

Totalitarianism at its finest essay



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Introduction

Totalitarianism is a form of government whereby all societal resources are monopolized by the state which to penetrate and control its citizens through the states use of propaganda, technology and terror. This type of government has been seen to be more successful than other systems of government. This essay will focus on the history of totalitarianism, its history, where it has been used and why it is more effective than other systems of government

Totalitarianism

Totalitarianism is a form of government that refers to imposed political power by an official on the basis of an ideology. The ruling power exercises complete control over a country's economy, law and order. Totalitarianism best thrives on the disseminated propaganda, state controlled media and personality cults. All the nation's activities like social, political, economic, intellectual, cultural and spiritual ones are subordinated to the purposes of the rulers of the state. In the modern totalitarianism, people are made utterly dependent on the wishes of a political party or its leader, this is unlike absolutism, tyranny or despotism where people could live and work in comparative independence as long as they refrained from politics (Pleuger, G.). Older autocracies were ruled by a monarch or any other aristocrat who governed by a divine right but for totalitarian state is ruled by a leader or dictator who controls a political party (Buzzle. com. What is totalitarianism)

History of totalitarianism

The earliest forms of totalitarianism ideals were recorded in 1923 by Giovanni Amendola proclamations. The word totalitarianism was used instead of the dictatorship to refer to Italy's Fascism. Later a prominent Italian philosopher and theorist Giovanni Gentile later used the term to refer to the state's revised structure and goals. Giovanni later described the totalitarianism as a form of society and not government which is responsible for influencing its citizens with a self centered ideologies.

Totalitarianism government

A totalitarianism government is one that relates to a political organization in which a single governing entity monopolizes absolute political power over its citizens. Depending on the arrangement, the governing body can be an individual person, a special committee or a political party. Absolute political control of the state is exercised by using rules and regulations techniques that remolds the private life and morals of the people.

Some of the countries that are or have been governed by this kind of leadership are Italy under Benito Mussolini, Russia under Stalin and Germany in the 20th century under the fascist regime of Adolf Hitler (National Socialism), Russia under Joseph Stalin, the people's republic of China under the communist ruler Mao Zedong Tse-tung, North Korea under Kim Il Sung, Syria under Hafez al-Assad and Iraq under Saddam Hussein.

Russia under Stalin

Joseph Stalin outmaneuvered his rivals and gained control of the government after Lenin's death in 1924. He wanted to transform Russia into a powerful

industrial state. He forced peasants to give up their land and work on collective farms but those who opposed him were brutally murdered. To achieve his ambitions, he created a totalitarianism government that controlled every aspect of the citizens' life. Individual rights did not count and the people had to obey the government. The government supported extreme nationalism. Stalin used propaganda, terror and censorship to force his will onto the people. Newspaper glorified him and his regime while the secret police spied on him. Stalin aided and supported a communist revolution. Although a tragic episode, Stalin had some economic purpose for the whole country to prosper (The rise of totalitarianism).

Fascism in Italy

After World War 1 ended, Italy had serious economic and political problems. There was unrest in the country that resulted in Benito Mussolini to gain power and he founded the Fascist Party. Fascists glorified the state, condemned democracy and supported aggressive nationalism. They also opposed communism. In the early 1920s, Mussolini had won the support of many Italians and in 1922, he led the “ March on Rome” in pretence of preventing a communist revolution but in fact he wanted to frighten the government to name him the prime minister. Once in office, he controlled the army and schools. He urged Italians to accept his new slogan, “ Everything in the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state.” (The rise of totalitarianism).

Italian fascism had some propaganda and a special cult of the duce that it fostered. This is because it centered on social and educational policies.

Efforts to channel women's policies and foster family life were represented. The Fascist had a direction for the youth as well as its racial policies being well represented. This attracted many people to their policies and seemed popular with them especially after the end of WW1 which resulted to a battered economy (The rise of totalitarianism).

