

- Italy and WW1
- B.M. + Fascist Party
- 1922 March on Rome
- Establishing a dictatorship 1922-1926
- Dealing with opposition
- Propaganda
- Church-State Relations
- Economic and Social Policy
- Corporate State
- Foreign Policy
- WWII/Demise of BM/Fascism

# Italy in WWI

- Joined on side of Allies in 1915 (promised land in Austria under Treaty of London)
- Defeated at Caporetto (1917) and other battles by Austria
- Treaty of San Germain (1919): Italy given South Tyrol, Istria and Trieste
- But failed to obtain colonies in Africa or more territory in Dalmatia (Croatia)

# Problems and political instability in Italy after WWI

- Unemployment
- Inflation/taxes
- Poverty
- Strikes
- Weak coalition govts.
- Growth of communist and right-wing paramilitary groups



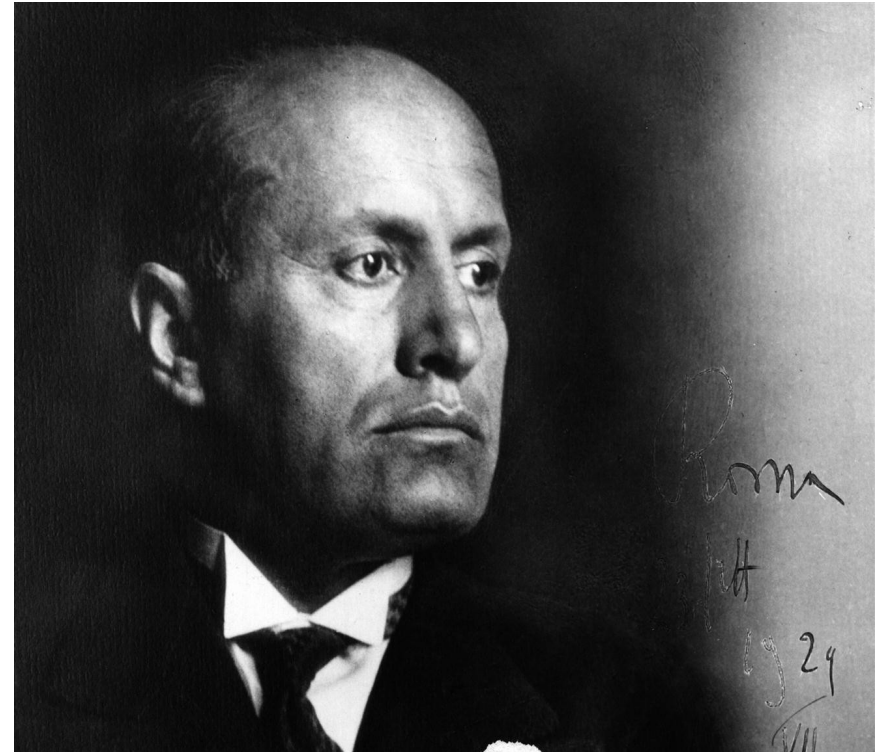
L'Italia dopo la Guerra 1915-1918

# Benito Mussolini



# Benito Mussolini

- Born 1883
- Served in WWI
- Worked as a journalist
- Initially a socialist
- Later changed ideas



# The Fascist Party

- BM set up 'Fascio di Combattimento' in Milan (1919)
- Anti-communist
- Nationalistic
- Black-shirt uniform
- Strong leader
- Militaristic
- Imperialistic



# Characteristics of Fascism

- Strong leader with absolute control (dictator)
- Very nationalistic
- Anti-communist
- Anti-democracy (felt it led to weak unstable governments)
- Racism
- Anti-semitism
- Willing to use violence to achieve aims
- Only Fascist party allowed in Fascist states

