Benito Mussolini

“Fascism is definitely and absolutely opposed to the doctrines of liberalism,

both in the political and economic sphere.”

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\_figures/mussolini\_benito.shtml

Benito Amilcare Andrea Mussolini was born on 29 July 1883 in Predappio in northern central Italy. His father was a blacksmith. Employment prospects in the area were poor so in 1902 Mussolini moved to Switzerland, where he became involved in socialist politics. He returned to Italy in 1904. In March 1919, Mussolini formed the Fascist Party, galvanizing the support of many unemployed war veterans. He organized them into armed squads known as Black Shirts, who terrorized their political opponents. In 1921, the Fascist Party was invited to join the coalition government.

Mussolini gradually dismantled the institutions of democratic government and in 1925 made himself dictator, taking the title 'Il Duce'. He set about attempting to re-establish Italy as a great European power. The regime was held together by strong state control and Mussolini's cult of personality.

In 1935, Mussolini invaded Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) and incorporated it into his new Italian Empire. He provided military support to Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Increasing co-operation with Nazi Germany culminated in the 1939 Pact of Steel. Influenced by Hitler, Mussolini began to introduce anti-Jewish legislation in Italy. His declaration of war on Britain and France in June 1940 exposed Italian military weakness and was followed by a series of defeats in North and East Africa and the Balkans.

In July 1943, Allied troops landed in Sicily. Mussolini was overthrown and imprisoned by his former colleagues in the Fascist government. In September, Italy signed an armistice with the Allies. The German army began the occupation of Italy and Mussolini was rescued by German commandos. He was installed as the leader of a new government, but had little power. As the Allies advanced northwards through Italy, Mussolini fled towards Switzerland. He was captured by Italian partisans and shot on 28 April 1945.

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Mussolini.html

Under the dictatorship the parliamentary system was virtually abolished. The law codes were rewritten. All teachers in schools and universities had to swear an oath to defend the Fascist regime. Newspaper editors were all personally chosen by Mussolini himself, and no one could practice journalism who did not possess a certificate of approval from the Fascist party. The trade unions were also deprived of any independence and were integrated into what was called the "corporative" system. The aim (never completely achieved) was to place all Italians in various professional organizations or "corporations", all of them under governmental control.

Mussolini played up to his financial backers at first by transferring a number of industries from public to private ownership. But by the 1930's he had begun moving back to the opposite extreme of rigid governmental control of industry. A great deal of money was spent on public works. But the economy suffered from his exaggerated attempt to make Italy self-sufficient. There was too much concentration on heavy industry, for which Italy lacked the resources.

As World War II approached, Mussolini announced his intention of annexing Malta, Corsica, and Tunis. In April 1939, after a brief struggle, he occupied Albania. Failing to realize that he had more to gain by trying to hold the balance of power in Europe, he preferred to rely on a policy of bluff and bluster to induce the Western democracies to give way to his increasing territorial demands. The fact that Italy had began its military buildup before other powers became a disadvantage as by 1939, its military infrastructure was becoming obsolete. His armed forces were completely unprepared when Hitler's invasion of Poland led to World War II. He decided to remain "nonbelligerent" until he was quite certain which side would win.

Joseph Stalin

"In the Soviet army, it takes more courage to retreat than advance."

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\_figures/stalin\_joseph.shtml

Stalin was not one of the decisive players in the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917, but he soon rose through the ranks of the party. In 1922, he was made general secretary of the Communist Party, a post not considered particularly significant at the time but which gave him control over appointments and thus allowed him to build up a base of support. After Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin promoted himself as his political heir and gradually outmaneuvered his rivals. By the late 1920s, Stalin was effectively the dictator of the Soviet Union.

His forced collectivization of agriculture cost millions of lives, while his programme of rapid industrialization achieved huge increases in Soviet productivity and economic growth but at great cost. Moreover, the population suffered immensely during the Great Terror of the 1930s, during which Stalin purged the party of 'enemies of the people', resulting in the execution of thousands and the exile of millions to the gulag system of slave labor camps.

These purges severely depleted the Red Army, and despite repeated warnings, Stalin was ill prepared for Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941. His political future, and that of the Soviet Union, hung in the balance, but Stalin recovered to lead his country to victory. The human cost was enormous, but was not a consideration for him.

http://www.pbs.org/redfiles/bios/all\_bio\_joseph\_stalin.htm

As war clouds were gathering on the horizon in 1939, Stalin felt that he had scored a coup by striking a non-aggression pact with Hitler, in which they agreed to divide up Poland and then leave each other alone. Stalin so strongly believed that he and Hitler had an understanding that he refused to listen to his military advisors' warnings in 1941 that the Wehrmacht was massing for an attack, and purged any one who dared utter such blasphemy. As a result, when the attack came, the Soviet army was completely unprepared and suffered horrible defeats, while Stalin spent the first several days after the attack holed up in his office in shock. Because the military had been purged of its best minds in the mid-1930s, it took some time, and many lives, before the Soviets were able to regroup and make a credible defense. By then, all of the Ukraine and Belarus were in German hands, Leningrad had been surrounded and besieged, and Nazi artillery was entrenched only a few miles from the Kremlin. After heroic efforts on the part of the whole country, the tide eventually turned at Stalingrad in 1943, and soon the victorious Red Army was liberating the countries of Eastern Europe--before the Americans had even begun to pose a serious challenge to Hitler from the west with the D-Day invasion.

Douglas MacArthur

"In war there is no substitute for victory."

http://www.biography.com/people/douglas-macarthur-9390257

In 1903, MacArthur graduated at the top of his class from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. As a junior officer in the years leading up to World War I, he was stationed in the Philippines and around the United States, served as an aide to his father in the Far East and participated in the American occupation of Veracruz, Mexico, in 1914. After the United States entered World War I in 1917, MacArthur helped lead the 42nd "Rainbow" Division in France and was promoted to brigadier general.

