

Chapter : 3

The World War Between the Two World Wars : 1919 - 1939

TEXTUAL TYPE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Easy Types Questions

Q 1. Discuss leading to the rise of Fascism in Italy.

Ans : The post- First World War period was marked by two major political development in the world. One was rise of Fascism in Italy and the other the rise of Nazism in Germany. Both these development had far-reaching consequences and prepared the ground for the second World War. The main cause for the rise of Fascism in Italy were :

(i) Dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Versailles : The Treaty of Versailles which concluded the First World war did not fulfill the political and territorial aspiration of Italy. The gains of Italy from this Treaty were totally insignificant when compared with that of England of France. Italy had joined with the Allies in the hope of getting territories such as Trentino , the Brenner pass, Trieste, Istria, Dalmatia, etc. Which had a high percentage of Italian population. But these Territories were not handed over to Italy by this Treaty. Therefore ,

Italy felt cheated by the Treaty of Versailles and was determined to undo the injustice done to them.

(ii) Deteriorating economic condition : The First World War greatly affected the economy of Italy . As a direct consequences of the war , Italian economy began to decline. Many of the Industrial units were shut down. The prices rose very high. There was extreme scarcity of foodstuff in the country. Trade and commerce were badly affected. Indebtedness , pauperization , inflation , unemployment and lack of social security marked Italy during this period. This created a great deal of disorder and chaos in the country , enabling the Fascists to come up within a short time .

(iii) political disorder: The government during this period was inefficient and weak . It failed to bring order in the country. During this period (from 23 June 1919 to 31 October 1922) , over six Ministers came to power one after another . But , none of them could do anything to improve the condition of the country , Thus , the political instability coupled with economic hardship forced the people to opt for parties that promised better deal . It helped the rise of Fascism Under Benito Mussolini.

(iv) Fear of Communist : Between the period 1919 and 1922, the communist movement in Italy began to spread rapidly. The Increasing influence of the communist in the country frightened the wealthy section of the Italian population- the capitalists, the Industrialists, big landowners, etc. The prevailing communist phobia led people to join hands with the fascist group of Mussolini

who promised to bring an efficient government and Social security in the country.

Q 2. Give the brife history of Fascism in Italy.

Ans : The rise and development of Fascism in an Italy is an important Milestone in the history of Europe during the post - First World War period . The war had caused immense economic hardship for the people of Italy leading to widespread disconnect in the country . The existing Italian government was weak , inefficient and lacked popular support. These conditions helped the rise of fascists who promised better condition in Italy.

(i) Beginning of the movement : The word ' Fascism ' originated from the latina word' Fasces' which means'group' or 'party'. Taking advantage of the prevailing political unstability during the post First - world war period, Mussolini organized the youths of Italy into' fasces' and urged them to work against the member of other political parties.The. First group of Fascists was organized in Milan on 23 March 1919 .

There was great anti- Russian and anti- communist propaganda in Europe, soon after the Russian Revolution in 1917. Italy was also affected by this propaganda. The vast majority of the people of Italy particularly the wealthy section flocked to the Fascist group as they promised freedom from communism. Fascism was welcomed as a panacea against the so - called communist evil.

(ii) Growth of Fascism : As there was a great deal of Dissatisfaction with the existing political group in the country, the youth of Italy were attracted by the policies and promises of Mussolini. Within a short time, Fascism became a popular party . The first all Italian congress of the Fascists was held in 1919. It had 22 units with a total membership of 17, 000. The membership rose to 30,000 with 118 units , in the second congress held in 1920.

The third congress was held in 1921 with a total membership of 3,00,000 and had 2,200 units in different parts of the country. A volunteer force was organised from the trusted members and they were given the task of fighting against the community who had become quite strong in Italy by that time . This created a civil war like situation in Italy in 1921. There was no rule of law. The government machinery was ineffective to deal with the situation .

In an atmosphere of political uncertainty and chaos , the country witnessed general election in May, 1921. A total of 36 candidates, including Mussolini of the Fascists returned to the Parliament. The Fascists used their presence in the Parliament to increase their influence in the country . They began to attack the communist and socialist openly. The meetings held by other political parties and leaders were attacked and dispersed by the Fascist.