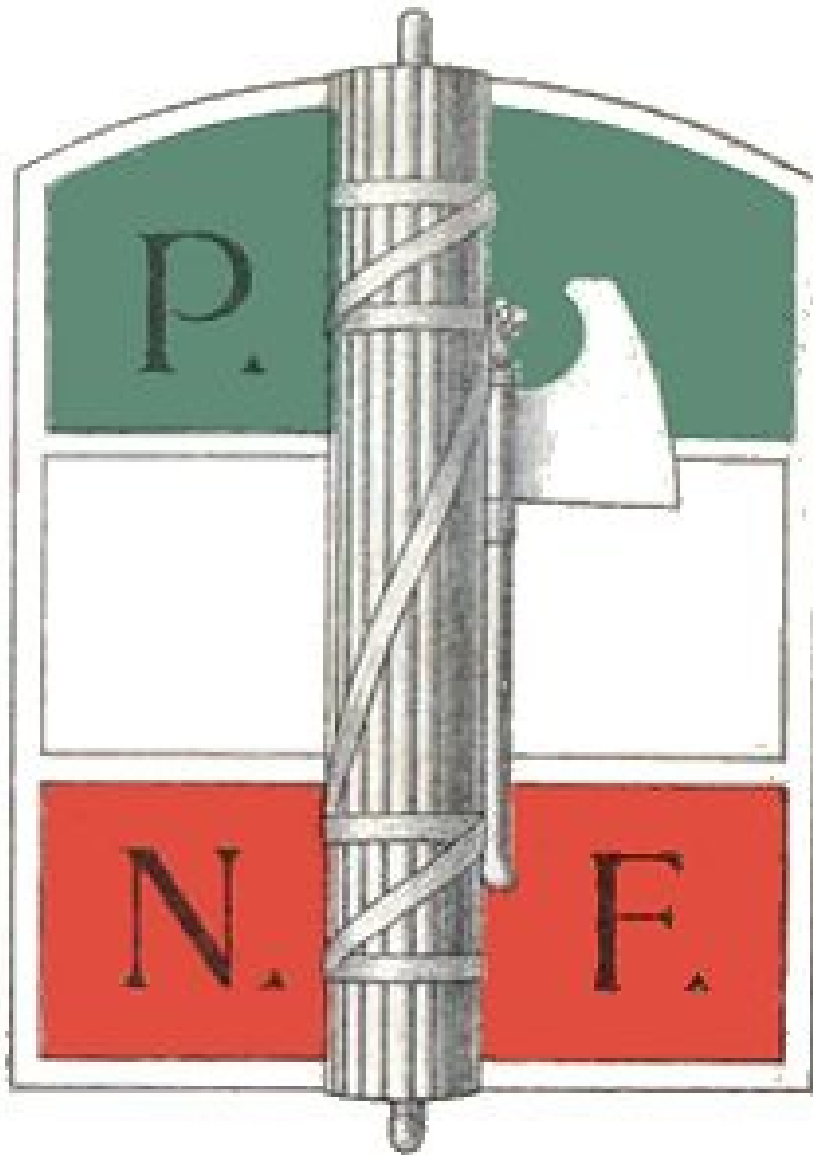


# Growth of Fascist Party (1919-1922)

- Fights between Communists/Fascists
- Fascists used to break strikes
- Several unstable govts.
- Fascists won no seats in 1919 election
- Fascists won 35 out of 535 seats in 1921 election
- Gained some respectability when brought into govt. by Giolitti
- Fascists helped break general strike 1922

# Key words

- **Dictatorship**
- Where a leader or dictator has absolute power
- E.g. Hitler, Franco, Mussolini, Stalin
- **Totalitarian(ism)**
- Where no rival political parties are allowed
- A one-party state
- E.g. Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Communist Russia



Lemmi, ridiculed and threatened by the fascist squads in Rome



# March on Rome 1922

- 50,000 Fascists planned March on Rome (October 1922)
- Fascists threatened to seize power
- PM Facta wanted to use army against Fascists
- King Victor Emmanuel II refused to allow PM to act against Fascists
- (perhaps scared of civil war/army refusing to obey/felt he could defuse crisis)
- King dismissed Facta as PM & makes Mussolini new PM







# Mussolini made Prime Minister by King Victor Emmanuel III







# Establishing a Fascist dictatorship

## 1 Mussolini's first government

- Initially Mussolini included many non-fascists in govt.
- Liberals & nationalists along with 4 fascist ministers in cabinet
- Nationalists and some right-wing liberals merge with Fascists (1923)
- Govt. got rid of PR voting system
- Acerbo Law meant party with majority of votes would get 2/3 of seats in parliament
- Blackshirts intimidate opposition in elections
- Fascist party win majority in election
- BM becomes PM but also Foreign Minister & Interior Minister
- Blackshirts made into a militia with oath of loyalty to BM not king

