Totalitarianism

Defintion: a government system in which the state has absolute or total authority and regulates every aspect of its citizen’s life (public and private).

Characteristics:

1. Dictatorship- a single political party establishes complete control of all aspects life (political, military, economy, social, and cultural).
	* State demands loyalty and denies basic liberties
2. Strong, dynamic leader at the head of the government
	* Often very charismatic
	* A symbol of government
3. Highly nationalistic
	* Flags, salutes, rallies, and uniforms
4. Common ideology- a common set of beliefs the people are expected to follow
	* total conformity of people to goals and ideas of the state and the leader
	* used to justify government actions
5. Employees methods of control
	* Police Terror: the government uses police to spy on, intimidate people, use brutal force or even murder people to inforce the will of the state
	* Indoctrination: the government shapes people’s minds through slanted education (uses schools and youth organizations)
	* Media Control: the government controls all mass media (newspapers, radio)
		+ Propaganda- the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person
			- crushes opposing views and uses the arts to promote views
		+ Censorship: an official reads communications and deletes material considered sensitive or harmful
			- Blocks opposing views or messages that would damage the image of the state from the public
			- No form of speaking out against the government is allowed
	* Religious or Ethnic Persecution:
		+ Leaders of various religious, ethnic minorities “enemies of the state” -exiled or killed
		+ Churches are destroyed
		+ In extreme cases this could lead to genocide

Examples:

* Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler
* Soviet Russia under Joseph Stalin
* Fascist Italy under Benito Mussolini
* North Korea under the Kim dynasty