

Dictators Threaten World Peace

MAIN IDEA

The rise of rulers with total power in Europe and Asia led to World War II.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Dictators of the 1930s and 1940s changed the course of history, making world leaders especially watchful for the actions of dictators today.

Terms & Names

- Joseph Stalin
- totalitarian
- Benito Mussolini
- fascism
- Adolf Hitler
- Nazism
- Francisco Franco
- Neutrality Acts

One American's Story

Martha Gellhorn arrived in Madrid in 1937 to cover the brutal civil war that had broken out in Spain the year before. Hired as a special correspondent for *Collier's Weekly*, she had come with very little money and no special protection. On assignment there, she met the writer Ernest Hemingway, whom she later married. To Gellhorn, a young American writer, the Spanish Civil War was a deadly struggle between tyranny and democracy. For the people of Madrid, it was also a daily struggle for survival.



▲ Martha Gellhorn, one of the first women war correspondents, began her career during the Spanish Civil War.

A Personal Voice MARTHA GELLHORN

"You would be walking down a street, hearing only the city noises of streetcars and automobiles and people calling to one another, and suddenly, crushing it all out, would be the huge stony deep booming of a falling shell, at the corner. There was no place to run, because how did you know that the next shell would not be behind you, or ahead, or to the left or right?"

—The Face of War

Less than two decades after the end of World War I—"the war to end all wars"—fighting erupted again in Europe and in Asia. As Americans read about distant battles, they hoped the conflicts would remain on the other side of the world.

Nationalism Grips Europe and Asia

The seeds of new conflicts had been sown in World War I. For many nations, peace had brought not prosperity but revolution fueled by economic depression and struggle. The postwar years also brought the rise of powerful dictators driven by the belief in nationalism—loyalty to one's country above all else—and dreams of territorial expansion.





Germany was expected to pay off huge debts while dealing with widespread poverty. By 1923, an inflating economy made a five-million German mark worth less than a penny. Here children build blocks with stacks of useless German marks.

FAILURES OF THE WORLD WAR I PEACE SETTLEMENT Instead of securing a "just and secure peace," the Treaty of Versailles caused anger and resentment. Germans saw nothing fair in a treaty that blamed them for starting the war. Nor did they find security in a settlement that stripped them of their overseas colonies and border territories. These problems overwhelmed the Weimar Republic, the democratic government set up in Germany after World War I. Similarly, the Soviets resented the carving up of parts of Russia. (See map, Chapter 11, p. 400.)

MAIN IDEA

Identifying Problems

A Why did the new democracies set up after World War I fail?

The peace settlement had not fulfilled President Wilson's hope of a world "safe for democracy." New democratic governments that emerged in Europe after the war floundered. Without a democratic tradition, people turned to authoritarian leaders to solve their economic and social problems. The new democracies collapsed, and dictators were able to seize power. Some had great ambitions. A

JOSEPH STALIN TRANSFORMS THE SOVIET UNION In Russia, hopes for democracy gave way to civil war, resulting in the establishment of a communist state, officially called the Soviet Union, in 1922. After V. I. Lenin died in 1924, **Joseph Stalin,** whose last name means "man of steel," took control of the country. Stalin focused on creating a model communist state. In so doing, he made both agricultural and industrial growth the prime economic goals of the Soviet Union. Stalin abolished all privately owned farms and replaced them with collectives—large government-owned farms, each worked by hundreds of families.

Stalin moved to transform the Soviet Union from a backward rural nation into a great industrial power. In 1928, the Soviet dictator outlined the first of several "five-year plans," to direct the industrialization. All economic activity was placed under state management. By 1937, the Soviet Union had become the world's second-largest industrial power, surpassed in overall production only by the United States. The human costs of this transformation, however, were enormous.