# Establishing a Fascist dictatorship

## 2murder of Matteoti and Aventine Secession

- Socialist Matteoti murdered after challenged election results (1924)
- Many politicians outraged and walk out of parliament (Aventine Secession)
- King did not dismiss BM
- April 1924 election Fascists win 4.3m votes, opposition win 2.6m votes
- Jan 1925 Mussolini makes speech promising strong govt.
- In 1926 three attempts to assassinate BM (one in 1925)
- Used as an excuse to ban opposition and set up 'Special Tribunal' to repress opposition
- 1926BM closes parliament and begins rule by decree
- Only Fascist Party allowed

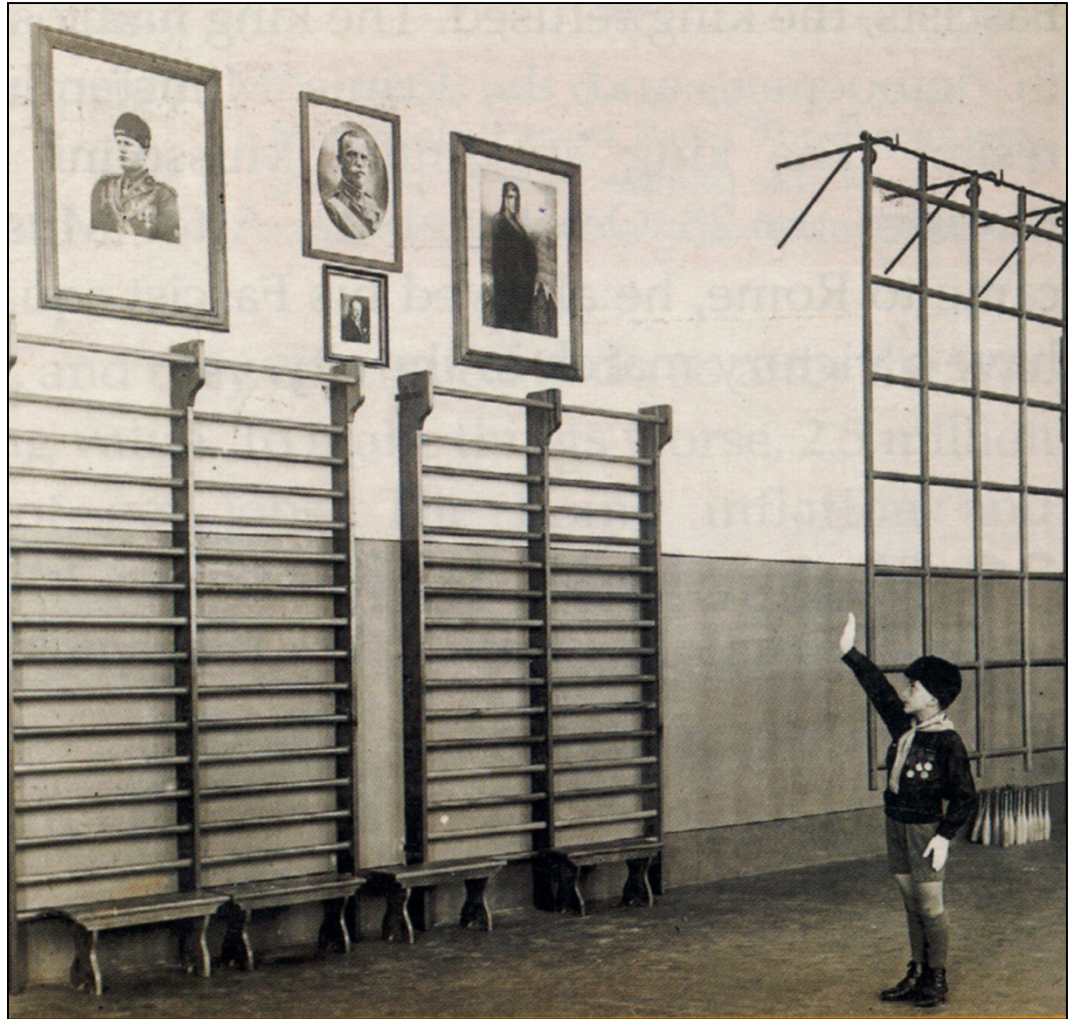
# Repression of the opposition

- Parliament shut down & replaced by Fascist Council
- Censorship
- Violence/intimidation by blackshirt squads
- Secret Police: OVRA
- Arrest of opponents
- Prison: communist leader Gramsci for 20 years
- Internal exile: eg Carlo Levi (author of 'Christ stopped at Eboli')

