

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)

- 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

Problems and political instability in Italy after WWI

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

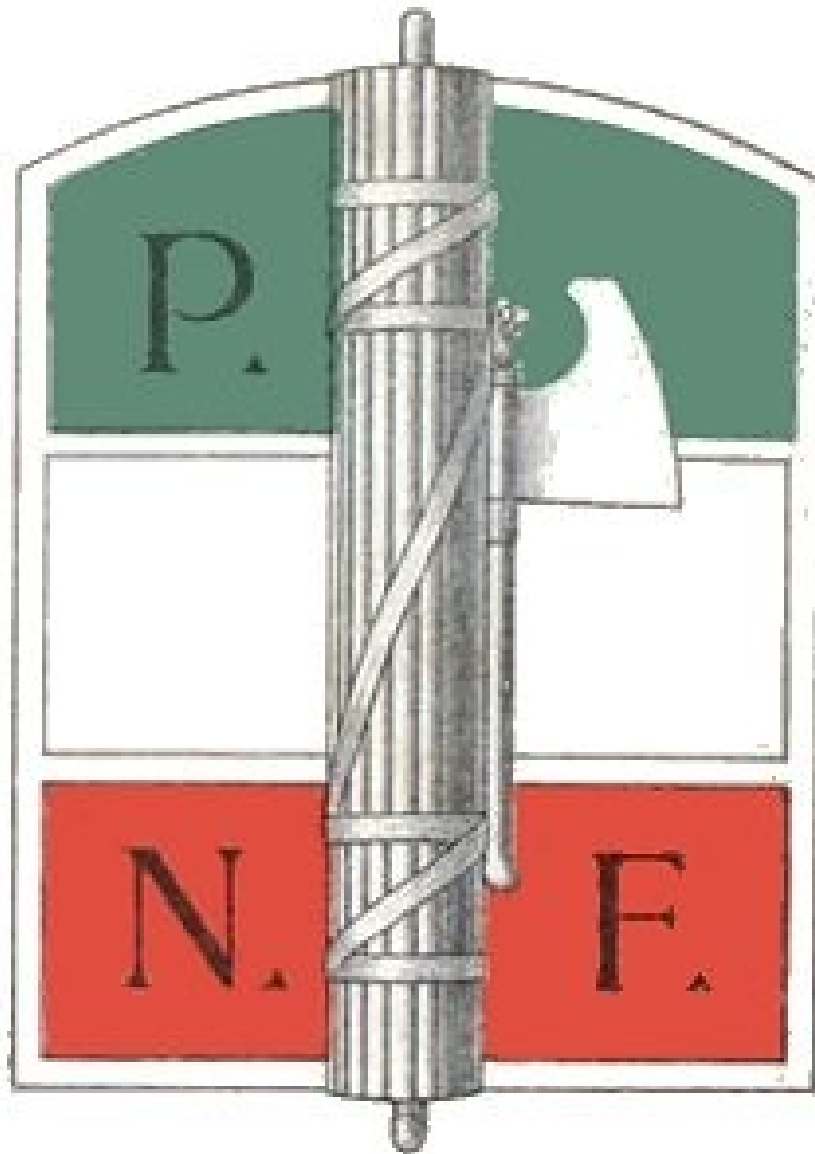
Benito Mussolini & Fascist Party

- Born 1883
- Served in WWI
- Worked as a journalist
- Initially a socialist
- Later changed ideas
- BM set up 'Fascio di Combattimento' in Milan (1919)
- Anti-communist
- Nationalistic
- Black-shirt uniform

