

The Rise of Militarism

READ TO DISCOVER

1. How did Benito Mussolini create a fascist state in Italy?
2. How did Joseph Stalin maintain power in the Soviet Union?
3. How did Adolf Hitler rise to power in Germany?
4. What caused the Spanish Civil War?
5. What actions did Japan's military take during the 1930s?

DEFINE

totalitarian state
anti-Semitism

IDENTIFY

Benito Mussolini
Fascist Party
Blackshirts
Joseph Stalin
Nazi Party
Brownshirts
Kristallnacht
Francisco Franco
Popular Front

WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

The rise of dictatorships in foreign nations continues to pose a concern to Americans today. Use CNNfy.com or other **current events** sources to learn about recent examples of totalitarian political systems in foreign nations. Record your findings in your journal.

CNNfy.com

EYEWITNESSES TO HISTORY

“The peace, the freedom, and the security of 90 percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining 10 percent who are threatening a breakdown of all international order and law. . . . War is a contagion [disease]. . . . It can engulf states and peoples remote from the original scene of hostilities. . . . If civilization is to survive, the principles of [peace] must be restored.”

—Franklin D. Roosevelt, speech, October 5, 1937

In this 1937 speech, President Franklin D. Roosevelt warned Americans of the growing danger of war. A rise in military activity by a number of nations and leaders made peace seem increasingly fragile.



President Roosevelt speaks to the American people.

Mussolini in Italy

Although Italy had been on the winning side when World War I ended, many Italians felt they had not benefited from the Treaty of Versailles. Thousands of Italian veterans were unable to find jobs. Many joined the Italian Communist Party, which urged Italian peasants to take over land and called on workers to seize factories.

To destroy the Communist Party and promote his own rise to power, Benito Mussolini founded the Fascist Party in 1921. The Fascists believed that a military-dominated government should control all aspects of society. Beginning in 1921, bloody clashes between Communists and Fascists created a situation bordering on civil war. In October 1922 Mussolini led an army of his followers, named Blackshirts for the color of their uniforms, in a march on Rome. Supported by nationalists who wanted to strengthen Italy and businesspeople who opposed the Socialists and Communists, the Fascists occupied the city.

The Italian king appointed Mussolini prime minister and granted him dictatorial powers. Mussolini limited freedom of speech, arrested political opponents, and restricted voting rights. Acting on a pledge to make Italy an imperial power, Mussolini sent Italian forces into the African nation of Ethiopia in 1935. The small, poorly equipped Ethiopian army proved no match for Italy's airplanes and machine guns. The U.S. Congress, fearful of being drawn into the conflict, passed a neutrality act banning arms shipments to both sides. The embargo hurt Ethiopia more than it did Italy, which continued to receive weapons from Germany and oil from American companies.

African Americans raised money to send relief and medical aid to the Ethiopians. Thousands of African Americans volunteered to fight in Ethiopia, but pressure from the U.S. government forced Ethiopia to reject the offer. This lack of support convinced other fascist countries, such as Germany, that aggression would go unpunished.

✓ **READING CHECK: Identifying Cause and Effect** Why did Italy become a fascist state?

Stalin in the Soviet Union

As Benito Mussolini seized power in Italy, a battle was being waged for power in the Soviet Union—the communist nation formed from Russia and several other surrounding states in 1922. By the early 1920s Vladimir Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik Revolution, was in poor health. His death in 1924 spurred a struggle for power among Communist Party leaders. Using underhanded tactics and even organizing the assassination of his enemies, Joseph Stalin eventually emerged as the nation's leader.

Driven by ambition, Stalin turned the Soviet Union into a totalitarian state—a country where the government has complete control. In 1927 the government began taking control of privately owned lands and reorganizing them into large state-run farms. Farmers who protested this policy were sent to forced labor camps. In all, some 15 million people were sent to Soviet labor camps by 1933. The reorganization policy resulted in decreased food production and widespread famine.

Stalin imposed his will through the Soviet Union's powerful Red Army. He used the army and other police forces to crush all opposition. In the late 1930s, fearing opponents were trying to weaken him, Stalin began a campaign to purge all perceived enemies from the Communist Party and the Red Army. Although the exact figure is not known, some historians estimate that eventually as many as 30 million people may have died as a result of Stalin's policies.

✓ **READING CHECK: Summarizing** In what ways was Soviet leader Joseph Stalin a dictator?