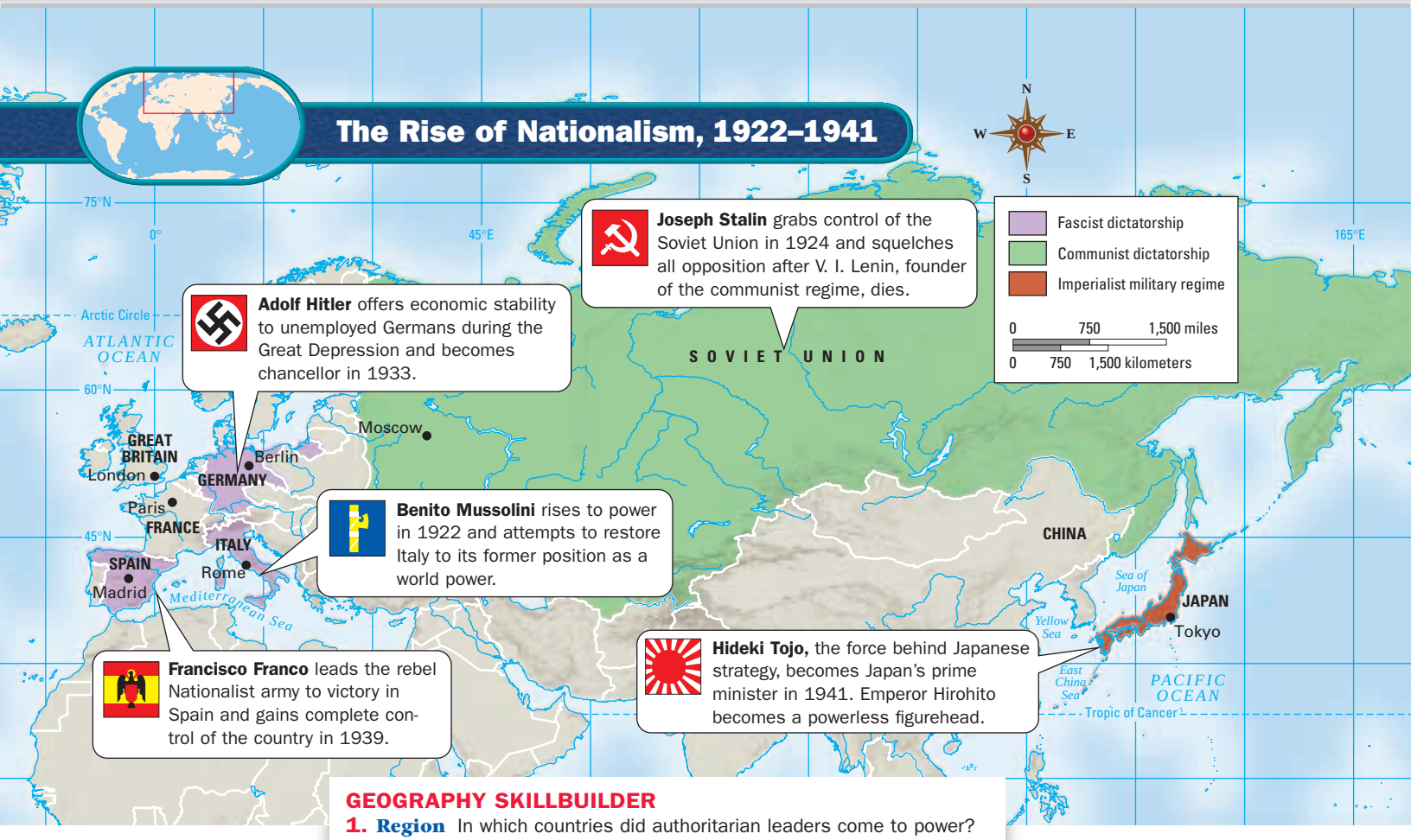
In his drive to purge, or eliminate, anyone who threatened his power, Stalin did not spare even his most faithful supporters. While the final toll will never be known, historians estimate that Stalin was responsible for the deaths of 8 million to 13 million people. Millions more died in famines caused by the restructuring of Soviet society.

MAIN IDEA

Summarizing

B What are the characteristics of a totalitarian state?

By 1939, Stalin had firmly established a **totalitarian** government that maintained complete control over its citizens. In a totalitarian state, individuals have no rights, and the government suppresses all opposition. B



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

1. **Region** In which countries did authoritarian leaders come to power? Who were the leaders?
2. **Location** What geographic features might have led Japan to expand?