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



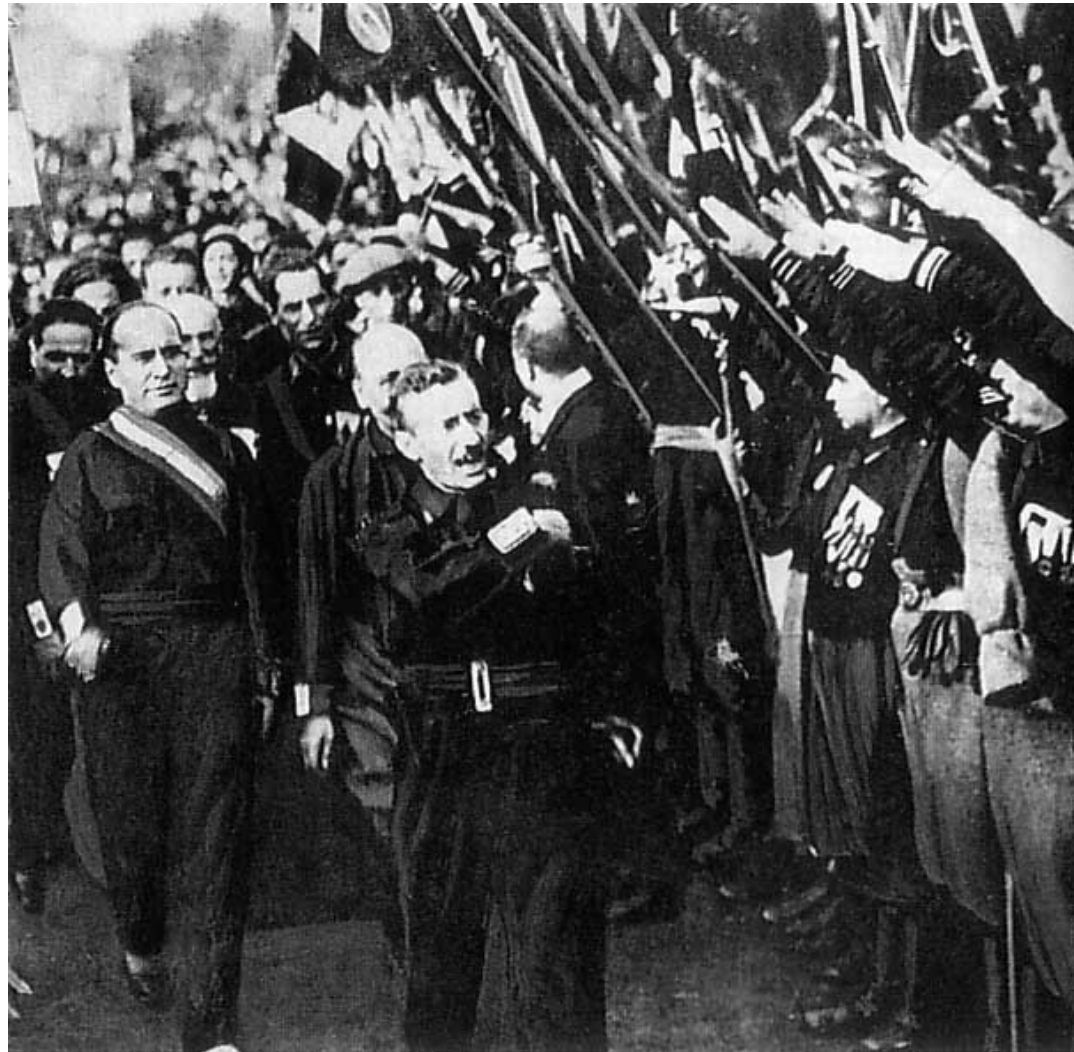


Lemmi, ridiculed and threatened by the fascist squads in Rome



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



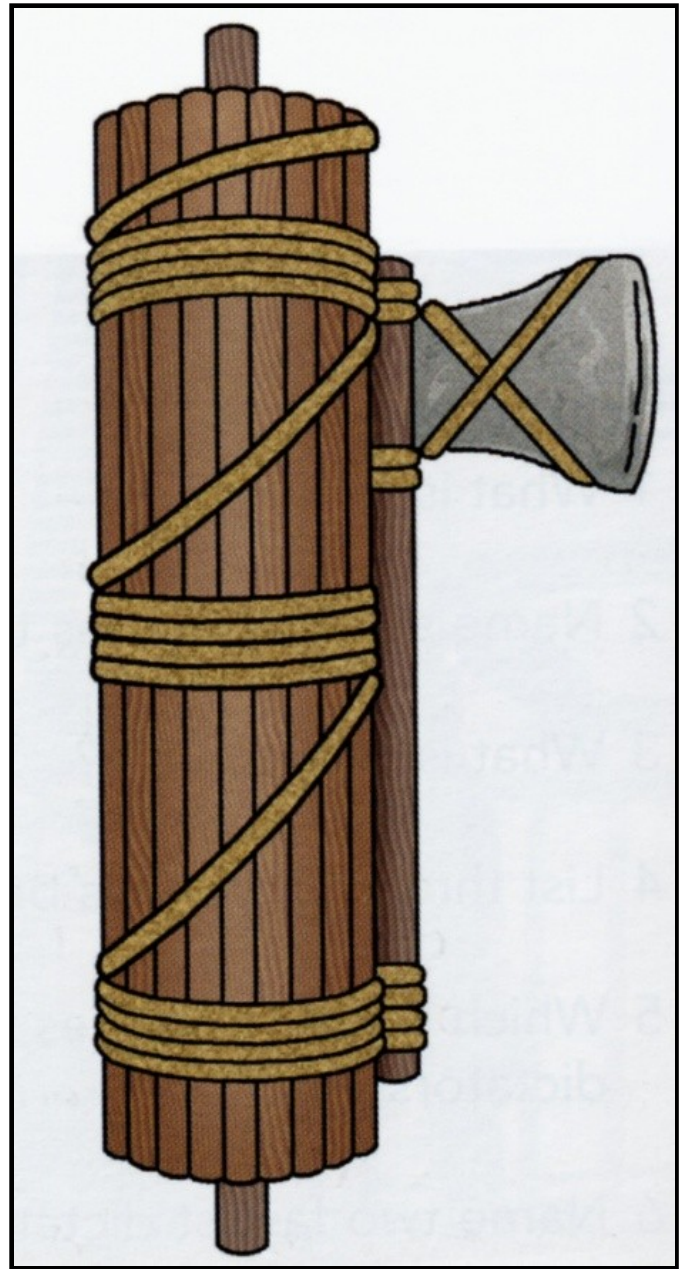


Characteristics of Fascism

