**What are the main causes for rise of Totalitarianism in Europe?**

**Document A**

By Samir

The following factors contributed to the rise of totalitarianism in Europe between 1929-39:

First, the humiliating treatment rneeted out to Germany by the Treaty of Versailles, created a sense of hatred and revenge amongst the I Germans. The treaty had mutilated Germany physically, humiliated her emotionally, suffocated her economically and encircled her territorially. This had greatly offended the popular sentiments in Germany. Hitler fully exploited these sentiments to establish his dictatorship in German".

Secondly, the Treaty of Versailles greatly disappointed Italy. Though she fought on the side of the victors she could not gain whatever had been promised to her during the war. the other hand. Italy had to face 'poverty, discontent and disorder.'

The Italian leaders felt that though they had won the war they lost the peace. Naturally, the Italians were in the look out for a man who could help them to achieve their national ambitions and they found such a person in Benito Mussolini and permitted him to establish his totalitarian rule in Italy.

Thirdly, the successful bid by America and other European powers to curb the growing power of Japan by imposing restrictions on her navy and ambitions in China, through the Washington Conference of 1921-22 was exploited by the military leaders in Japan to bring discredit to the demo­cratic government and establish a totalitarian rule in Japan.

Fourthly, in Russia the Communist leaders were determined to spread communism all over the world. They crushed all the anti-revolutionary forces within the country with firm hand and tried to promote communism in other countries of world by resorting to all types of methods.

In addition to the particular cause which helped the growth of totalitarian regimes in various countries there were some general causes which also contributed to the rise of dictatorships.

In the first place, the democratic governments established after the First World War proved a miserable failure in so far as they failed to solve the social, economic and political problems facing their countries in the post-war period. Their failure was fully exploited to establish dictatorial regimes.

Secondly, the world wide economic depression of 1929-32 caused enormous hardship and suffering to the people and gave rise to a spirit of frustration, despondency and despair among the people. The people were naturally allured by the leaders who promised them a bright future and rendered them willing obedience.

Finally, the failure of the League of Nations to check aggression and preserve world peace also greatly contributed to the rise of totalitarian regimes. Japan, Italy, Germany etc. committed aggression with impunity and the League of Nations failed to take any action against them.

**Document B**



-http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Tv39Hp41Jgk/Ti3fUW8Q3fI/AAAAAAAAAJw/0N4lqezUfRs/s1600/Barrow+of+money.jpg

**Document C**

[…]The worst human tragedies of the twentieth century were certainly most deadly when sponsored or at least unleashed by totalitarian regimes, and food was a crucial element of their politics. Several years ago, the German journalist and scholar Götz Aly showed in books such as Architects of Annihilation (2003) the role of food in the horrors of National Socialist imperialism. More recently, Timothy Snyder has made the conquest of more productive agricultural territory—especially the Ukrainian “breadbasket”—an essential factor in the episodes of mass death occurring in what he calls the “bloodlands.” Soviet and Nazi planners both sought to occupy the region for the sake of food, and their macabre policies dictated that those on the home front would eat before the occupants of the newly conquered territory, who were deemed too numerous to feed with limited resources.[…]

-**Totalitarianism, Famine and Us**

**Have histories of famines caused by totalitarianism become a distraction to the new politics of hunger?**

[Samuel Moyn](http://www.thenation.com/authors/samuel-moyn) *November 7, 2012*

**Document D**

Benito Mussolini's Fascist movement rose to power in the late 1920's as a reactionary force, responding to pervasive popular disillusionment with the ineffective government in place at the time. Devastating economic conditions disillusioned Italian citizens and embittered them towards their leaders, creating prime conditions for a coup. One particular grievance of the Italian people in the 1920's was the Treaty of Versailles, which was the Treaty that ended World War I. The Treaty of Versailles was perceived as unfair by the Italian people because it allotted no war reparation payments to Italy, though Italy had suffered great losses fighting for Allies. The nation was left impoverished by the war effort, the government was perceived as unable to solve any problems, and middle-class fear of the socialist revolution paved the way for extreme right wing factions to rise to power.

**Document E**

**German outrage**

When the Germans heard about the Treaty of Versailles, they felt ‘pain and anger’. They felt it was **unfair**. It was a '*Diktat*' – an IMPOSED settlement. They had not been allowed to take part in the talks – they had just been told to sign.

**The German reaction**

On 7 May, the victors presented their Treaty to the small German delegation. Count Brockdorff-Rantzau angered the Big Three by giving a long speech criticising the Treaty; then the delegation left and set about countering it. A little later, they sent their counter-proposal based on the Fourteen Points) to the Big Three -- their reply was so good that one of the British delegation said it was much better than the Allies' suggestions, and even Lloyd George wondered for a time if they ought to rethink the treaty . Then the delegation went home. Many Germans wanted to refuse to sign the treaty; some even suggested that they start the war again. So it was with great difficulty that the President got the Reichstag to agree to sign the treaty, and the imperious way the two German representatives were treated when they were forced to sign made things worse.

**The Germans HATED the Treaty of Versailles**

The Germans hated Clause 231; they said they were not to **blame** for the war. The soldier sent to sign the Treaty refused to sign it – ‘To say such a thing would be a lie,’ he said. Clause 231 did not physically harm Germany, but it hurt Germany's pride - and it was this, as much as anything else, that made them want to overturn the treaty.

The Germans hated **reparations**; they said France and Britain were trying to starve their children to death. At first they refused to pay, and only started paying after France and Britain invaded Germany (January 1921).

The Germans hated their tiny **army**. They said they were helpless against other countries. At first they refused to reduce the army, and the sailors sank the fleet, rather than hand it over.

The Germans also hated the loss of **territory**. Germany lost a tenth of its land - they claimed that the treaty was simply an attempt to destroy their economy. Other nations were given self-determination – but the Treaty forced Germans to live in other countries. Germans were also angry that they could not unite with the Austrian Germans.

**-http://www.johndclare.net/peace\_treaties5.htm**