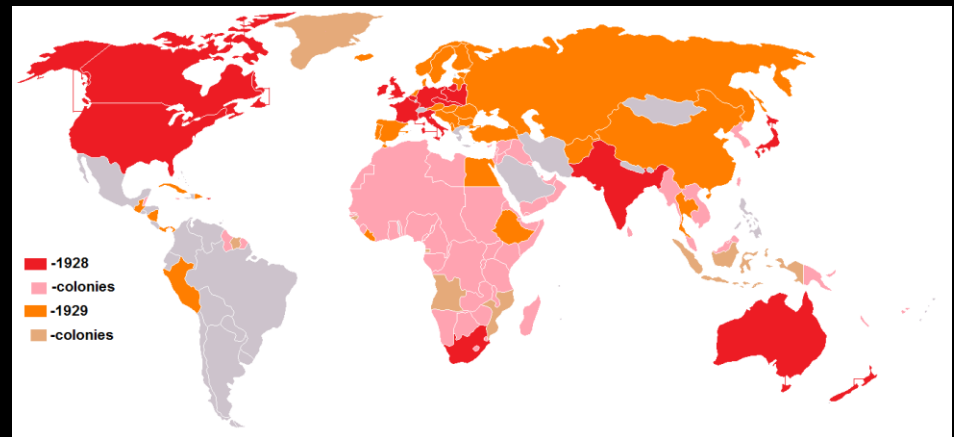Road to World War II

The Rise of Dictators

Postwar Peace

- During the 1920s many people worked towards peace.
- The Kellogg-Briand Pact - Almost every independent nation signed promised to renounce war
- League of Nations was powerless to stop aggression.
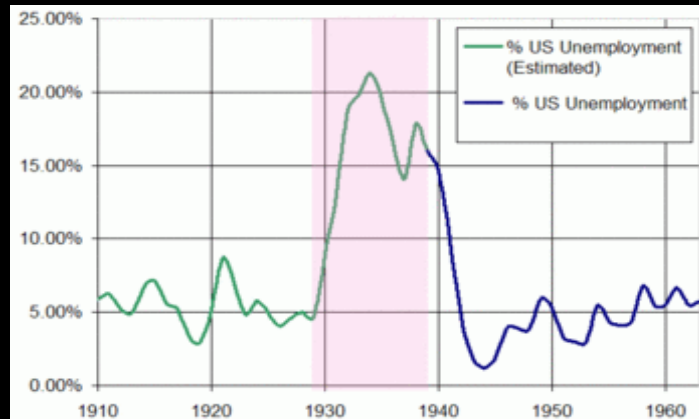

- -1928
- -colonies
- -1929
- -colonies

Economic Crisis

- Britain and France both owed huge war debts to the United States.
- The U.S. emerges from the war as the leading economic power.
- Crushing reparations and conditions continued to hurt Germany's economy.

Great Depression

- Began in the US and spread to the rest of the world.
- Overproduction occurred = demand slowed Factories then had to cut production and employees.
- In the Fall of 1929, due to an increase in interest rates many people began to sell their stocks at once leading to a financial panic.

Great Depression

- American banks stopped making loans abroad and demanded repayment of foreign loans.
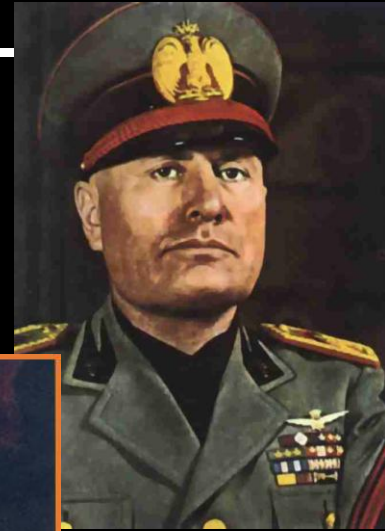- Germany greatly suffered, unable to make reparation payments.
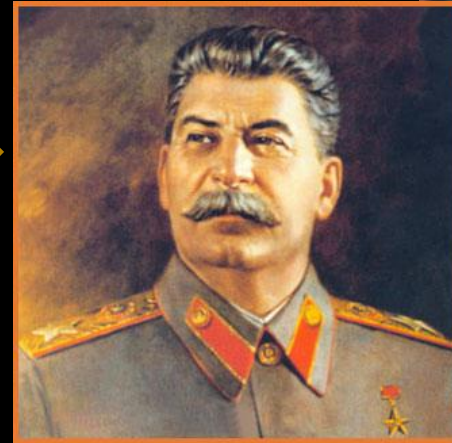
Great Depression
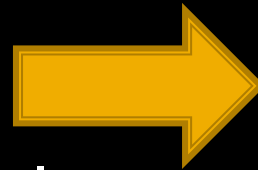
- As the Depression continued people began to lose faith in democracy.
- Hopelessness paved the way for extremists who promised radical solutions.