- 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

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



Mussolini making speeches to crowds of supporters



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

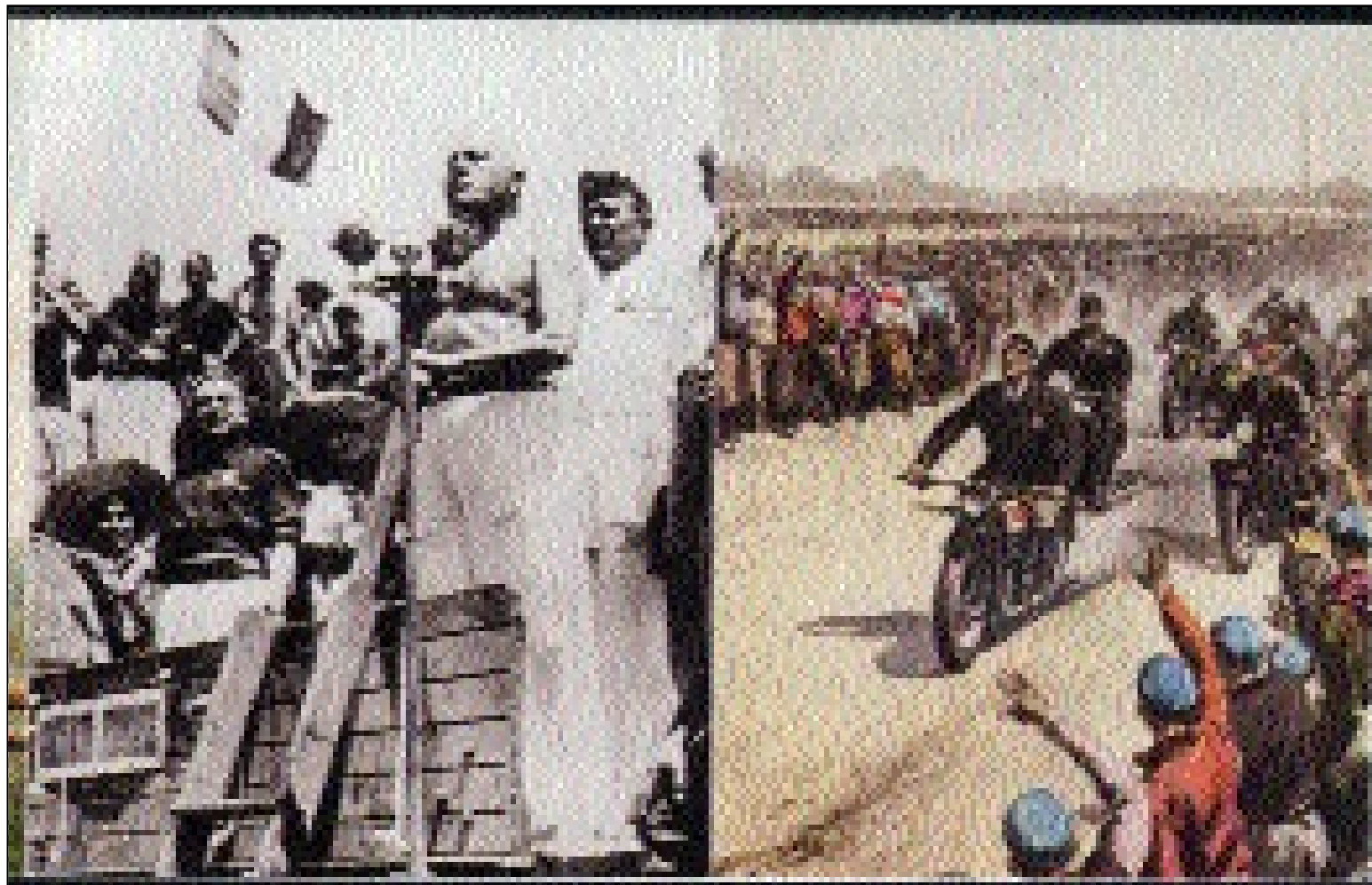
2murder of Matteoti and Aventine Secession