(iii) Capture of power : Mussolini organised the greatest mobilization of the Fascists towards the end of October , 1922 for the capture of Rome. Being threatened by the

Mussolini, Facta, the prime Ministers of Italy , advise King, Victor Emanuel III , to impose martial law in the country , but the king refused. Therefore , Facta resigned on 27 October, 1922 and on 28 October 1922, Mussolini started his famous March Rome. On reaching Rome he was made the prime Ministers of the country by the King on 30 October 1922. The Parliament gave Mussolini absolute power to bring law and order in the country.

Within a short period, Benito Mussolini captured all power and became an absolute ruler. He organised the Fascists into a political organisation and gave them certain fundamental principles. The Parliament of Italy gave absolute and autocratic power to Mussolini for one year so that he can restore law and order in the country.

Q 3. Discuss the foreign policy of Italy under Benito Mussolini .

Ans : The rise of Fascism in Italy had serious consequences in the history of Europe during the post-world war period. It ushered new concepts and trends in the world politics. Fascism rose up mainly as a result of the economic and political instability that exists in Italy during the post - World War period . Fascism was started by Benito Mussolini in Italy in March , 1919 and they 1922. Within a few years, Fascists led by Mussolini captured all state power and turned Italy into an autocratic state.

Benito Mussolini followed an aggressive foreign policy. The Treaty of Versailles that concluded the First World War had prevented Italy's territorial aspirations. Italy had joined the Allied Powers during the war with the hope of getting territories like Trentino, the Brenner pass, Trieste, Istria Dalmatia, etc. Which had a high percentage of Italian population. But, her hopes were dashed to the ground by the Treaty of Versailles. Were dashed to the ground by the Treaty of Versailles.

Mussolini, therefore, determined to undo the harm done to Italy by this Treaty wanted more Colonies for supply of essential raw - materials which Italy lacked and also areas for settling the extra population of the country. As part of his aggressive foreign policy, he wanted to convert the Mediterranean Sea into a lake of Italy and wanted to establish control over the countries that existed in the coast of the Mediterranean.

Therefore, he occupied island of Corfu from Greece and later handed it over to her in lieu of a huge amount of money. In 1935, he attacked Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and in May, 1936 annexed it to Italy. In 1936, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland were united with Italian East Africa and made part of the greater Italian empire by a government proclamation.

In 1939, Italy attacked Albania forcing the king of Albania to flee. Later, Albania was annexed to the Italian empire. These events brought Italy and Germany on a common platform as both countries wanted more Colonies and desired for the nullification of the Treaty of

Versailles. This resulted in the formation of Rome - Berlin Axis in October, 1936. In November communist pact. Italy too joined this pact making it ' Rome -Berlin - Tokyo Axis.' These developments had great impact on the political atmosphere of Europe . It created a sense of fear and suspicion among the other major European countries.

Nevertheless , England and France greatly ravaged by the after - effects of the first world war followed a policy of appeasement. They preference not to provoke and precipitate the existing tension in the international area. Thus, the policy of appeasement allowed Italy and Germany to get away with their annexations. and conquests.

Q 4. Discuss the causes of the rise and growth of Nazism in Germany.

Ans : The rise abd growth of nazaim in Germany had far- reaching repercussions in the history of the world during the pos- First World war period. Nazaim was one of the factors that prepared the ground for the outbreak of the second world war. The main causes for the rise of nazaim in Germany were :

(i) Dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Versailles : The Treaty of Versailles was a dictated treaty. It was a humiliating treaty for Germany. Her Territories were forcibly taken away. She was deprived of all her foreign Colonies. She was hemmed from all sides. Her military strength was completely reduced and made powerless.

She had to pay a huge war indemnity. The result of these harsh terms was that it brought untold misery to the People of Germany. The Germans on the whole wanted to get rid of this humiliating treaty. This national feeling helped the Nazis to come up within a short time.

(ii) Economic hardship: During the first world war two decades following the first world war, the Economic condition of Germany was in a miserable state. Out of the 70 million people of the country, about 5 million were unemployed. Trade and commerce had come to a standstill. The prices of foodstuffs began to skyrocket agricultural fields were destroy. As a result, the Germany currency, the mark, sank in value.