THE RISE OF FASCISM IN ITALY While Stalin was consolidating his power in the Soviet Union, **Benito Mussolini** was establishing a totalitarian regime in Italy, where unemployment and inflation produced bitter strikes, some communist-led. Alarmed by these threats, the middle and upper classes demanded stronger leadership. Mussolini took advantage of this situation. A powerful speaker, Mussolini knew how to appeal to Italy's wounded national pride. He played on the fears of economic collapse and communism. In this way, he won the support of many discontented Italians.

"Italy wants peace, work, and calm. I will give these things with love if possible, with force if necessary."
BENITO MUSSOLINI

By 1921, Mussolini had established the Fascist Party. **Fascism** (făsh'ĭz'əm) stressed nationalism and placed the interests of the state above those of individuals. To strengthen the nation, Fascists argued, power must rest with a single strong leader and a small group of devoted party members. (The Latin *fasces*—a bundle of rods tied around an ax handle—had been a symbol of unity and authority in ancient Rome.)

In October 1922, Mussolini marched on Rome with thousands of his followers, whose black uniforms gave them the name "Black Shirts." When important government officials, the army, and the police sided with the Fascists, the Italian king appointed Mussolini head of the government.

Calling himself *Il Duce*, or "the leader," Mussolini gradually extended Fascist control to every aspect of Italian life. Tourists marveled that *Il Duce* had even "made the trains run on time." Mussolini achieved this efficiency, however, by crushing all opposition and by making Italy a totalitarian state. C

MAIN IDEA
Analyzing Causes
C What factors led to the rise of Fascism in Italy?

The Faces of Totalitarianism

Fascist Italy	Nazi Germany	Communist Soviet Union
		
• Extreme nationalism • Militaristic expansionism • Charismatic leader • Private property with strong government controls • Anticommunist	• Extreme nationalism and racism • Militaristic expansionism • Forceful leader • Private property with strong government controls • Anticommunist	• Create a sound communist state and wait for world revolution • Revolution by workers • Eventual rule by working class • State ownership of property

▲ **Left to right: Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin**

THE NAZIS TAKE OVER GERMANY In Germany, **Adolf Hitler** had followed a path to power similar to Mussolini's. At the end of World War I, Hitler had been a jobless soldier drifting around Germany. In 1919, he joined a struggling group called the National Socialist German Workers' Party, better known as the Nazi Party. Despite its name, this party had no ties to socialism.

Hitler proved to be such a powerful public speaker and organizer that he quickly became the party's leader. Calling himself *Der Führer*—"the Leader"—he promised to bring Germany out of chaos.

In his book *Mein Kampf* [My Struggle], Hitler set forth the basic beliefs of Nazism that became the plan of action for the Nazi Party. **Nazism** (nätʹsĭzʹəm), the German brand of fascism, was based on extreme nationalism. Hitler, who had been born in Austria, dreamed of uniting all German-speaking people in a great German empire.

Hitler also wanted to enforce racial "purification" at home. In his view, Germans—especially blue-eyed, blond-haired "Aryans"—formed a "master race" that was destined to rule the world. "Inferior races," such as Jews, Slavs, and all nonwhites, were deemed fit only to serve the Aryans.