- 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

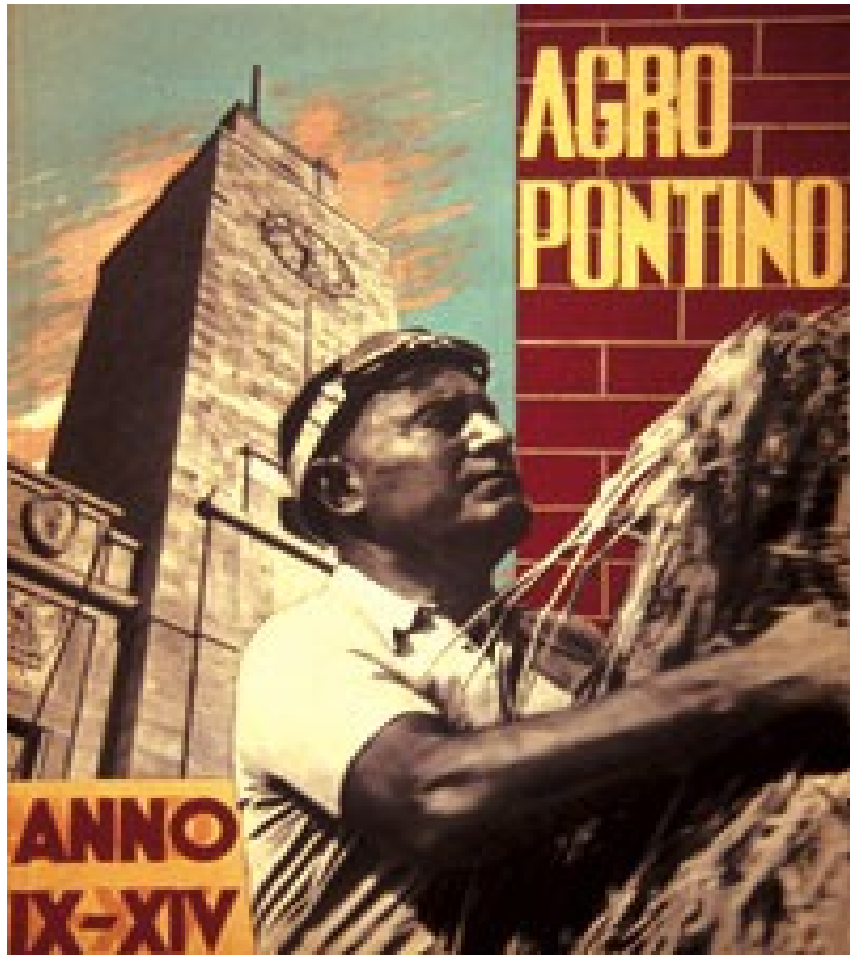
Repression of the opposition

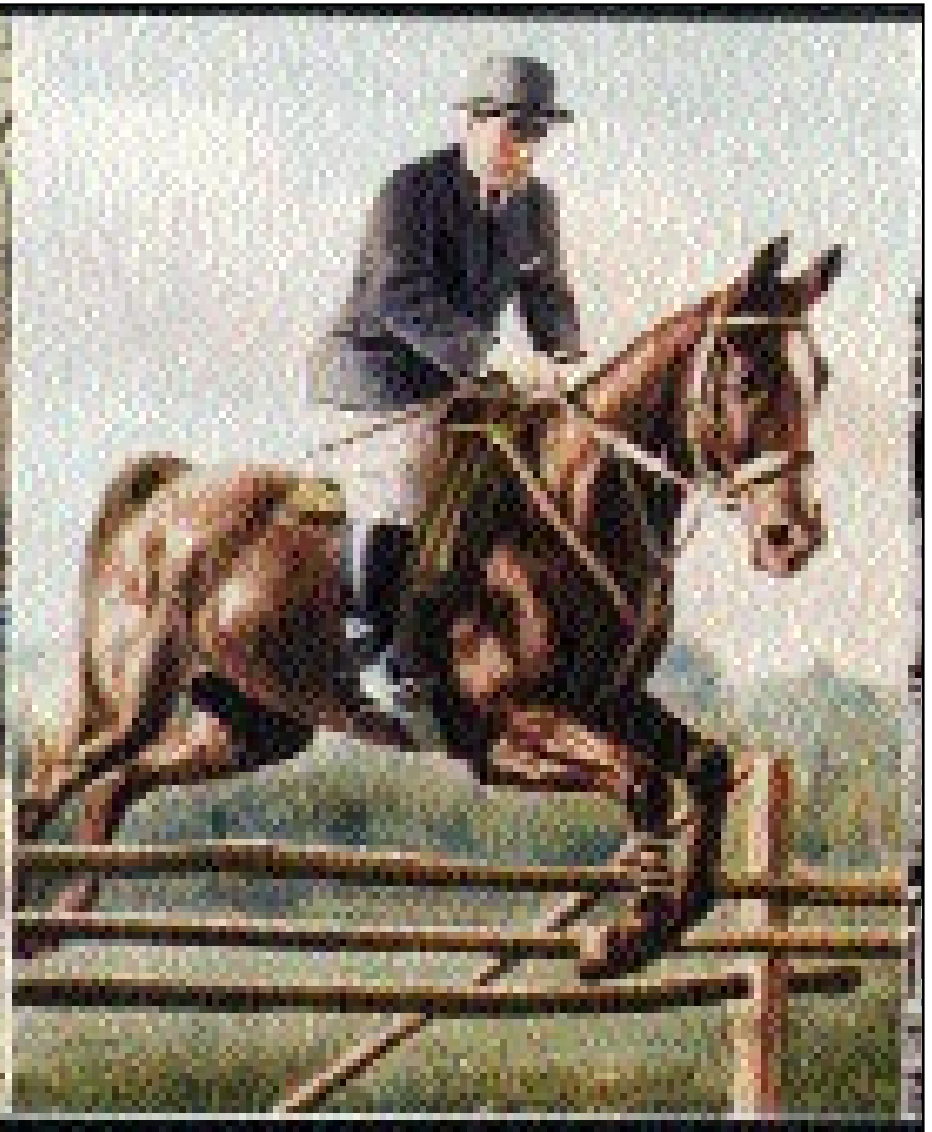
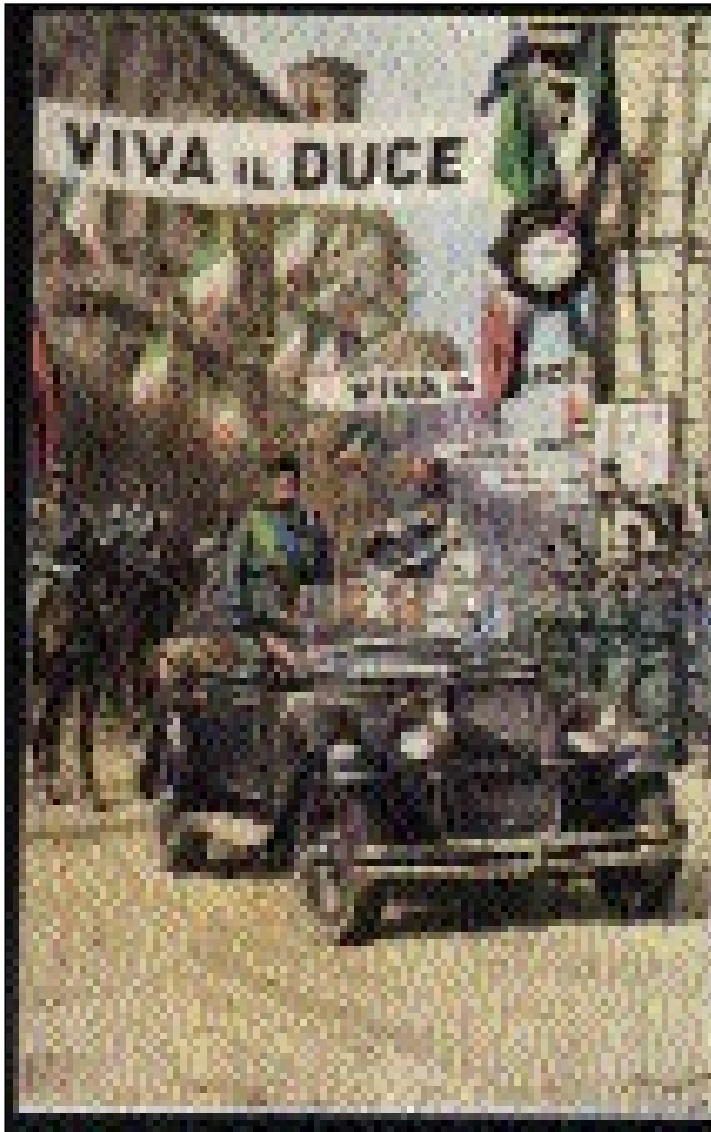
- Parliament shut down & replaced by Fascist Council
- Censorship
- Violence/intimidation by blackshirt squads
- Secret Police: OVRA
- Arrest of opponents
- Prison: communist leader Gramsci for 20 years
- Internal exile: eg Carlo Levi (author of 'Christ stopped at Eboli')

