even if somewhat unrealistically
 - 2. Promised to control inflation if brought into power
 - 3. Campaigned under themes of national pride, unity, strength, and recovery of old lands
 - 4. Offered something new to the disillusioned
 - 5. Promised strength and power that the weak democracies could not

III. Early Totalitarian Examples

Country	Leader	Year Came to Power	How Came to Power
Italy	Benito Mussolini	1922	Elected
Germany	Adolph Hitler	1932	Elected
Russia	Josef Stalin	1928	Elected*
China	Mao Zedong	1949	Revolution

*Stalin succeeded Lenin (1917 – Bolshevik Revolution) and was elected to his position by the tiny membership of the communist party, not a general election in the democratic sense

IV. Totalitarian Successes

- A. Totalitarians generally managed to keep their promises to their people: land, jobs, national power, restoration of pride – at a price.
- B. To make sweeping changes to government and economy required total power.
- C. People often willingly gave total power to their new leaders, as is the case with **tyranny** through history.

V. Totalitarian Methods of Control

- A. **Ideology**
 - 1. Government decides on national goals and ideals without public input
 - 2. Common ideals include loyalty, obedience, personal sacrifice for the good of the country
- B. **Dictatorship**
 - 1. One party system
 - 2. Suppression of all other political ideas as treason
 - 3. Absolute loyalty demanded

V. Totalitarian Methods of Control

- C. **Propaganda and Censorship**
 - 1. Government uses mass media (radio, movies, print, etc.) to promote its messages
 - 2. Government suppresses all opposing views through **censorship** of competing ideas
- D. **Police State and Police Terror**
 - 1. Citizens are encouraged to spy on each other and report to the government
 - 2. Secret police exist and have power to arrest and hold without trial, and even execute without recourse

V. Totalitarian Methods of Control

- E. **Indoctrination**
 - 1. Young people are state-educated into government approved thinking **ONLY**
 - 2. Other forms of thinking, including religious or culturally traditional, are forbidden & persecuted
- F. **Charismatic Leadership**
 - A. Strong single leader symbolizes government to all
 - B. Portrayed as caring, patriotic, and strong