Rise of Dictators
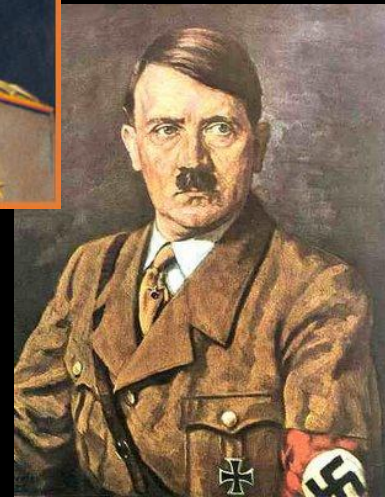
- **Italy-** Benito Mussolini

- **Russia-** Josef Stalin

- **Germany-** Adolf Hitler

Benito Mussolini

- Intense Nationalist
- Fascist Party.
  - Authoritarian government
  - Policies glorify the state over the individual.
- Wanted revival of Roman greatness.
- Black Shirts- Combat squads that rejected democracy in favor of violent action.
- Nickname = Il Duce ("The Leader").

Life Under Benito Mussolini

- Mussolini brought the economy under state control
- Capitalism remained
- All were expected to obey Mussolini.
- Authority was enforced by the Black Shirts appointed by Mussolini.
- Fascist ideas were spread through the youth = a nation of warriors.

Josef Stalin

- Member of the communist party
- Turned the Soviet Union into a totalitarian state.
- Proposed "five-year plans" that aimed at building heavy industry, improving transportation and increasing farm output.

Life Under Josef Stalin

- Total control of all media
- Stalin's self-image was glorified. Painting portrayed him as a kind and gentle uncle figure.
- Children were taught how to become good socialists/communists.
- The state paid families a child allowance if they were a married couple.

Life Under Josef Stalin

- Millions died due to **collectivization**.
  - The pooling of farmland, animals and equipment for the sake of more efficient large-scale production.
- Many of Russia's most talented people were murdered during **the Purges of 1930**.
- Anyone with talent was viewed as a threat to Stalin.

Adolf Hitler

- Hitler hated Marxism and Socialism. He was convinced that the struggles for the survival of the fittest were the facts of the world.
- Fought in World War I
- The shock of Germany's defeat and revolution intensified his commitment to Racial Nationalism.

Adolf Hitler

- Became the leader of a group known as the National Socialist German Worker's Party (a.k.a. Nazi).
- Hitler was good at grasping the attention of an audience.
- He used uniforms, emblems and flags as a way of creating uniformity and camaraderie.

Life Under Adolf Hitler

" Every girl belongs to us."

- **Hitler Youth** - created in the 1920s. It was an additional education for students as a way of continuing Nazi Germany.
- **SS** - Maintained security, fought alongside the army and took control of concentration camps.
- **Gestapo** - Hitler's secret police.
  - Could arrest anyone
  - Could send them to concentration camps without trial

Life Under Adolf Hitler

- Hitler used propaganda as a way of aiming at people's emotions.
- Nazi members had full control of what they wanted the German people to see and hear.
  - Jazz music was banned.
  - Films were controlled.
  - Telling jokes about Hitler was banned.