Fascist Propaganda Pictures







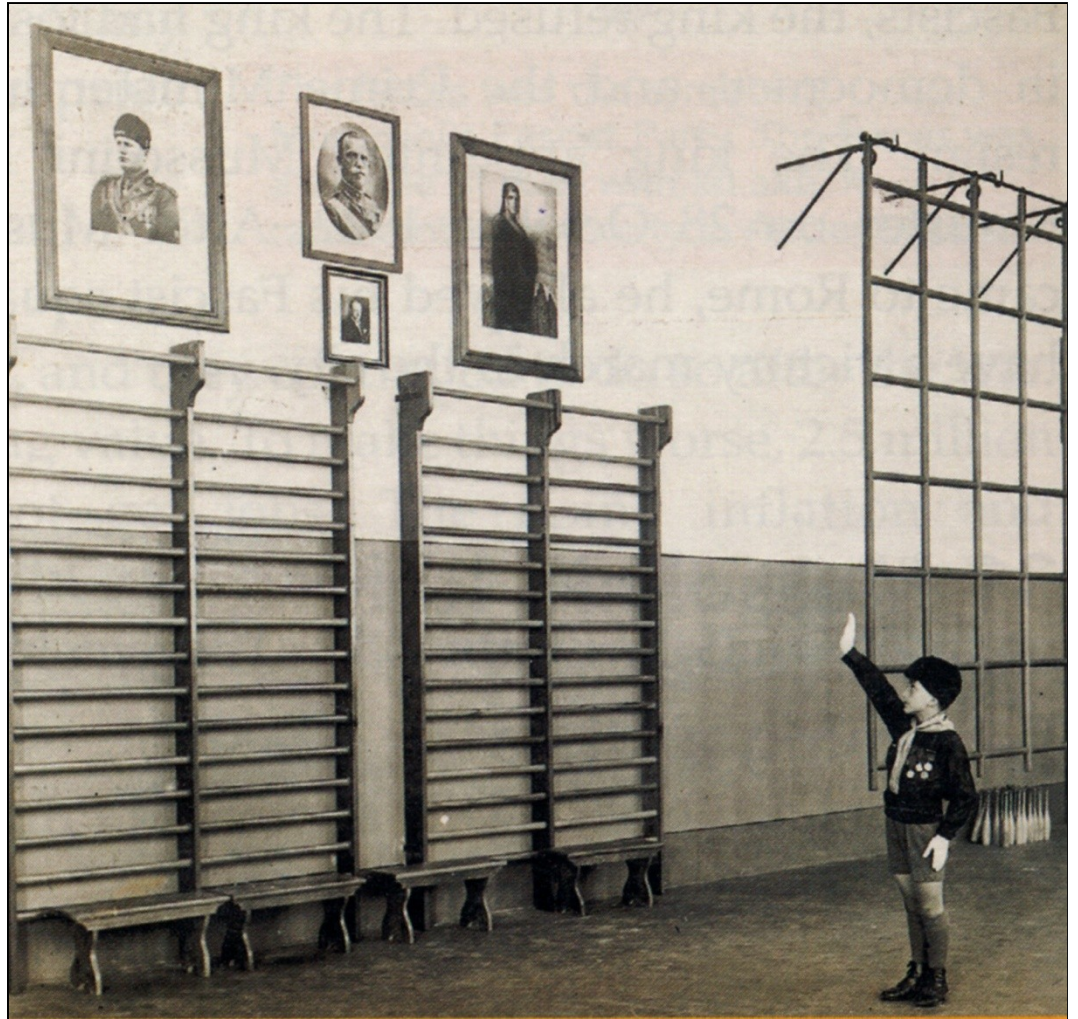


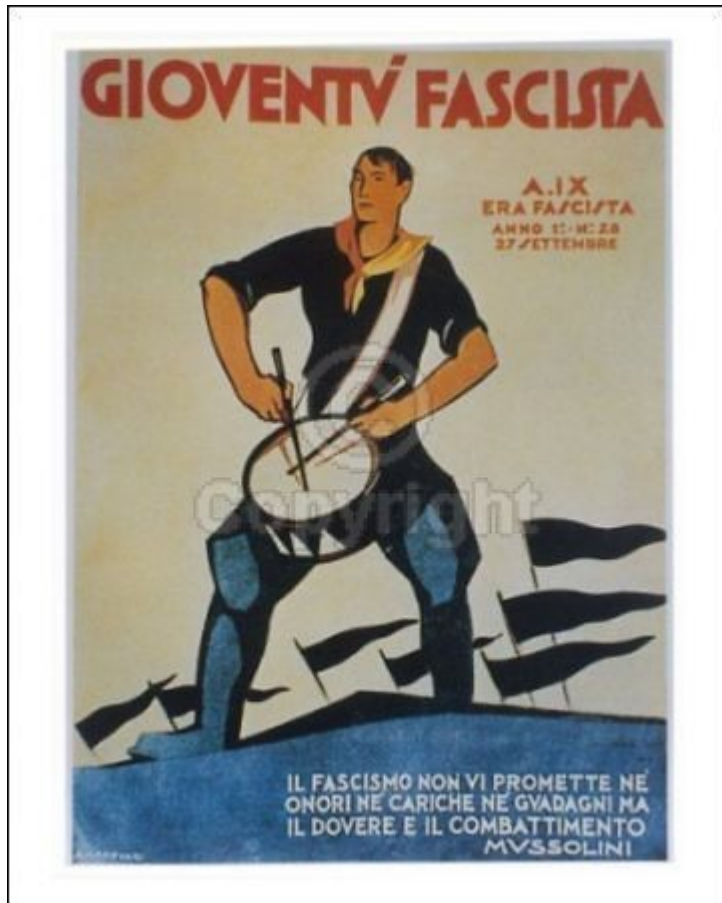


Cult of leader-Propaganda-Youth Groups- 'Bread & Circuses'

- 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)
- 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
- 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