In 1930 President [Herbert Hoover](http://www.biography.com/people/herbert-hoover-9343371) (1874-1964) named MacArthur chief of staff of the Army, with the rank of general. In this role, MacArthur sent Army troops to remove the so-called Bonus Army of unemployed World War I veterans from Washington, D.C., in 1932. The incident was a public relations disaster for MacArthur and the military.  
  
In 1935, after finishing his term as chief of staff, MacArthur was tasked with creating an armed force for the Philippines, which became a commonwealth of the United States that year (and gained independence in 1946). In 1937, upon learning he was scheduled to return for duty in the United States, MacArthur resigned from the military, stating that his mission wasn't finished. He remained in the Philippines, where he served as a civilian advisor to President Manuel Quezon (1878-1944), who had appointed him field marshal of the Philippines.

In 1941, with expansionist Japan posing an increasing threat, Douglas MacArthur was recalled to active duty and named commander of U.S. Army forces in the Far East. On December 8, 1941, his air force was destroyed in a surprise attack by the Japanese, who soon invaded the Philippines. MacArthur's forces retreated to the Bataan peninsula, where they struggled to survive. In March 1942, on orders from President Franklin Roosevelt (1882-1945), MacArthur, his family and members of his staff fled Corregidor Island in PT boats and escaped to Australia. Shortly afterward, MacArthur promised, "I shall return." U.S.-Philippine forces fell to Japan in May 1942.  
  
In April 1942, MacArthur was appointed supreme commander of Allied forces in the Southwest Pacific and awarded the Medal of Honor for his defense of the Philippines. He spent the next two and a half years commanding an island-hopping campaign in the Pacific before famously returning to liberate the Philippines in October 1944. Wading ashore at Leyte, he announced, “I have returned. By the grace of Almighty God, our forces stand again on Philippine soil.” In December 1944, he was promoted to the rank of General of the Army and soon given command of all Army forces in the Pacific.  
  
On September 2, 1945, MacArthur officially accepted Japan's surrender aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. From 1945 to 1951, as Allied commander of the Japanese occupation, MacArthur oversaw the successful demobilization of Japan's military forces as well as the restoration of the economy, the drafting of a new constitution and numerous other reforms.

\*More Information on page 500 of your textbooks.

Dwight Eisenhower

**"War is a grim, cruel business, a business justified only as a means of**

**sustaining the forces of good against those of evil."**

http://www.dwightdeisenhower.com/biodde.html

  From 1922 to 1924, Eisenhower served as executive officer to General Fox Conner, a highly respected Army officer, in the Panama Canal Zone. Conner assumed the role of mentor to the younger Eisenhower, a decision that proved to be instrumental in the advancement of his career. Under Conner's tutelage, Eisenhower immersed himself in seminal works of history, military science, and philosophy. It was Conner who explained the inevitability of the coming world war to Eisenhower. With Conner's assistance, Eisenhower was accepted into the Command and General Staff School at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, the army's elite graduate school. In 1926, he graduated first in a class of 245 of the Army's finest young officers. Eisenhower had established a reputation for himself among officers of the small, peacetime, United States Army.

     While in Fort Benning in 1927, Eisenhower was selected by General John "Black Jack" Pershing to write for the American Battle Monuments Commission in Washington and Paris. It was in this period that Eisenhower was introduced to the geography, cultures, and people of Europe; knowledge that would prove invaluable little more than a decade later. His tour completed in 1929, Eisenhower reported to the War Department. One of his assignments was to develop a plan to mobilize manpower and materiel for the Army should there be another war. It was from this position, that he was transferred to serve as chief military aide--largely to write speeches, reports and policy papers--under Douglas MacArthur, U.S. Army Chief of Staff in 1933.

     In 1935, Eisenhower accompanied MacArthur to the Philippines as assistant military advisor, and there he remained--less than enthusiastic--until late in 1939. His primary mission, to build a viable Filipino Army, was to prove both frustrating and elusive. As the end of his assignment approached, Europe was, once again, at war. Despite MacArthur's pressure to remain in the Philippines and President Quezon's handsome offer of a blank contract for his services, Eisenhower was never tempted. He was not going to miss this war.

On December 12, 1941, just five days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Brigadier General Dwight D. Eisenhower received the phone call that would alter the course of his life forever. On the other end of the line was the voice of Colonel Walter Bedell Smith, secretary of the General Staff, insisting that "The Chief," General George C. Marshall, wanted him in Washington-immediately.

 As a result of that December 12 summons to Washington, Eisenhower was transferred to the War Plans Division in Washington, DC, where Marshall tested his abilities with an amazing array of responsibilities in rapid succession. The Army Chief of Staff was impressed with Eisenhower's thinking, organizational, and people skills; in turn, Eisenhower was promoted to Major General by March of 1942.  June 6, 1944, D-day, was the beginning of the end for the war in Europe. Eisenhower was promoted to the rank of General of the Army (5 stars) in December of that year. When Germany surrendered in May 1945, Eisenhower was appointed Military Governor, US Occupied Zone. By then, Dwight D. Eisenhower was an international celebrity; he had earned the respect, admiration, and affection of people around the world. Allied victory in Europe culminated in joyous exhaustion. Eisenhower quickly became the centerpiece of speeches, grand parades, and throngs of admirers as grateful nations throughout Europe honored him. In June of 1945, Eisenhower returned to a hometown hero's welcome in Abilene, where her citizens honored him as they had no other. Five months later, November 1945, Eisenhower was selected as Chief of Staff, US Army.

\*More information on page 510 of your textbook.