# Cult of leader-Propaganda-Youth Groups- 'Bread & Circuses'

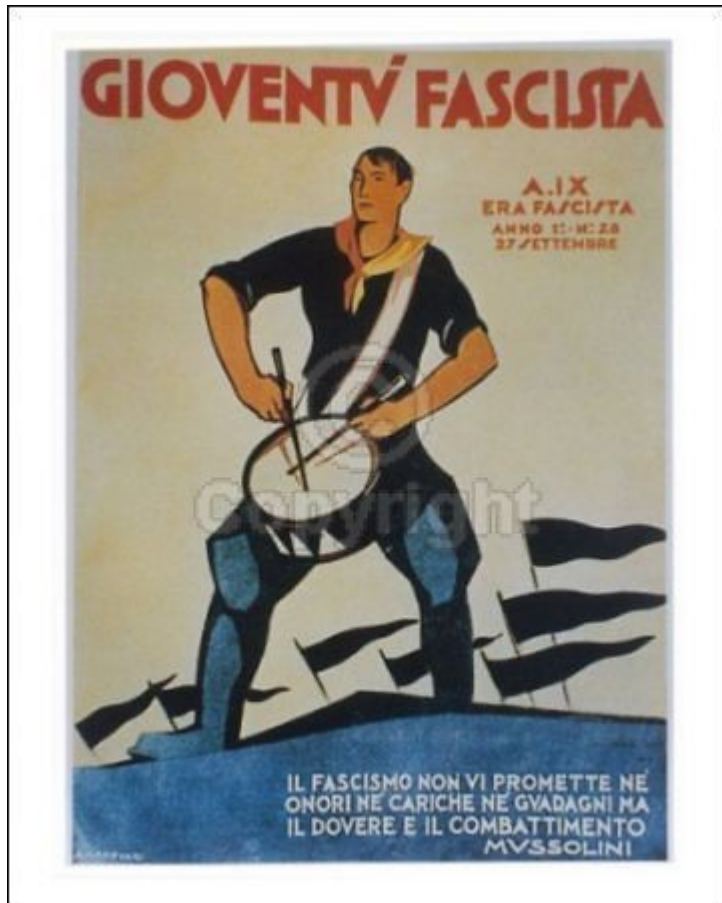
- Glorification of 'il Duce' (the leader) and Fascism in newspapers, radio, cinema, statues, posters
- School textbooks/curriculum changed to promote Fascism
- Youth Groups eg 'Sons of the She-Wolf' (6-8yrs), Balilla (boys 8-14), Avanguardisti (boys 14-18), Piccole Italiane (girls 8-14), Giovane Italiane (girls 14-18)
- Dopolavoro- (After work)- bars, libraries, sports grounds, trips, dancing, social clubs
- Italy hosted World Cup 1934
- Welfare provided in poor areas
- Big audiences for car racing, cycling, skiing
- Cinecitta set up for cinema industry

# Fascist Youth Groups









# Fascist Youth Group Poster





# Economic Policy

- 'Self sufficiency': eg Battle for Grain (1925)
- Protectionism (putting tariffs/taxes on imports in order to 'protect' industries from competition)
- Revaluation of lira made exports more expensive - damaged economy
- Pension & welfare benefits introduced
- No trade unions & unemployment increased in late 1920s & early 1930s
- Public Works: eg draining of Pontine Marshes near Rome
- Increased electricity and car production
- Infrastructure: motorways built, railways improved



# Corporate State & industrial relations

- Fascist believed in Corporations of workers and employers and govt. representatives
- No trade unions/strikes allowed & corporations often more favourable to employers
- Ministry of Corporations set up 1926
- 22 corporations (eg agriculture, industry, professions)
- Corporations elected Fascist Council

# Church-State relations in Italy

- After the unification of Italy and loss of papal states the Vatican refused to recognise the Italian state
- Most Italians were catholic and BM sought good relations with church
- Mussolini saw benefit to good relations with Roman Catholic church
- Both Mussolini and Catholic church opposed to communism