The financial burden imposed by the Allies on germany was too high to be paid and its payment caused immense hardship for the people. This gave the Nazis an opportunity to come up and satisfy people's aspirations and goals.

(iii) Anti-commusim : The anti- commusim ideals class, the Industrialists and the wealthy classes of Germany. In February, 1933 van der lubbe , a Dutchman set fire to the German to parliament. The cause or the aim behind the incident was not known. But, Hitler utilized it against the Communists and spread the rumour that it was caused by the communists. Begin frightened of the communists, the people in general flocked to the Nazis.

(iv) Able leadership : Another important factor that helped the rise of Nazism in Germany during the post-

first world War period was the able leadership proved by Adolf Hitler. He knew the art of getting people to believe his words. He aroused the German passion and spoke of the superiority of the German blood. He was able to get people's support since he spoke of their well- begin.

(v) Incompetent government : Soon after king , william II, fled from Germany to Holland in November 1918, Fredrick herr Ebert of the social Demoratic party was appointed the Chancellor of Germany. The new parliament form after the general election in January 1919, framed a new constiuction established a republican Government and Chancellor frederich herr Ebert were made the president of the German republic.

The republican Government failed to satisfy the aspirations of the people completely and also failed to bring peace and order in the country. In this background, Adolf Hitler Formed the nationalist Socialists German workers party, i.e. nazi party in April, 1920. Hitler promised to undo the injustice done to Germany by the Treaty of Versailles as well as to bring back the former glory of Germany. The German youth were charmed by his words and within a short time, Nazis became the most important political power in the country.

Q5. What were the political aims and objectives of Hitler? Discuss.

Ans : The rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany during the the post-First world war period is an important period in the history of the world. Hitler fromed the nazi party in party

in April 1920 and within a few years he captured all power and controlled the destiny of Germany for two decades. The main political aims and objectives of the Hitler were:

(i) Hitler wanted to nullify the Treaty of Versailles Which was a humiliating treaty for the Germans. Germany was hemmed from all sides. All her colonies were taken away. Hitler wanted sufficient colonies for the expansion and growth of Germany. He looked towards the north-Eastern Europe and to soviet Russia for German expansion.

(ii) Hitler believed in the purity of Germans blood and German race. He argued that the Germans belonged to the Aryan blood and were Far superior to other races if the world. He aroused german passion and raised self-image.

(iii) The notion that the German races was superior to all other races of the world, especially the Jews was propagated.

(iv) Hitler tried to reconstruct the economy and the German society by introducing a programme named the 25-point Economic programme. The 25-point Economic programme included:

(a) Acceptance and application of the principle of national self- determination to the people of German Origin and allowing them to become citizens of one single German state.

(b) nullification of the Treaty of Versailles and German.

(c) Establishment of Colonies for the excess population of Germany.

(d) organisation of National Armed forces in place of professional military force.

(v) Nazi party spent considerable amount of money and time for party propaganda. It devoted much of its energy organizing the Germans against other parties and against the Allied Powers. The youth of Germany were promised employment, self-respect and better livelihood.

(vi) Like Fascism, Nazism, opposed democracy and the practices of democracy. Hitler never believed in democracy and even the opinion of this party were not tolerated he believed in the principle of one state, one party and one leader.

(vii) Nazi party in order to strengthen the position of Hitler organized unconditional paramilitary forces. This force was used to terrorize the men of the opposition groups and to get rid of opponents of Hitler. These illegal Armed Germany. Apart from this, there was another group which Hitler. It was called the 'Schutzstaffel' or S.S. These two groups let loose a reign of terror and killed hundreds of Germans in 30 June 1934.

(viii) The Nazi party also started a hate campaign against the Communists. During the post-First World

War period, the Communists had made many inroads in Germany . The Nazi party reminded the Germans About the denger of Communism and what happened in Russia. Therefore, Many of the Industrialists and capitalists of Germany flocked to the Nazi party and contributed much fund for the party.