After WW1, Germany's government faced many problems as the people looked for somebody to blame for their defeat. Extremists threatened revolt, inflation during this time caused the Germans to have little faith in the government. Adolf Hitler gained control of the government in the 1920s with a nationalistic, anti-communist and Semitic Nazi party. He won support for blaming Jews for their defeat. The great depression of the 1930s made the Nazi party more popular. Using the threat of communism to gain power, he moved against all odds to set up a fascist state. He used to preach about need for hard work, sacrifice and service to the state. This seemed to be popular to the masses. He used the Gestapo to suppress dissidents for opposing Nazi rule. He used Schools, press, and churches to glorify their goals. Hitler banned strikes, vast building programs and placed strict control of wages and prices (The rise of totalitarianism).

Totalitarianism party and its tools

Under Totalitarianism form of leadership, members of the ruling elite subject the entire society to hierarchical form of organization where individuals are subject to another in a position of higher authority. The supreme leader is an exception here as he is answerable to no one else. Any non-governmental social groupings are destroyed or reconstituted to serve the party's purpose

and that of the state. Total subjection of the individual can only become possible through advanced science and technology. Some of the features of Totalitarianism that make it possible to govern effectively than other forms of government is through among others decisive technologically conditioned features, monopoly of mass communications, a monopoly of all effective weapons, a terroristic police and a centrally controlled economy. We will discuss these features and get a glimpse on how they assist the government to run effectively (Brucekelly. com. Totalitarianism).

1. Control of mass media and communications

The ruling party and the government have monopoly of mass communications and are in possession of all the nation's channels through which its citizens receive information, direction and guidance on national matters. All newspaper magazines, publishing houses, radio and television broadcasting, motion pictures, theater productions are centrally controlled and directed. All the actors, writers, speakers, composers and poets are enrolled in party controlled organizations and then licensed by the government. Most countries require them to be members of the party. They are meant to tow the party's line, that is, interpret the party's policy, which is imposed on all mass media through censorship.

2. The secret police

The secret police employs the theories and techniques of scientific crime detention and that of modern psychology. The secret police terrorizes the citizens in radically different ways from much cruel police systems of earlier autocracies. These police employ institutions and the use of devices such as <https://assignbuster.com/totalitarianism-at-its-finest-essay/>

the concentration camp, public confessions and predetermined trials. The citizens thus will most likely not stage a coup against this type of government. The only fear is the possibility of the secret police seizing power.

3. Monopoly of effective weapons

Another attribute of all the contemporary governments is the control and monopoly of armament. In these arrangements, there are no legal means of effecting a change of government, and popular revolutions like the uprisings that occurred in East Germany in 1953 and Hungary in 1956 have few chances of success. The government controls tanks, jet planes, flamethrowers and other forms of war weapons that provide them strong defense against revolutions (Brucekelly. com. Totalitarianism).

4. Control of the economy

The totalitarianism government controls the economy and uses it to exploit its population for foreign conquest and the world revolution. An example is concentrating all resources on a single important military project. This type of government controls the economy to enable them control the workers and make them dependent on the government. They issue work permits to which if you do not have one you cannot work. Work permits are withdrawn for even minor offenses like objecting to foul working conditions. These workers are sometimes called state slaves (Brucekelly. com. Totalitarianism).

Totalitarianism has been seen especially by its supporters as a dynamic process which focuses on development and progress as being very

important. The slogan “ forward” is common to totalitarianism to stress the importance of the movement. Also for totalitarianism, there is consistency of purpose, clarity of policy and unity of purpose. More often than not, there is better law and order. Therefore, when countries are at war, they tend to move towards totalitarianism in order to mobilize the country’s resources to win the war. Example is Stalin in Russia (Nekrasas E.).

Conclusion

The essay has dealt in length with totalitarianism. We have seen how totalitarianism was carried out in Italy, Russia and German. The ruling power exercises complete control over a country’s economy, law and order. All the nation’s activities like social, political, economic, intellectual, cultural and spiritual ones are subordinated to the purposes of the rulers of the state.