# Fascist government made changes supported by the Catholic Church

- Religious instruction introduced in schools in 1922
- 'Battle of Births' supported by catholic church
- Ban on sale of contraceptives and limits placed on abortions
- Ban on obscene publications

# The Lateran Treaty and Concordat 1929

- Catholic church had lost land during the unification of Italy (Risorgimento) in 1860s
- Vatican refused to recognise legitimacy of Italian state
- Negotiations on 'Roman Question' began in 1926
- In 1929 Lateran Treaty signed by Vatican and the fascist government

# Mussolini signs Lateran Treaty 1929







# The Lateran Treaty & Concordat

- Agreement between Italian state and Vatican signed in 1929
- Pope Pius XI agreed to recognise Italian state
- Italy paid compensation for loss of papal states (750m lire)
- Catholicism made official religion of Italy
- Catholic church given control of religious education in state schools
- Independence of Vatican City recognised by state
- Government agreed to pay salaries to bishops & priests
- Italian government formally recognised by Vatican (gave it more legitimacy?)

# Tensions between Church and State in Italy

- Church angry at attempts to suppress Catholic Action youth movement (1931)
- Pope criticised invasion of Abyssinia in 1935/6
- Anti-jewish laws introduced by fascist government in Manifesto della Razza (1938)
- Pope Pius XI condemned these racial laws
- Pius XII replaced him after his death in 1939
- Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano published articles critical of government
- In 1940 Papal Nuncio warned paper that it would be banned if articles continued

# Mussolini's Foreign Policy up to 1935

- Mussolini was nationalistic, imperialistic and militaristic
- Corfu incident (1923) 4 Italians killed redrawing Greek-Albanian border for League of Nations, Italy invaded corfu, later withdrew after Greece paid compensation
- Italy got Fiume from Yugoslavia after negotiation (1924)
- Locarno Pact (1925) guaranteed existing borders
- Italy signed Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928) outlawing war 'as an instrument of National Policy'
- Sent troops to Italian-Austrian border after murder of Austrian PM Dolfuss (1934)
- BM joins GB/France in Stresa Front to prevent German expansion (1935)

LA SOLA AUTENTICA FILM DI GUERRA GIUNTA  
DALL'ITALIA TUTTA PARLATA IN ITALIANO



# ITALIA VITTORIOSA

CON MUSICA E CANTO DELLA  
POPOLARE CANZONE

## FACCETTA NERA

E L'ENTRATA TRIONFALE IN

## ADDIS ABEBA

DEL

## GEN. BADOGLIO

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9 MAGGIO 1937



# L'ITALIA IMPERIALE



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L'ITALIA  
HA FINALMENTE  
IL SUO IMPERO

*Mussolini*

# Invasion of Abyssinia 1935-1936

- Invades Abyssinia (Ethiopia) 1935
- Tanks, planes, poison gas & 400,000 troops used in invasion
- Haile Selassie asked League of Nations for help
- League of Nations imposed sanctions on Italy
- Sanctions which did not include oil had little effect
- Italians capture Addis Adaba in May 1936
- Stresa Front collapses as GB/France support League of Nations