(ix) The worldwide Economic depression following The first world war , created a sense of panic among the capitalists and the Industrialists of Germany leading to fruition and uncertainty among the general public and many of for German population.

The political ambition of the war veterans and ex-military men was another important cause which led to the rise and growth of nazaim in Germany. The nazi party was joined by many ex-military men , ex- Generals and other High official, in order to accomplish their political ambition in life.

Q 6. Discuss the main features of the foreign policy of Hitler.

Ans : One of the main cause for the outbreak of the second world war was the rise of Hitler in Germany during the post - First World War period. Acute economic depression, political instability, Communists phobia, social insecurity, etc. That existed in Germany after the rise of autocratic ruler like Hitler followed an aggressive foreign policy. Some of the main features of this policy were:

(i) Massive arms build-up : The main basis of Hitler's foreign policy was the military force. From the very beginning, Hitler was determined to nullify the Treaty of Versailles. Treaty had reduced the military strength of Germany. They were not allowed to build ships and aeroplanes. Arms build-up as he knew he needs a well Armed force to capture the colonies and fight the Allies if needed

(ii) Conquest of Austria : One of the first countries to be conquered by Hitler was Austria. This was because most of the population of Austria to the German race. Therefore, in 1934, he began to interfere in the affairs of the country with a view to annexing it to Germany. However, because of the opposing stand of England and France he could not conquer it straightaway. He waited for some more time for annexing it. He remained satisfied simple by signed a treaty with a Austria in 1936.

(iii) Rome - Berlin Axis : Hitler supported mussoulini in the latter's attempt to conquer Ethiopia even though England and France strongly objected to it. This resulted in the formation of ' Rome-Berlin Axis ' in October 1936. In The next month, he signed the Anti-Comminter pact with japan to prevent the spread of Communism. Mussolini too joined this pact and thus the new pact became 'Rome - Berliner -Tokyo' Axis. Meanwhile, England and France followed a policy of appeasement and tried not to provoke Hitler but in to his various demands.

(iv) Various annexations : when Hitler realized that England and France were not interested in war, he conquered Austria in the month of March, 1938 and annexed it to Germany without any opposition from England and France. Thereafter , Hitler turned his attention to czechoslovakia and conquered the country within a short time.

Next he occupied the port town of Memel on the Baltic sea and soon raised it to the level of a military Port. Soon after this, he turned his attention to the city of Danzig which was internationalized by the Treaty of Versailles. He annexed it and made it part of the Third Reich, the German empire Under Adolf Hitler.

(v) Other pacts : The various conquest and annexations created ripples in European politics. England and France began to realize that something had to be done to oppose Hitler. Realizing that England and France might oppose his further conquest, Hitler got the support of Benito Mussolini by signing the famous pact named ' Pact of Steel' with Mussolini on 22 May 1939.

To neutralize Russia, in case of war against him, he signed ' Russo-German Non-aggression pact' on 21 August 1939. Soon after the signing of the non - aggression pact with Russia, Hitler started his military offensive against Poland on a massive scale on 1 September 1939. The integrity and independence of Poland had been assured by England and France by the Munich pact (1 October 1938) and so both the countries declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939. Thus,

the second World war began mostly as a result of the aggressive foreign policy followed by Adolf Hitler.

Q 7. Was the Anglo-French appeasement policy responsible for the rise of Mussolini and Hitler ?

Ans : During the post - First World War period the foreign policy of England and France was characterized by a policy named the policy of appeasement. The repercussions following this policy were disastrous and finally led to the outbreak of the second world war.

The policy of conciliation with an aggressive power at the expenses of some other power is known as the policy of appeasement. It seems that the British prime Minister of Stanley Baldwin was the first person to initiate this policy of appeasement towards the Fascists in Italy and the Nazis in Germany.

This policy was strongly followed up by the next Prime Minister of England, Neville Chamberlain who succeeded Stanley Baldwin in 1937. Neville Chamberlain did not want to and conquests as their legitimate needs. In other words, Chamberlain allowed the legitimate needs. In other words, Chamberlain allowed the expansionist policy of Hitler and Mussolini. Therefore, both countries did not do anything when Hitler conquered Austria in March, 1938. The British appeasement policy towards Hitler whetted his appetite for more Territories.