VII
CONCORSO
NAZIONALE
PER
LA VITTORIA
DEL
GRANO

BANDITO
DAL
CAPO DEL
GOVERNO

L. 4.700.000
DI PREMI

SPONSORING
CATTOLICA
AGRICOLTURA

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

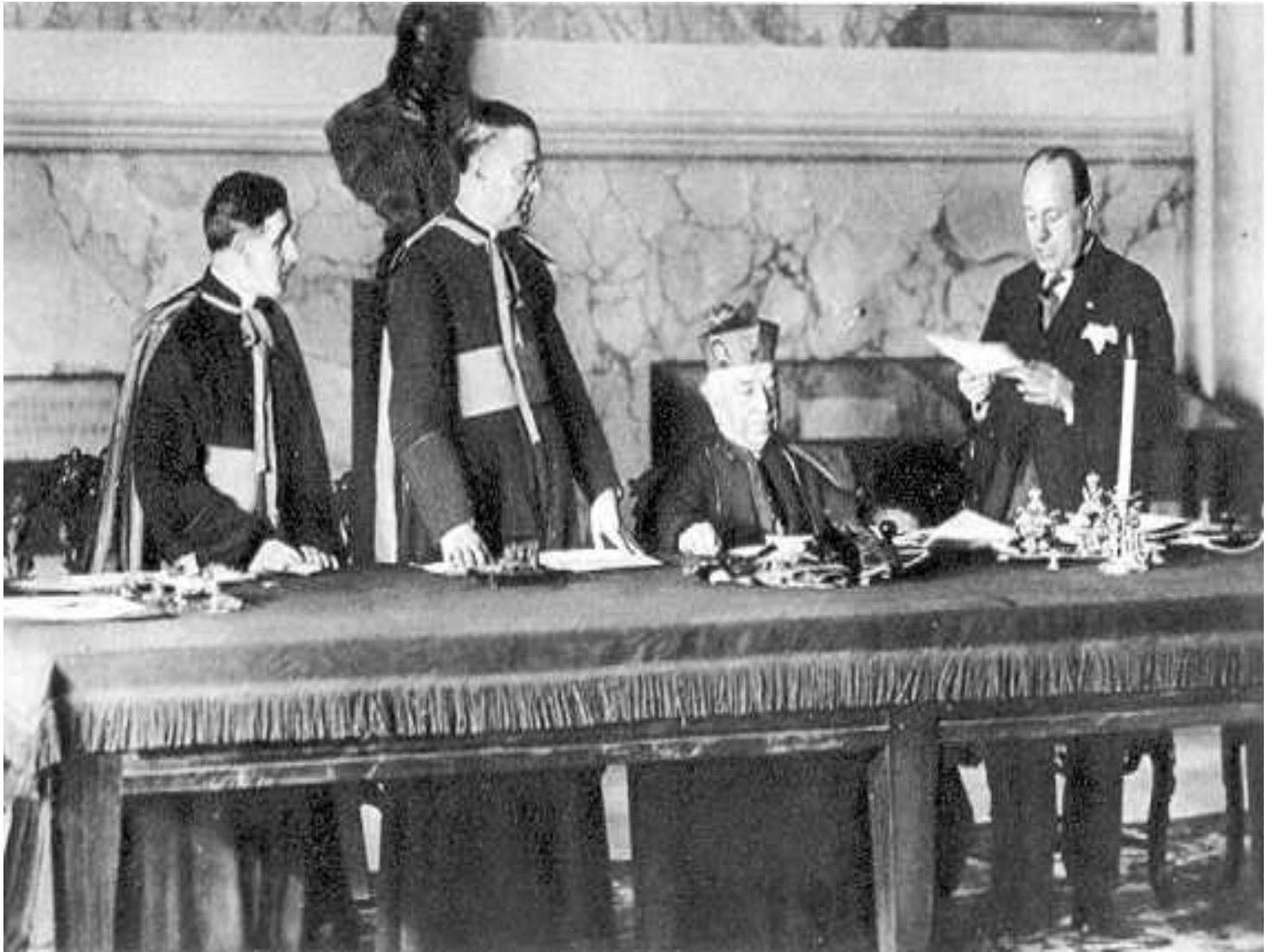
Fascist government made changes supported by the Catholic Church