Hitler in Germany

In 1932 Adolf Hitler's National Socialist Party, or Nazi Party, won nearly 40 percent of the vote in national elections. Hitler became chancellor of Germany the next year. While in prison, he had written Mein Kampf [*My Struggle*], which laid out his plans to restore German power. Hitler blamed Jews, Communists, and intellectuals for Germany's decline. Hitler's views won him many supporters, particularly among those ruined by the depression.

The Third Reich. Hitler's government, called the Third Reich (the Third Empire), claimed dictatorial powers. Hitler prohibited Jews and non-Nazis from holding government positions, outlawed strikes, and made military service mandatory. Nazi storm troopers, known as Brownshirts because of the color of their uniforms, crushed all political opposition.

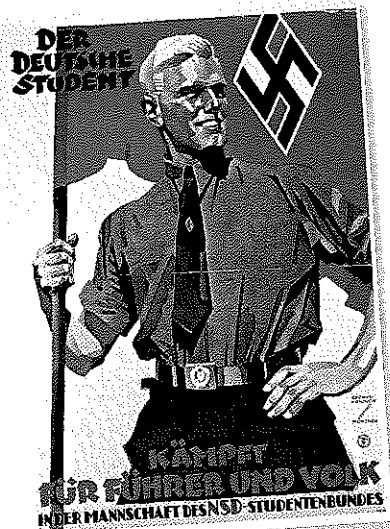
Hitler used his tight control over German industry to rearm the country, in violation of the Treaty of Versailles. He declared that this rearmament strengthened the economy and reduced unemployment. In a speech that Hitler gave in 1933, he declared, “The buildup of the armed forces is the most important precondition for . . . political power.” He wanted to use this power for the “conquest of new Lebensraum [space for expansion] in the East.”



These workers at the “Lenin’s Way Collective Farm” in Russia are sharing a communal lunch.



The German press often portrayed Adolf Hitler as Germany’s savior, as in this image from a 1934 German magazine.



The Nazis used posters like this one to appeal to Germans' desire to see their country reclaim its role as a world power.

INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

The Spanish Civil War. These Spanish Loyalists are marching from Madrid to fight a rebel army heading toward the city. *In what ways do these troops appear to differ from a regular army?*



In March 1936, German troops moved into the Rhineland. Two years later they overran Austria. Hitler then turned toward the Sudetenland (soo-DAYT-uhn-land) region of western Czechoslovakia, where more than 3 million German-speaking people lived. Hitler demanded that Czechoslovakia turn over the region to Germany. Czechoslovakia refused Hitler's demand.

Anti-Semitism. Meanwhile, Hitler's anti-Semitism, or hatred of Jews, became official government policy. In 1935 Hitler instituted the Nuremberg Laws, which deprived Jews of their German citizenship and authorized the destruction of Jewish property. Gradually the oppression of Jews increased. On November 9, 1938, Nazi thugs burned down synagogues and destroyed Jewish businesses. Known as Kristallnacht, or "the night of broken glass," the violence provided a chilling preview of the fate that awaited European Jews and others whom Hitler opposed.

Increased oppression caused many Jews to flee the country. Most wealthy or famous Jewish refugees were able to find safe haven abroad. Hundreds of writers, artists, and scientists came to the United States. The vast majority of Jewish refugees, however, had no place to turn. Many countries, including the United States, had strict immigration laws. Despite outrage at events like *Kristallnacht*, most Americans remained unwilling to encourage Jewish immigration.

✓ **READING CHECK: Sequencing** List in order the events that led to Adolf Hitler's rise to power in Germany.

Franco in Spain

Fascism also spread to Spain. In the 1930s Spain experienced bitter political conflicts. In 1931 a constitution that limited the power of the military and the Catholic Church went into effect. It called for reforms including universal suffrage, the nationalization of public utilities, and land for peasants. Conservative military men who felt threatened by the reforms united under the leadership of General Francisco Franco. In July 1936 the Fascist army officers tried to overthrow the government, starting the Spanish Civil War between Fascists and Loyalists.

After almost three years of fighting, Franco took over the government with German and Italian military aid. The Soviet Union aided the Loyalists, but President Roosevelt's fears of being drawn into a European war kept the United States from sending direct aid. Some 3,000 individual Americans, however, did join the fight against fascism. Ernest Hemingway covered the Spanish Civil War as a journalist. He expressed his support for the Loyalist cause in the powerful novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940).