Another example of British prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policy can be seen in the Treaty signed between Britain and Italy in April 1938 regarding Spain. She had interfered in the internal affairs of Spain in support of General Franco. In exchange of Italian withdrawal from Spain, Chamberlain recognized Italian control over Ethiopia and allowed Italy to occupy the country. This he did in the hope of keeping Mussolini from the camp of the camp of Hitler.

A further example of Britain's appeasement policy is seen with regard to Czechoslovakia. Hitler wanted to occupy Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia and annex it to Germany as this area was mostly inhabited by the Germans. In order to please Hitler, Chamberlain allowed Germany to occupy this area. In addition, Chamberlain tried to bring the government of France and Czechoslovakia to accept German annexation of Sudetenland with the hope that Hitler would stop at that.

Therefore, under the British influence, the famous Munich Pact was signed on 1 October 1938 which allowed Germany to occupy Sudetenland. However, soon after the occupation of Sudetenland, Hitler demanded the whole of Czechoslovakia. Without waiting for the opinion of England's support or view, Hitler conquered and annexed it to the German empire. England and France could not prevent the occupation of Czechoslovakia in any way. The great powers, mainly France and England, feared Russian advance towards the Mediterranean Region and Balkan peninsula and to contain it preferred to support Hitler and Mussolini as

they declared themselves enemies of communism and Mussolini and Hitler would do the job of removing the Communists from Italy and Germany respectively and thus communism would be wiped out from Europe. Historians believe that the rise of Mussolini and Hitler as world threats was the direct consequence of the policy of appeasement followed by England and France during 1930-1939 periods. It resulted in tilting the international peace and security of the world. Therefore, it can be said that following of the policy of appeasement by England and France was greatly responsible for the second world war that began in September, 1939.

Q 8. Present a brief note on the rise and growth of the United States of America during 1919-41.

Ans : The rise of the United States of America after the first world war is an important period in the world history. The first world War was brought to a close due to her support and after the war, she continued to thrive and prosper while the European world took a great deal of time to recover from the after-effects of the First World war. After the war, America became the banker of the world. The war devastated European countries, big and small, had to look to the United States of America for financial support.

Through her financial support, she came to control the affairs of Europe and to exert great influence on world politics. After the end of the first world war, Japan emerged as the most powerful country in the far East. Rise as a major power posed a threat to America's power. Besides,

japan followed an aggressive policy towards China and wanted to bring China under her control which America did not want to happen. Therefore, she called a nine - nation conference on China in 1921 which prevented japan from occupying China for some time . During November 1921 to February 1922, this conference was held in washington with the presence of the representatives of the USA , Great Britain, Italy, Freance, japan, China, Belgium, the netherlands and portugal.

During this time , America had to face severe Economic depression. This great depression started during the period of US president , Herbert hoover (1929 - 32).It main sometime in October 1929 and lasted few years. The main cause for the depression was overproduction and lack of adequate market . In addition to overproduction , availability of loans on easy terms and speculation contributed to this development, depression affected Industry, finance , export, import , Money market and led to serious unemployment problem .

However, the next Us president Franklin Roosevelt was able to change the situation. He indicated a wave of economic reconstruction programme known as ' New Deal' which was able to bring depression Under control. Within a few years, the American Economic normalize and the once again became the most important economic power in the world .

In view of the Increasing menace of the rise of Fascism in Italy and Nazaim in Germany , Roosevelt convened

an international conference of American Republics at Buenos Aires in Argentina in 1936 and took measures for collective security. The same policy as repeated in the All - American conference held at Lima in Peru in 1936 and took measures for collective security . The same policy as repeated in the All - American conference held at Lima in Peru in 1938.

Soon after the outbreak of the second world War in September 1939 , Roosevelt was able to supply essential war items to allies. Though she maintained neutrality during the first phase of the war she was forced to join the war after the Japanese attack on pearl harbour (in Hawaii Islands) on 7 December 1941. With her entry in the second world war, the victory for Allied Powers was assured and after the war, she remained the Most important interational power in the world while other European powers had to suffer terrible Economic hardship due to the war .

