

Years of Crisis

1919 - 1939

A Worldwide Depression

Postwar Europe

- The Great War left every major European country nearly bankrupt.
- After the war, most European countries had democratic governments, but the citizens had little experience with a representative government.

A Worldwide Depression

The Weimar Republic

- Germany's post war government was named the Weimar Republic. Many Germans blamed the new government for the countries defeat in the war and the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles.
- To pay for the Great War, the German government simply printed money. To pay for reparations after the war, Germany printed even more money. The result was a lot of worthless paper and very high inflation.



A Worldwide Depression

Financial Collapse

- During the 1920's, the American production brought enormous profits. Factories produced more goods and farms produced more food than ever before.



A Worldwide Depression

Financial Collapse

- As companies grew, more people bought stocks. Middle-income people began borrowing money to buy stocks. This only works if stock prices rise; when stock prices fall, the borrower cannot pay back the loan.
- In October 1929, investors panicked when prices started to fall. When no one wanted to buy the stocks, prices fell even more and the market finally collapsed.



A Worldwide Depression

The Great Depression

- Within months of the crash, unemployment began to rise and wages declined. This long business slump would come to be called the Great Depression.
- Thousands of businesses failed. Banks closed and over 9 million people lost the money in their savings accounts.



A Worldwide Depression

The Great Depression

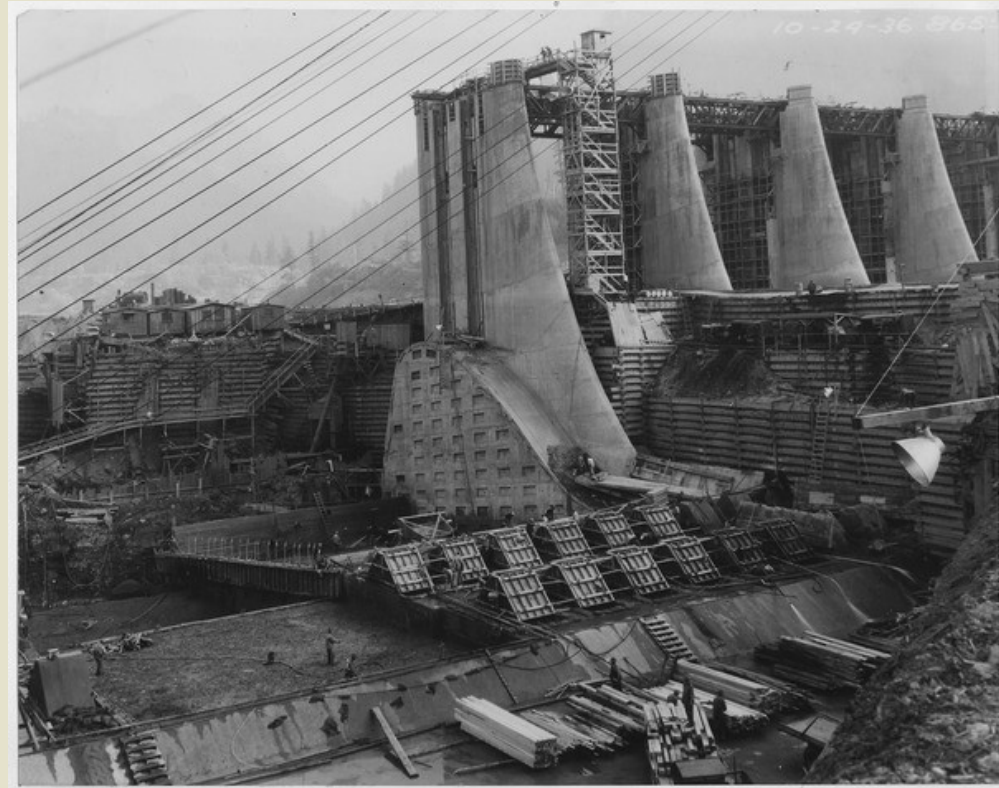
- Many farmers lost their land. By 1933, one-fourth of all American workers had no jobs.
- The depression in America was felt by many countries around the world. Overall world trade dropped by 65 percent.