These Americans were part of what was called the Popular Front—an international alliance of organizations united against fascism. Joseph Stalin had used the term Popular Front in a 1935 speech denouncing fascism. Fearful of Adolf Hitler's military motives, Stalin declared that communism and fascism were incompatible. Although he used many of the same totalitarian tactics as the fascist leaders, Stalin's efforts encouraged many noncommunists to oppose fascism.

After the Spanish Civil War, many Loyalists remained bitter over Western nations' failure to support their cause. In 1940 Julio Alvarez del Vayo, a wartime diplomat for the defeated Spanish republic, charged that this lack of support had cost the Loyalists the war.



"No, it was not Spanish democracy that failed. It was the other democracies who failed to save democratic Spain, as they will one day learn to their cost."

—Julio Alvarez del Vayo, *Freedom's Battle*

✓ **READING CHECK: Drawing Conclusions** How did the U.S. government and individual Americans respond to the Spanish Civil War?



Residents of Barcelona, Spain, often blocked the streets during the Spanish Civil War.

Skill-Building Strategies

Using Oral Histories

Oral histories—verbal accounts of historical events supplied by people who observed or participated in the events—are useful tools for learning about the past. They provide a close-up view of how specific people experienced the past. Oral histories also furnish valuable information about the opinions and feelings that people in history had about issues that affected them.

Oral histories are often taken down years or even decades after the events in question. It is therefore important to consider how the passage of time may have affected an interviewee's account of the past.

How to Use Oral Histories

1. **Become familiar with the source.** First, identify the person who was interviewed for the oral history and the general topic that he or she addressed. Then find out when the interview was conducted and, if possible, who conducted it.
2. **Study the account carefully.** Read the oral history thoroughly and carefully, taking note of any words or phrases that signal a statement of opinion.
3. **Assess the reliability of the account.** After you have read the oral history, evaluate its reliability as a piece of historical evidence. Be sure to consider how the interviewee's role in the events described, as well as the passage of time between the events and the interview, may have affected the account.
4. **Put the information to use.** Compare the oral history with other sources that address the same topic. Then use the results of your analysis and your knowledge of the historical period to draw conclusions.

Applying the Skill

Examine the following excerpt from an oral history from the 1980s provided by Hans Massaquoi, the son of a German mother and a Liberian father, who grew up in Germany during the 1930s.

"In '32, when I started school, I was six years old. In '33, my first teacher was fired for political reasons. I don't know what her involvements were. Gradually, the old teachers were replaced with younger ones, those with Nazi orientations. Then I began to notice a change in attitude. Teachers would make snide remarks about my race. One teacher would point me out as an example of the non-Aryan race. One time, I must have been ten, a teacher took me aside and said, 'When we're finished with the Jews, you're next.' He still had some inhibitions [reluctance]. He did not make that announcement before the class. (Laughs.) It was a private thing."

Practicing the Skill

Use the excerpt above to answer the following questions.

1. What is the general topic of the excerpt?
2. How do you think the passage of time between the events described in the excerpt and the interview affected Massaquoi's account?
3. What is your opinion of the excerpt as a piece of historical evidence?
4. How does the excerpt contribute to your understanding of Nazi Germany during the 1930s?

Ernest Hemingway and War

Before the United States entered World War I, Ernest Hemingway served with the Italian infantry. He was seriously wounded. Hemingway's novels of the 1920s, including *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), reflected many people's disillusionment with war. The story focuses on a group of World War I veterans trying to forget their experiences. In 1940, after working as a correspondent during the Spanish Civil War, Hemingway published *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which depicted Loyalists battling nobly against Fascists.

from *The Sun Also Rises*

"What medals have you got, Mike?"

"I haven't got any medals."

"You must have some."

"I suppose I've the usual medals. But I never sent in for them. One time there was this whopping big dinner

... and the cards said medals will be worn. So naturally I had no medals, and I stopped at my tailor's ... and I said to him: 'You've got to fix me up with some medals.' He said: 'What medals, sir?' And I said: 'Oh, any medals. Just give me a few medals.' So he said: 'What medals *have* you, sir?' And I said: 'How should I know?' ... So he got me some medals, you know, miniature medals, and handed me the box, and I put it in my pocket and forgot it. ...

Later on in the evening I found the box in my pocket. What's this? I said. Medals? Bloody military medals? So I cut them off their backing—you know, they put them on a strip—and gave them all around. Gave one to each girl. Form of souvenir. ..."