MAIN IDEA

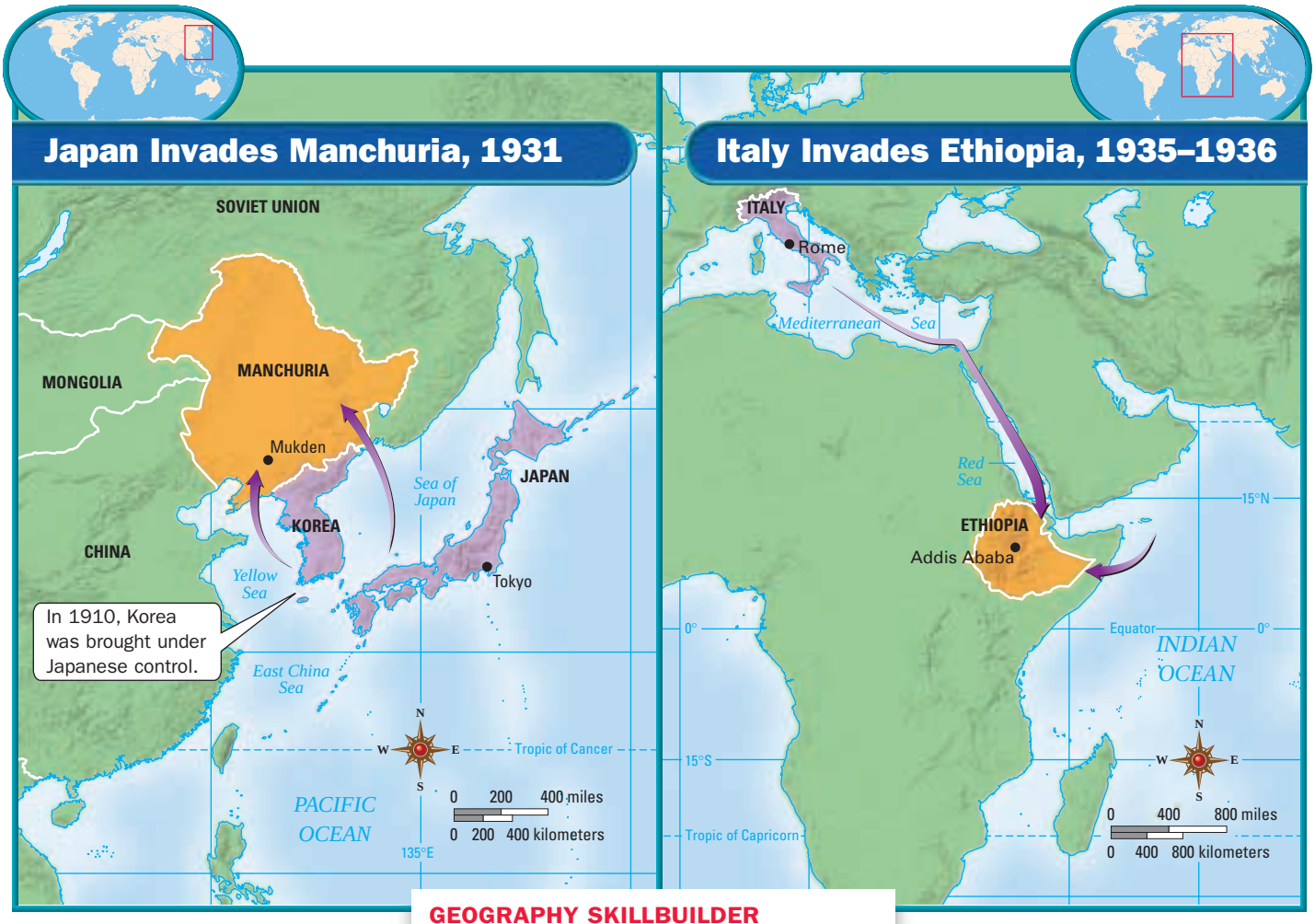
Summarizing D What were the key ideas and goals that Hitler presented in *Mein Kampf*?

A third element of Nazism was national expansion. Hitler believed that for Germany to thrive, it needed more *lebensraum*, or living space. One of the Nazis' aims, as Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, was "to secure for the German people the land and soil to which they are entitled on this earth," even if this could be accomplished only by "the might of a victorious sword." D

The Great Depression helped the Nazis come to power. Because of war debts and dependence on American loans and investments, Germany's economy was hit hard. By 1932, some 6 million Germans were unemployed. Many men who were out of work joined Hitler's private army, the *storm troopers* (or *Brown Shirts*). The German people were desperate and turned to Hitler as their last hope.

By mid 1932, the Nazis had become the strongest political party in Germany. In January 1933, Hitler was appointed chancellor (prime minister). Once in power, Hitler quickly dismantled Germany's democratic Weimar Republic. In its place he established the *Third Reich*, or Third German Empire. According to Hitler, the Third Reich would be a "Thousand-Year Reich"—it would last for a thousand years.