A Worldwide Depression

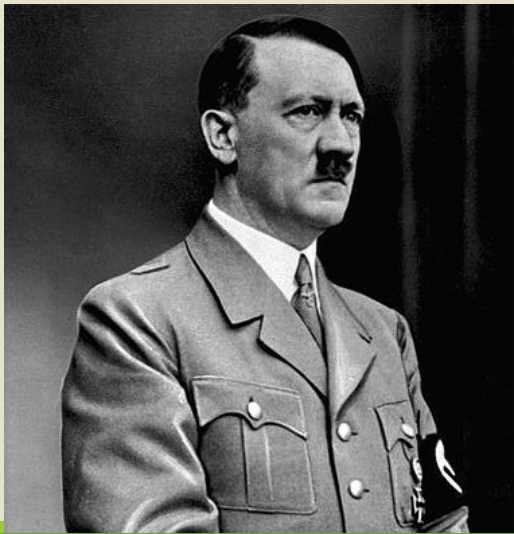
The World Confronts the Crisis

- Leaders in Great Britain, France, the Scandinavian countries, and the United States used government policies to help rebuild their economies and preserve the democratic governments.



Fascism Rises in Europe

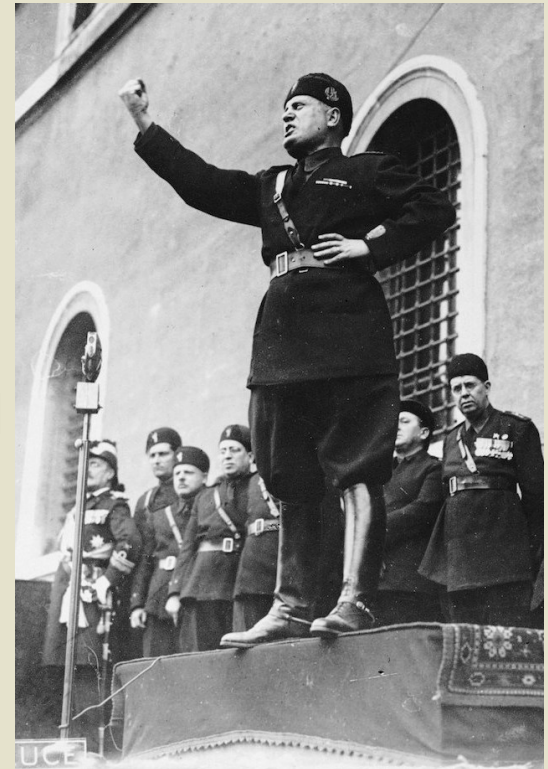
In some countries, people lost faith in the democratic government and turned to an extreme system of government called Fascism. Fascist promised to revive the economy, punish those responsible for hard times, and restore order and national pride.



Fascism Rises in Europe

Fascism's Rise in Italy

- Fascism was a new, militant political movement that emphasized loyalty to the state and obedience to its leader.
- Fascists preached extreme nationalism. They wore uniforms of a certain color, used special salutes, and held mass rallies.
- In Italy, the people saw their democratic government as helpless to solve the country's problems. They wanted a leader to take action.



Fascism Rises in Europe

Fascism's Rise in Italy

- Benito Mussolini promised to rescue Italy. He founded the Fascist Party and his popularity rapidly increased.
- After taking command of the government, Mussolini used secret police, censorship and economic control to rule Italy.



Fascism Rises in Europe

Hitler Rises to Power in Germany

- In 1919, Adolph Hitler joined a small political group called the National Socialist German Workers' Party, called Nazi for short. In a short time, Hitler was chosen as der Fuhrer, or The Leader, of the Nazi Party.
- In 1923, the Nazis staged a failed attempt to seize power. Hitler was arrested and sent to jail.
- While in jail, Hitler wrote a book called Mein Kampf, (My Struggle), stating his beliefs and goals for Germany.



Fascism Rises in Europe

Hitler Rises to Power in Germany

- After his release from jail, most Germans ignored Hitler until the onset of the Great Depression.
- When the German economy collapsed, people turned to Hitler, hoping for security and firm leadership.



Fascism Rises in Europe

Hitler Becomes Chancellor

- By 1932, the Nazis had become the largest political party.
- Political leaders advised their president to appoint Hitler as the chancellor.
- Hitler used his power to turn Germany into a totalitarian state. He used secret police, censorship, and economic authority to control every aspect of German life.



