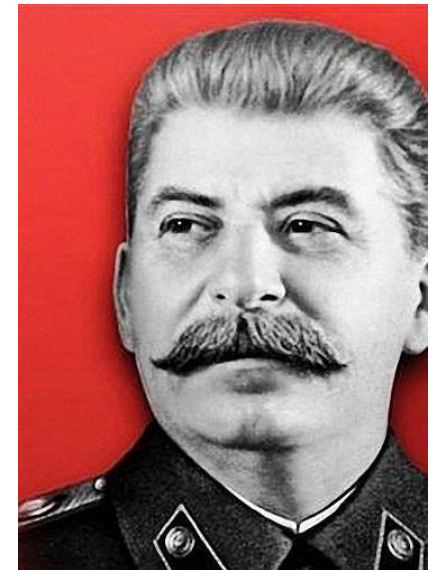


America and the World



The Rise of Dictators

- ▶ **Mussolini in Italy:** Mussolini's rise to power marked the emergence of fascism in Italy. Fascism, characterized by aggressive nationalism and suppression of opposition, appealed to many Italians disillusioned by economic hardship and political instability. Mussolini capitalized on fears of communism and promised to restore Italy's former glory. His Black shirts, backed by industrialists and the Catholic Church, helped him seize power and establish a dictatorship.
- ▶ **Stalin Takes Over the USSR:** After Lenin's death, Stalin emerged as the leader of the Soviet Union. He ruthlessly consolidated power, purging rivals and dissenters. Stalin's policies included rapid industrialization, collectivization of agriculture, and the Great Purge, resulting in millions of deaths. The Soviet Union became a one-party state under Stalin's totalitarian rule.
- ▶ **Hitler and Nazism in Germany:** Hitler's Nazi Party capitalized on German resentment over the Treaty of Versailles and economic turmoil. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* outlined his vision of a racially pure Germany and expansionist ambitions. Through legal means and coercion, Hitler obtained dictatorial powers, dismantled democracy, and initiated rearmament. His regime persecuted minorities, particularly Jews, laying the groundwork for the Holocaust.
- ▶ **Militarists Gain Control of Japan:** Economic challenges fueled discontent among Japanese military officers, who viewed expansion as essential to securing resources. The invasion of Manchuria signaled Japan's aggressive expansionism and the marginalization of civilian authority. Japan's militarists advocated for an imperialist agenda, rejecting democratic principles and seeking dominance in East Asia.



America Turns to Neutrality



- ▶ Disillusionment after World War I: The aftermath of World War I left many Americans disillusioned with international involvement. The failure of the Treaty of Versailles to establish lasting peace, coupled with economic instability, led to a desire to avoid entanglements in foreign conflicts.
- ▶ Growing Isolationist Sentiment: The Great Depression exacerbated isolationist tendencies, as Americans focused on domestic recovery. Many believed that involvement in European conflicts would divert resources and exacerbate economic hardship.
- ▶ The Nye Committee: Senator Gerald P. Nye's investigation into the profits of arms manufacturers during World War I fueled suspicions of war profiteering and manipulation. The committee's findings reinforced isolationist sentiments and skepticism towards military intervention.
- ▶ Neutrality Acts: Congress enacted a series of neutrality acts to prevent American involvement in foreign conflicts. These laws restricted arms sales, banned loans to belligerent nations, and implemented a cash-and-carry policy for non-military goods. Isolationist sentiment influenced the passage of these laws, reflecting a desire to avoid repeating the experiences of World War I.

Roosevelt and Internationalism

- ▶ Support for Internationalism: Despite isolationist pressures, President Roosevelt advocated for international cooperation and trade. He recognized the interconnectedness of global economies and the importance of diplomacy in maintaining peace.
- ▶ Struggle Against Isolationism: Roosevelt faced resistance from isolationist factions within Congress and the public. He sought to balance his commitment to internationalism with the prevailing desire for neutrality, often refraining from challenging isolationist policies directly.
- ▶ Decision to Aid China: In response to Japanese aggression in China, Roosevelt circumvented neutrality laws to provide assistance to the Chinese government. His decision reflected a belief in the moral imperative to oppose aggression and uphold international norms, despite domestic opposition.



Conclusion

- ▶ The era of the Great Depression witnessed the rise of dictators and militarism in Europe and Asia, prompting America to adopt a policy of neutrality and isolationism.
- ▶ Despite President Roosevelt's advocacy for internationalism, the prevailing sentiment in America favored avoiding foreign entanglements.
- ▶ The legacy of isolationism shaped American foreign policy in the lead-up to World War II, highlighting the complexities of balancing national interests with global responsibilities.



The End