# Italian Foreign Policy 1936-1939

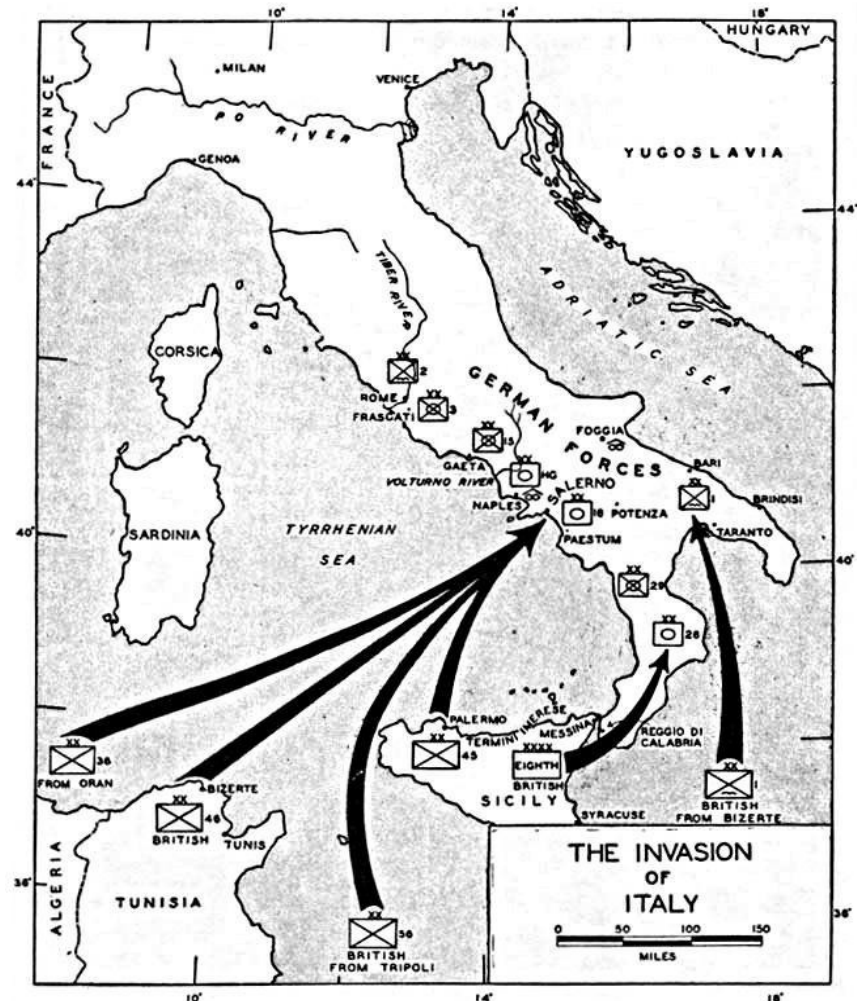
- Mussolini sends help to Franco & Nationalists in Spanish Civil War
- Fascist Italy allies itself to Nazi Germany in Rome-Berlin Axis (1936)
- Germany, Italy, Japan sign Anti-Comintern Pact (1937)
- Italy did not intervene in Anschluss (1938)
- Supported Germany on Sudetenland at Munich Conference 1938
- Italy and Germany sign Pact of Steel (1939) agree to support each other in war





# Italy in World War II up to 1943

- Italy stayed neutral in 1939
- BM felt Italy not ready for war
- Joined on side of Germany 1940
- Defeats in Greece and N. Africa
- Allies landed in Sicily (1943) and then southern Italy





# Allies land in Italy 1943



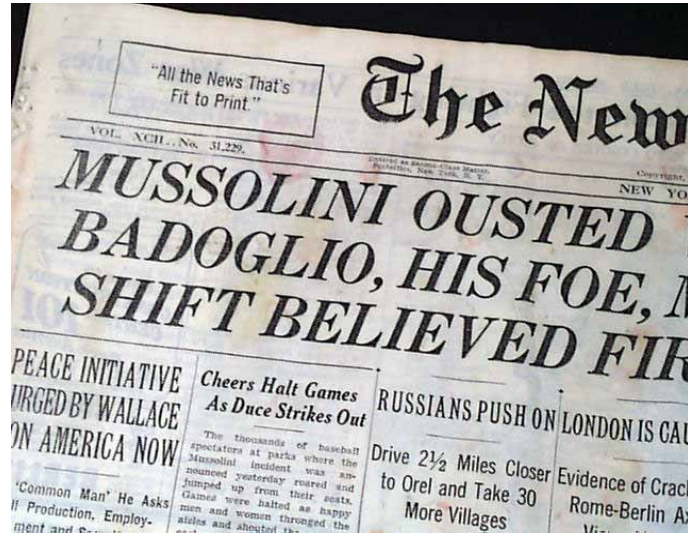






# Mussolini removed as leader

- Mussolini removed by the Grand Fascist Council as leader in Italy
- Badoglio replaced Mussolini as prime minister in 1943
- Mussolini put under house arrest in the mountains
- Italian government began to negotiate for peace with Allies



## MUSSOLINI OUSTED WITH FASCIST CABINET; BADOGLIO, HIS FOE, MADE PREMIER BY KING; SHIFT BELIEVED FIRST STEP TOWARD PEACE

ONE IS OUT, THE OTHER IS

ARRESTS REPORTED

Berlin Hears the Fascist Leaders Are Being Held in Homes

PEACE CRY IN ROME

Riots in Milan Said to Have Fired on Mob of Demonstrators



Benito Mussolini and his cabinet in Florence, National Photo Service

### PEACE INITIATIVE URGED BY WALLACE ON AMERICA NOW

Mr. Wallace, who is active in the production, distribution and sale of the "New Deal" program, urged that the United States should take a peace initiative now.