Fascism Rises in Europe

Hitler Becomes Chancellor

- Hatred of Jews, or Anti-Semitism, was a key part of Nazi ideology. By naming the Jews as scapegoats for all Germany's troubles since the war, Hitler provided an enemy for the people.
- The Nazis passed laws depriving Jews of their rights. Violence against Jews mounted.



Fascism Rises in Europe

Hitler Becomes Chancellor

- On Kristallnacht (Night of the Broken Glass), Jews were attacked and thousands of Jewish owned buildings were destroyed. This was the start of the process of eliminating Jews from German life.



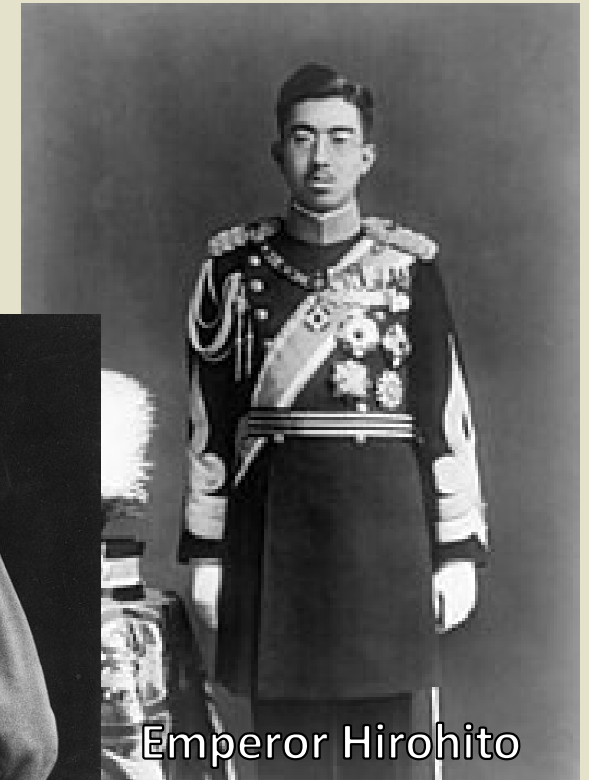
Aggressors Invade Nations

Japan Seeks an Empire

- When the Great Depression struck in 1929, many Japanese blamed the government. Military leaders gained support and soon won control of the country.
- Militarist leaders left the Emperor in place, but ruled in his name.



General Tojo



Emperor Hirohito

Aggressors Invade Nations

Japan Seeks an Empire

- In 1931, the Japanese army seized Manchuria, a part of China north of Korea.
- The League of Nations protested, but Japan ignored them and later withdrew from the League.



Aggressors Invade Nations

Japan Seeks an Empire

- In 1937, Japan went to war with China. After conquering the capital city of Nanjing, the Japanese troops killed tens of thousands of captured soldiers and civilians, raped thousands, and looted much of the city.



Aggressors Invade Nations

European Aggressors on the March

- In 1935, Mussolini ordered a massive invasion of Ethiopia. The League of Nations protested, but did nothing.



Aggressors Invade Nations

European Aggressors on the March

- Also in 1935, Hitler announced he would not obey the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles.
 - Germany enlarged and rearmed its military.
 - German troops marched into the Rhineland, a buffer between Germany and France.
 - Germany formed an Alliance with Italy and Japan.
 - Germany annexed Austria and the Sudetenland (part of Czechoslovakia)



Aggressors Invade Nations

Democratic Nations Try to Preserve Peace

- Instead of taking a stand, Britain and France made concessions, hoping to keep peace.
- Americans supported isolationism, the belief that ties to other countries should be avoided.



Aggressors Invade Nations

Democratic Nations Try to Preserve Peace

- In September 1938, France, Britain, Italy, and Germany met in the Munich Conference. Britain and France agreed to give in to Hitler's demands. They celebrated this appeasement, giving in to an aggressor to keep peace.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 146-1970-052-24
Foto: o. Ang. | 29. September 1938

Aggressors Invade Nations

Democratic Nations Try to Preserve Peace

- Hitler next demanded a part of Poland.
- Britain and France asked the Soviet Union to join them in stopping Hitler's aggression. Stalin bargained with Hitler and signed a pledge never to attack one another.



DOUBTFUL FRIENDS

On September 3, 1939, Germany invaded Poland