Background According to Hitler there were three German empires: the Holy Roman Empire; The German Empire of 1871–1918; and The Third Reich.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

1. **Location** What countries were aggressors during this period?
2. **Movement** Notice the size and location of Italy and of Japan with respect to the country each invaded. What similarities do you see?

MILITARISTS GAIN CONTROL IN JAPAN Halfway around the world, nationalistic military leaders were trying to take control of the imperial government of Japan. These leaders shared in common with Hitler a belief in the need for more living space for a growing population. Ignoring the protests of more moderate Japanese officials, the militarists launched a surprise attack and seized control of the Chinese province of Manchuria in 1931. Within several months, Japanese troops controlled the entire province, a large region about twice the size of Texas, that was rich in natural resources. E

The watchful League of Nations had been established after World War I to prevent just such aggressive acts. In this greatest test of the League's power, representatives were sent to Manchuria to investigate the situation. Their report condemned Japan, who in turn simply quit the League. Meanwhile, the success of the Manchurian invasion put the militarists firmly in control of Japan's government.

AGGRESSION IN EUROPE AND AFRICA The failure of the League of Nations to take action against Japan did not escape the notice of Europe's dictators. In 1933, Hitler pulled Germany out of the League. In 1935, he began a military buildup in violation of the Treaty of Versailles. A year later, he sent troops into the Rhineland, a German region bordering France and Belgium that was demilitarized as a result of the Treaty of Versailles. The League did nothing to stop Hitler.

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Motives

E Why did Japan invade Manchuria?

Background

Military government had centuries-old roots in Japan. The shogun lords of the Middle Ages had been military leaders.

Meanwhile, Mussolini began building his new Roman Empire. His first target was Ethiopia, one of Africa's few remaining independent countries. By the fall of 1935, tens of thousands of Italian soldiers stood ready to advance on Ethiopia. The League of Nations reacted with brave talk of "collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression."

When the invasion began, however, the League's response was an ineffective economic boycott—little more than a slap on Italy's wrist. By May 1936, Ethiopia had fallen. In desperation, Haile Selassie, the ousted Ethiopian emperor, appealed to the League for assistance. Nothing was done. "It is us today," he told them. "It will be you tomorrow."

CIVIL WAR BREAKS OUT IN SPAIN In 1936, a group of Spanish army officers led by General **Francisco Franco**, rebelled against the Spanish republic. Revolts broke out all over Spain, and the Spanish Civil War began. The war aroused passions not only in Spain but throughout the world. About 3,000 Americans formed the Abraham Lincoln Battalion and traveled to Spain to fight against Franco. "We knew, we just knew," recalled Martha Gellhorn, "that Spain was the place to stop fascism." Among the volunteers were African Americans still bitter about Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia the year before.

Such limited aid was not sufficient to stop the spread of fascism, however. The Western democracies remained neutral. Although the Soviet Union sent equipment and advisers, Hitler and Mussolini backed Franco's forces with troops, weapons, tanks, and fighter planes. The war forged a close relationship between the German and Italian dictators, who signed a formal alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis. After a loss of almost 500,000 lives, Franco's victory in 1939 established him as Spain's fascist dictator. Once again a totalitarian government ruled in Europe. F

MAIN IDEA

Summarizing

F What foreign countries were involved in the Spanish Civil War?

HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT



AFRICAN AMERICANS STAND BY ETHIOPIANS

When Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, many Europeans and Americans—especially African Americans—were outraged. Almost overnight, African Americans organized to raise money for medical supplies, and a few went to fight in Ethiopia. Years later, the Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie (shown above) said of these efforts,

"We can never forget the help Ethiopia received from Negro Americans during the terrible crisis. . . . It moved me to know that Americans of African descent did not abandon their embattled brothers, but stood by us."



A French journalist escapes from Spain to France with a child he rescued from a street battle. Fighting would soon engulf not only France but the rest of Europe and parts of Asia.

The United States Responds Cautiously

Most Americans were alarmed by the international conflicts of the mid-1930s but believed that the United States should not get involved. In 1928, the United States had signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The treaty was signed by 62 countries and declared that war would not be used "as an instrument of national policy." Yet it did not include a plan to deal with countries that broke their pledge. The Pact was, therefore, only a small step toward peace.