### Cheese Halt Games As Duce Strikes Out

The Italian government has ordered the suspension of all sports and games, including the World Chess Championship, in protest against the German invasion of Poland.

### RUSSIANS PUSH ON LONDON IS CAUTIOUS

Drive 23 1/2 Miles Closer to Orel and Take 30 More Villages. Evidence of Crack in the Rome-Berlin Axis is Viewed With Joy.

### NAZI STAND-STIFFER BADOGLIO 'WAR HERO'

Enemy Counter-Attacks Britons See Possibility of His Being 'Front' for Fascist Deal.

By BISHOP BARNETT  
The Italian government has announced that it will stand firm in its policy of non-interference in the Spanish civil war.

### NORTH JERSEY OPA DROPS DRIVING BAN

State of Rutgers, Plus Vacation Permits, in Tax Confusing—Injunction Tied at Home

### British Eighth Army Opens New Drive to Take Catania

By OWEN WHELAN  
The British Eighth Army has opened a new drive to take Catania, Sicily, from the Germans.

### ITALY SEEN MAKING FIRST PEACE STEP

Observers in Washington Look for Similar Action by New Satellite in Balkans

### BENIN RADIO SEES MUSOLINI AS TL

Benin radio has reported that Mussolini is the only man who can bring peace to Italy.



# The Italian Social Republic set up 1943

- North of Italy controlled by Germans and Fascists
- Italian Social Republic or the Republic of Salò set up in North (a 'puppet-state' really controlled by the Germans)
- Southern Italy controlled by the Allies

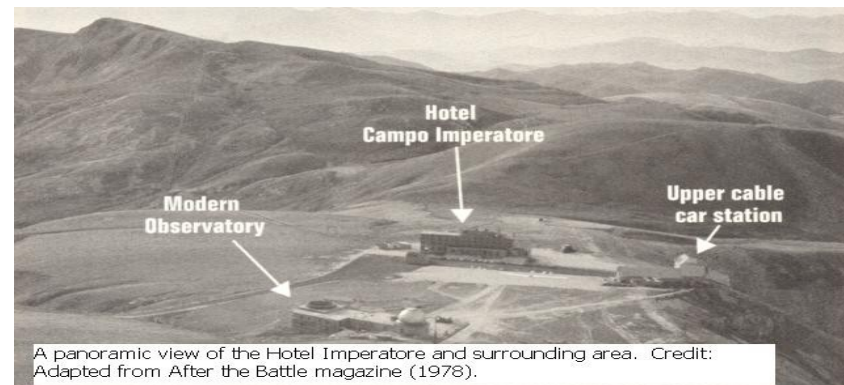




# Mussolini rescued by Germans

-Mussolini rescued by  
German commandos so  
he can be used as the  
leader of the Italian  
Social Republic

(but he is a 'puppet'  
leader, the Germans  
are really in charge in  
Northern Italy)



A panoramic view of the Hotel Imperatore and surrounding area. Credit: Adapted from After the Battle magazine (1978).