Q 9. Give a brief note on the rise and growth of the Union of Soviet Socialist republic during 1917-41.

Ans : The rise of Russia as a great international power begin with the October revolution. Immediately after the revolution, certain drastic administrative changes were brought in Russia in July 1918 with the promulgation of a New constiuction. As per the New constiuction of 1924 the name of the country was charged into Union of Soviet Socialist republic (USSR) . Russia comprised of 7 republics and under the constitution of 1936; the number of republics rose to 11.

Russia was primarily an agricultural based country. But, soon after the Revolution of 1917, began to make solid strides in all fields of human activity. Speedy measures were undertaken for the overall development of the country. The period of economic progress and reconstruction initiated from 1918 to 1921 came to be known as the period of 'War communism'. One of the main planks of this new policy was privatization of all production.

All the Industrial units and establishment belonging to individual owners were nationalized. On the country, the private Industries were declared illegal. This principle greatly affected production, which led to the decline of production in all sectors. The whole economic system of Russia fell down. Therefore, the government started a new economic policy named the 'New Economic policy' (NEP) in 1921. Within a short time, the New Economic policy began to bring about great changes in the country and once again the Russian economy began to prosper. The export and import, Industrial production, trade, production of foodstuff, etc. Registered a high growth rate.

Lenin died in January 1924 and then his position was occupied by Joseph Stalin. Within a short period, he became the absolute ruler of Russia. He started the first Five - YEAR plan in 1928. The FIRST FIVE- YEAR plan was a great success. While most western Countries suffered from the great depression of 1929-1935 periods, Russia was totally unaffected. This definitely boosted the image of Russia in the world. As a result of

the tremendous economic growth and Industrial production, Russia emerged as one of the most developed industrialized nations of the world almost at par with the United States of America. However, the affairs of Russia were marred by the 'Great purge' in the party initiated by Joseph Stalin.

With the Death of Lenin in 1924, There emerged a struggle for power among the leading members within the party. This struggle continued for sometime and all those opposes Stalin or the party. Stalin let loose a reign of terror from 1924 to 1934 and it lowered the image of Russia.

Q 10. Discuss the main features of the Soviet Foreign policy during 1917 - 41.

Ans: Soviet Russia became a key player in the international politics after the revolution of 1917. They did the influence the turn of events in the international arena during the post-First World War period. The Bolshevik party after coming to power in 1917 disowned the treaties and agreement made with the foreign powers by the Czarist regime. They also withdrew from the First World war as the Bolsheviks were opposed to the war. With the end of the Russian Revolution of 1917, Lenin declared that his Bolshevik party would support the movement of liberation of Russia. The aim of this movement was to liberate the oppressed people who were exploited in various parts of the world Under colonialism and imperialism.

Aiming this objective, an organization named the Communists international or comminter to was was established in 1919 and its head office was at Moscow. To fulfill its objective, Russia soon began to provide help to revolutionary organizations of the middle East countries and the Balkan peninsula. This was the period from 1918 to 1921.

In 1920, soviet Russia established bilateral relations with Finland, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuanian. Besides, she entered into bilateral relations with poland, Afghanistan, Turkey And Persia in 1921. In the same way , she established commercial contracts with Germany and England.

After a long waiting, the Soviet government of the Bolshevik party got recognition from Germany in 1922 and France, Italy had England in 1924. The Anglo-soviet treaty was signed in 1924 and accordingly soviet Russia received francial aid from Britain. In the year 1934, USA gave recognition to the Soviet government, when Franklin Roosevelt was the president of USA Russia got a short time, Soviet got the permanent membership of the council.

There had been no good relations between Russia and japan during the Czarist regime. Just after the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution, japan intervened Russia immediately. As per the term of the Russo- japanese agreement, japan withdrew her forces from Siberia and sakhalin Island.

As the Nazis came to power Under the leadership of Hitler in Germany, the national security and territorial integrity of Soviet Russia became extremely dangerous. Hitler severally pointed out to soviet Russia as an for future German expansion. Great Britain and France expressed their sympathy to Hitler. In Durnig that time, there was a fear of the Russo-German Non-agressive pact of 1939, this fear slightly reduced.