AMERICANS CLING TO ISOLATIONISM In the early 1930s, a flood of books argued that the United States had been dragged into World War I by greedy bankers and arms dealers. Public outrage led to the creation of a congressional committee, chaired by North Dakota Senator Gerald Nye, that held hearings on these charges. The Nye committee fueled the controversy by documenting the large profits that banks and manufacturers made during the war. As the furor grew over these "merchants of death," Americans became more determined than ever to avoid war. Antiwar feeling was so strong that the Girl Scouts of America changed the color of its uniforms from khaki to green to appear less militaristic. G

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Causes

G What factors contributed to Americans' growing isolationism?

Americans' growing isolationism eventually had an impact on President Roosevelt's foreign policy. When he had first taken office in 1933, Roosevelt felt comfortable reaching out to the world in several ways. He officially recognized the Soviet Union in 1933 and agreed to exchange ambassadors with Moscow. He continued the policy of nonintervention in Latin America—begun by Presidents Coolidge and Hoover—with his Good Neighbor Policy and withdrew armed forces stationed there. In 1934, Roosevelt pushed the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act through Congress. This act lowered trade barriers by giving the president the power to make trade agreements with other nations and was aimed at reducing

Analyzing Political Cartoons

"IT AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE"

During the late 1930s, Americans were divided about becoming involved in "Europe's quarrels." Some people felt that the United States should be more involved in the economic and political problems occurring across the Atlantic. Isolationists—people who believed the United States should stay completely out of other nations' affairs except in the defense of the United States—strictly opposed intervening. The idea that America and Europe were two separate worlds divided by an ocean that could guarantee safety was quickly eroding.



SKILLBUILDER

Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. What does Uncle Sam's turning his back on Europe show about American attitudes in the late 1930s?
2. What U.S. policy does the cartoon imply?
3. Why might the Atlantic Ocean have appeared to shrink in the late 1930s?

SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R24.

tariffs by as much as 50 percent. In an effort to keep the United States out of future wars, beginning in 1935, Congress passed a series of **Neutrality Acts**. The first two acts outlawed arms sales or loans to nations at war. The third act was passed in response to the fighting in Spain. This act extended the ban on arms sales and loans to nations engaged in civil wars.

NEUTRALITY BREAKS DOWN Despite congressional efforts to legislate neutrality, Roosevelt found it impossible to remain neutral. When Japan launched a new attack on China in July 1937, Roosevelt found a way around the Neutrality Acts. Because Japan had not formally declared war against China, the president claimed there was no need to enforce the Neutrality Acts. The United States continued sending arms and supplies to China. A few months later, Roosevelt spoke out strongly against isolationism in a speech delivered in Chicago. He called on peace-loving nations to "quarantine," or isolate, aggressor nations in order to stop the spread of war.

A PERSONAL VOICE FRANLKIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

"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. Surely the 90 percent who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with moral standards that have received almost universal acceptance through the centuries, can and must find some way . . . to preserve peace."

—"Quarantine Speech," October 5, 1937

At last Roosevelt seemed ready to take a stand against aggression—that is, until isolationist newspapers exploded in protest, accusing the president of leading the nation into war. Roosevelt backed off in the face of criticism, but his speech did begin to shift the debate. For the moment the conflicts remained "over there."

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

1. TERMS & NAMES For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- **Joseph Stalin**
- **totalitarian**
- **Benito Mussolini**
- **fascism**
- **Adolf Hitler**
- **Nazism**
- **Francisco Franco**
- **Neutrality Acts**

MAIN IDEA

2. TAKING NOTES Using a web diagram like the one below, fill it in with the main ambition of each dictator.



What ambitions did the dictators have in common?

CRITICAL THINKING

3. ANALYZING CAUSES How did the Treaty of Versailles sow the seeds of instability in Europe?

Think About:

- effects of the treaty on Germany and the Soviet Union
- effects of the treaty on national pride
- the economic legacy of the war

4. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS Why do you think Hitler found widespread support among the German people? Support your answer with details from the text.

5. FORMING GENERALIZATIONS Would powerful nations or weak nations be more likely to follow an isolationist policy? Explain.