# The Partisans form the Resistance in Northern Italy

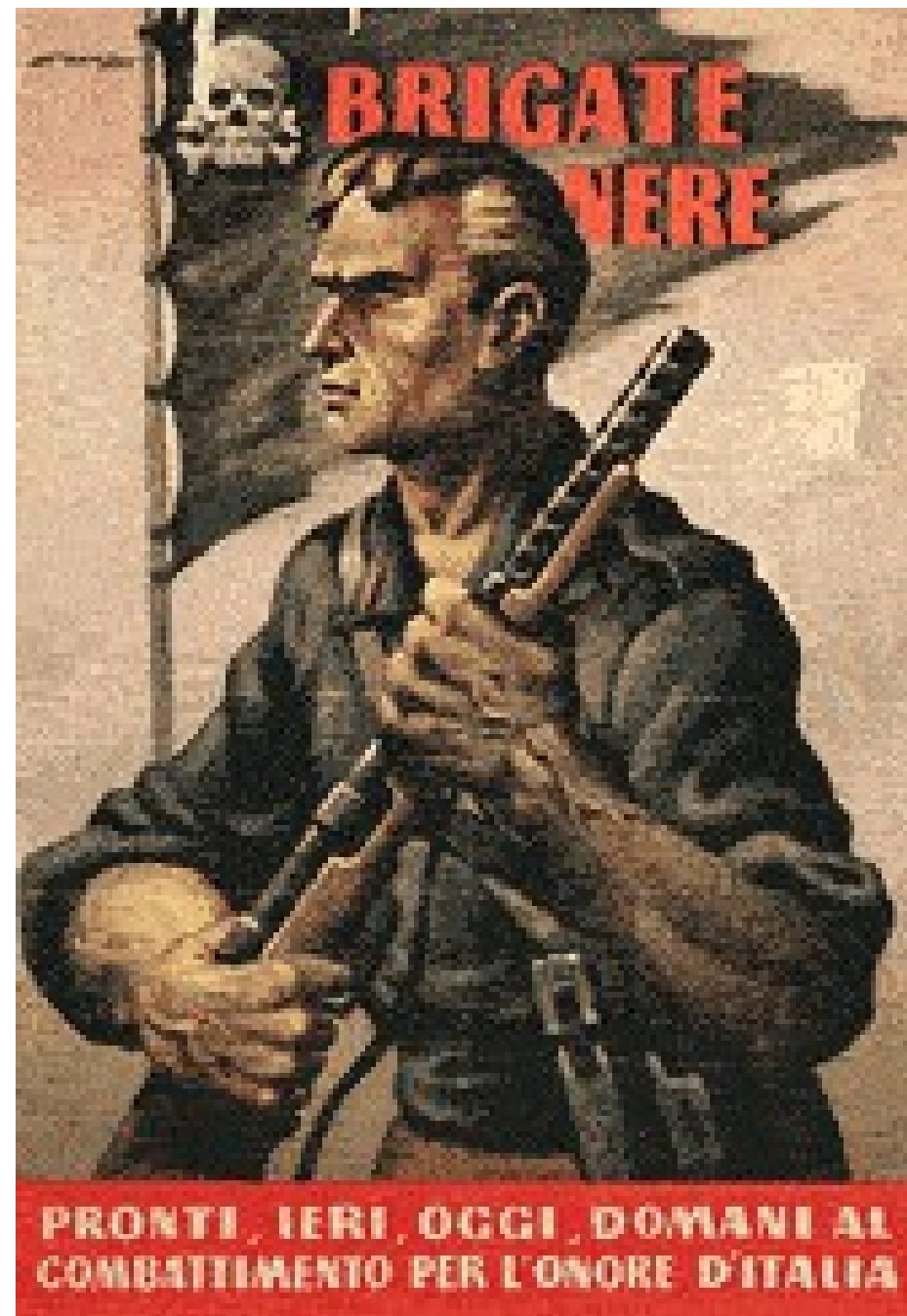
- Anti-fascist groups of 'partisans' begin guerilla war in Northern Italy
- They launch an insurgency of sabotage, assassinations, ambushes to weaken the German and Fascist forces in Italy





During the war special fascist army units called 'Black Brigades' were set up to fight with the Germans against the Allies and Italian partisans

The Germans and Fascists used the tactic of 'reprisals' where a number of prisoners or civilians would be killed if a German or Fascist was killed (sometimes 10 for 1)



# Member of the Black Brigades welcomed by supporters





Fascist  
Poster:  
shows  
anti-fascist  
partisans  
being  
crushed



# Allied advance in Italy

- Allies try to push north but blocked by German defensive lines
- Huge battle at Monte Cassino (Benedictine Abbey used a fortress by Germans)





# The Allies gradually advanced North through Italy

-The Allies slowly pushed northwards through Italy getting close to Austrian border in April 1945

-Allies get control of all of Italy





# Mussolini's death

- Mussolini (along with his girlfriend, Clara Petacci) was captured and killed by partisans in April 1945 while trying to flee northwards
- Their bodies were mutilated and hung up on the street

