

aware of the enormous gulf between Western ideals and practices, they decided to seek reform. As yet independence remained only a dream.

Protest took different forms. In Nigeria and South Africa, workers organized trade unions that tried to gain benefits for workers. But there were also incidents of violent protest. In British Nigeria in 1929, a group of women protested the high taxes that were levied on the goods they were selling in the markets. During the riot that ensued, women called for all white men to leave their country. The British crushed the riot, killing fifty women in the process. Although colonial powers responded to these protest movements with force, they also began to make some reforms in the hope of satisfying the indigenous peoples. The reforms, however, were too few and too late, and by the 1930s, an increasing number of African leaders were calling for independence, not reform.

The clearest calls came from a new generation of young African leaders who had been educated in Europe and the United States. Those who went to the United States were especially influenced by the pan-African ideas of W. E. B. Du Bois (doo BOISS) (1868–1963) and Marcus Garvey (1887–1940). Du Bois, an African American educated at Harvard, was the leader of a movement that tried to make all Africans aware of their own cultural heritage. Garvey, a Jamaican who lived in Harlem in New York, also stressed the need for the unity of all Africans. Leaders and movements also appeared in individual African nations. In his book *Facing Mount Kenya*, Jomo Kenyatta (JOH-moh ken-YAHT-uh) (1894–1978) of Kenya, who had been educated in Great Britain, argued that British rule was destroying the traditional culture of the peoples of black Africa.

The Authoritarian and Totalitarian States

Q FOCUS QUESTIONS: Why did many European states experience a retreat from democracy in the interwar years? What are the characteristics of so-called totalitarian states, and to what degree were these characteristics present in Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Stalinist Russia?

The apparent triumph of liberal democracy in 1919 proved extremely short-lived. By 1939, only two major states (Great Britain and France) and several minor ones (the Low Countries, the Scandinavian states, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia) remained democratic. What had happened to Woodrow Wilson's claim that World War I had been fought to make the world safe for democracy? Actually, World War I turned out to have had the opposite effect.

The Retreat from Democracy: Did Europe Have Totalitarian States?

The postwar expansion of the electorate made mass politics a reality and seemed to enhance the spread of democracy in

Europe. But the war itself had created conditions that led the new mass electorate to distrust democracy and move toward a more radicalized politics.

Many postwar societies were badly divided, especially along class lines. During the war, to maintain war production, governments had been forced to make concessions to trade unions and socialist parties, so the working class had been strengthened. At the same time, the position of many middle-class people had declined as consumer industries had been curtailed during the war and war bonds, which had been purchased by the middle classes as their patriotic contribution to the war effort, sank in value and even became worthless in some countries.

Gender divisions also weakened social cohesion. After the war, as soldiers returned home, women were forced out of jobs they had taken during the war, jobs that many newly independent women wanted to retain. The loss of so many men during the war had also left many younger women with no marital prospects and widows with no choice but to find jobs in the labor force. At the same time, fears about a declining population because of the war led many male political leaders to encourage women to return to their traditional roles as wives and mothers. Many European countries outlawed abortions and curtailed the sale of birth control devices while providing increased welfare benefits to entice women to remain at home and bear children.

The Great Depression served to deepen social conflict. Larger and larger numbers of people felt victimized, first by the war, and now by socioeconomic conditions that seemed beyond their control. Postwar politics became more and more polarized as people reverted to the wartime practice of dividing into friends and enemies, downplaying compromise and emphasizing conflict. Moderate centrist parties that supported democracy soon found themselves with fewer and fewer allies as people became increasingly radicalized politically, supporting the extremes of left-wing communism or right-wing fascism. In the 1920s, Italy had become the first Fascist state while the Soviet Union moved toward a repressive Communist state. In the 1930s, a host of other European states adopted authoritarian structures of various kinds. Is it justified to call any of them **totalitarian states**?

The word *totalitarian* was first used by Benito Mussolini (buh-NEE-toh moos-suh-LEE-nee) in Italy to describe his new Fascist state: "Fascism is totalitarian," he declared. A number of historians eventually applied the term to both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union (Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union are discussed later in the chapter). Especially during the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1950s and 1960s, Western leaders were inclined to refer to both the Soviet Union and the Eastern European states that had been brought under Soviet control as "totalitarian."

What did the historians who used the term think were the characteristics of a totalitarian state? Totalitarian regimes, it was argued, extended the functions and power of the central state far beyond what they had been in the past. The totalitarian state expected the active loyalty and commitment of its

citizens to the regime's goals and used modern mass **propaganda** techniques and high-speed modern communications to conquer the minds and hearts of its subjects. The total state aimed to control not only the economic, political, and social aspects of life but the intellectual and cultural aspects as well. The purpose of that control was the active involvement of the masses in the achievement of the regime's goal, whether it be war, a socialist state, or a thousand-year Reich (RYKH). Moreover, the totalitarian state was led by a single leader and a single party and ruthlessly rejected the liberal ideal of limited government power and constitutional guarantees of individual freedoms. Indeed, individual freedom was subordinated to the collective will of the masses, organized and determined for them by a leader. Furthermore, modern technology gave these states unprecedented ability to use police controls to enforce their wishes on their subjects.

By the 1970s and 1980s, however, revisionist historians were questioning the usefulness of the term *totalitarian* and regarded it as crude and imprecise. Certainly, some regimes, such as Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union, sought total control, but these states exhibited significant differences and none of them was successful in establishing total control of its society.

Nevertheless, these three states did transcend traditional political labels and led to some rethinking of these labels. Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany grew out of extreme rightist preoccupations with nationalism and, in the case of Germany, with racism. Communism in the Soviet Union emerged out of Marxist socialism, a radical leftist program. Thus, extreme right-wing and left-wing regimes no longer appeared to be at opposite ends of the political spectrum but came to be viewed as similar to each other in at least some respects.

Fascist Italy