"Tell the rest," Brett said.

"Don't you think that was funny?" Mike asked. We were all laughing. "It was. I swear it was. Any rate, my tailor wrote me and wanted the medals back. Sent a man around. Kept on writing for months. Seems some chap had left them to be cleaned. ..." Mike paused. "Rotten luck for the tailor."



Ernest Hemingway

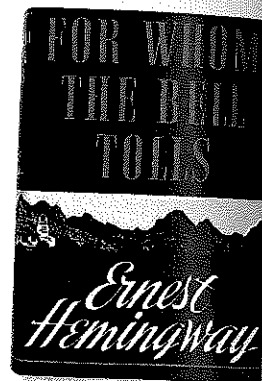
from *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

Why don't you ever think of how it is to win? You've been on the defensive for so long that you can't think of that. ...

But remember this that as long as we can hold them here we keep the fascists tied up. They can't attack any other country until they finish with us and they can never finish with us. If the French help at all, if only they leave the frontier open and if we get planes from America they can never finish with us. Never, if we get anything at all. These people will fight forever if they're well armed.

No you must not expect victory here, not for several years maybe. This is just a holding attack. ...

Today is only one day in all the days that will ever be. But what will happen in all the other days that ever come can depend on what you do today.



For Whom the Bell Tolls

UNDERSTANDING LITERATURE

1. In the first excerpt, what does Mike's attitude about military medals reveal about his attitude toward his service in World War I?
2. What is the meaning of the last two lines in the excerpt from *For Whom the Bell Tolls*?
3. How do these two excerpts convey universal themes?

Militarists in Japan

As German aggression threatened Europe, Japanese expansion loomed in Asia. In the 1920s the leaders of Japan's military forces had gained increasing power. These military men wanted to lessen Japan's reliance on foreign imports. They also aimed to reduce the influence of Western countries in Asia and promote Japanese expansion throughout East Asia and the Pacific.

The creation of a Japanese empire would give Japan direct control over territories that produced iron, petroleum, rubber, and timber. Worsening economic conditions in Japan strengthened the popular appeal of the militarists' position. Japan's 1931 invasion of Manchuria signaled its imperialist ambitions. In 1934 and 1935, in violation of their Washington Conference pledges, the Japanese began a rapid naval buildup. Viscount Inoue, a member of the Japanese House of Peers, explained Japan's position during a 1937 visit to London.



"Not only do we possess no oil supplies but this is true of very many other materials without which today a nation is helpless in wartime. To secure ... raw materials has become a problem of greatly increased importance. The very life of Japan as a first-class power is dependent on this question."

—Viscount Inoue, quoted in *Tojo*, by Courtney Browne

On July 7, 1937, Japanese and Chinese troops clashed near Beijing. The incident soon developed into a full-scale war. Japan occupied northern China and launched devastating bombing raids against Chinese cities. In December 1937, Japanese troops brutally assaulted and occupied the Chinese city of Nanjing. Although the League of Nations and the United States condemned Japan's actions, they failed to halt Japanese expansion.

✓ **READING CHECK: Evaluating** Why did Japan's military promote expansion during the 1930s?

SECTION 3 REVIEW

1. Define and explain:

totalitarian state
anti-Semitism

2. Identify and explain:

Benito Mussolini
Fascist Party
Blackshirts
Joseph Stalin
Nazi Party
Brownshirts
Kristallnacht
Francisco Franco
Popular Front

3. Comparing

Copy the chart below. Use it to describe how aggressive world leaders came to power and what their major policies were.

Leaders	Rise to Power	Policies
Mussolini		
Stalin		
Hitler		
Franco		
Japanese Militarists		

4. Finding the Main Idea

- a. How did dictators in the 1930s use military power against their own people?
- b. How did fascists gain power and influence in the 1920s and 1930s?
- c. Imagine that you are an American supporter of the Popular Front in the 1930s. Why are you fighting for the Spanish Loyalists?

5. Writing and Critical Thinking

Making Generalizations Write a paragraph explaining why the United States, the League of Nations, and European nations did not stop Germany's or Japan's expansion in the 1930s.

Consider:

- Hitler's claims on the territory
- the actions of other nations at the time
- international cooperation that existed in the 1930s



Uchida Ryohei was president of the Black Dragon Society, which wanted to drive the Soviet Union out of East Asia.