- 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?)

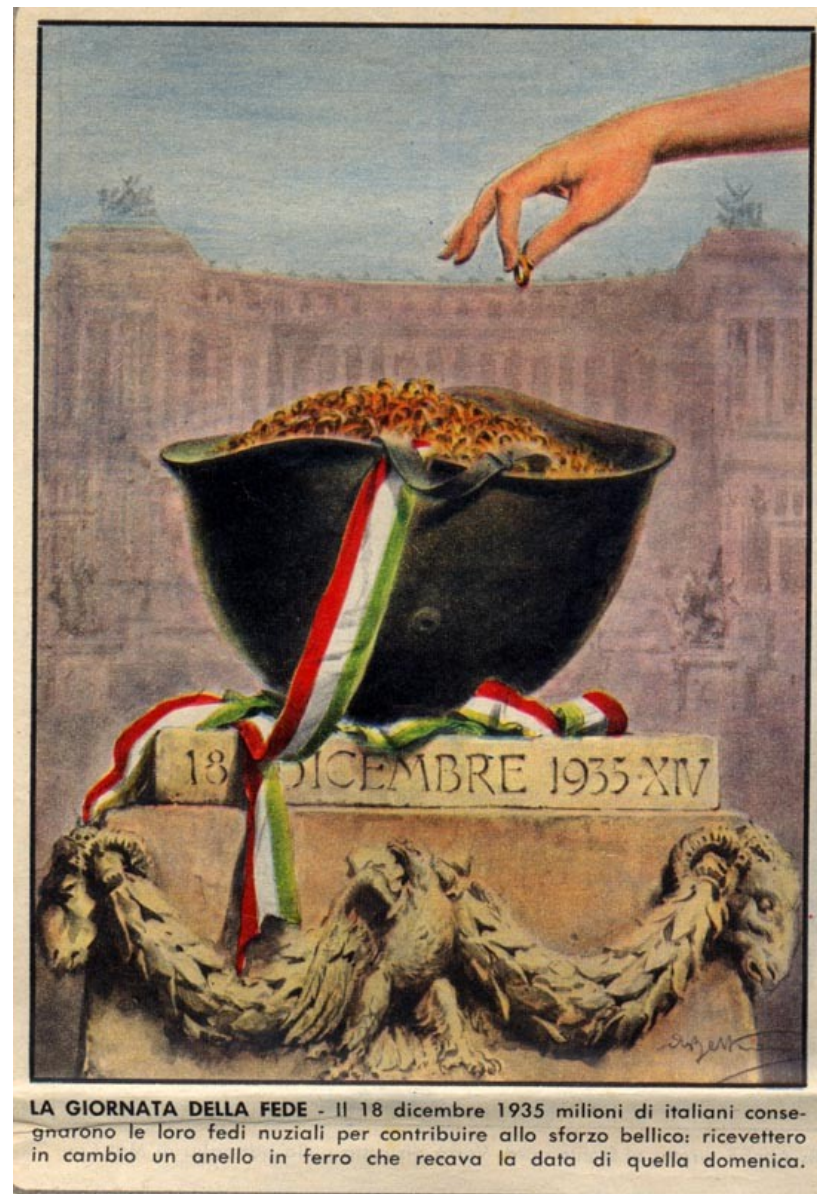
Tensions between Church and State in Italy

- 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
- 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 GIORNATA DELLA FEDE - Il 18 dicembre 1935 milioni di italiani consegnarono le loro fedi nuziali per contribuire allo sforzo bellico: ricevettero in cambio un anello in ferro che recava la data di quella domenica.

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)
- 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
- Badoglio replaced Mussolini as prime minister in 1943
- Italian govt. made peace with Allies
- Germans/Fascists took control northern Italy
- Allies controlled South

Italian anti-fascist partisans

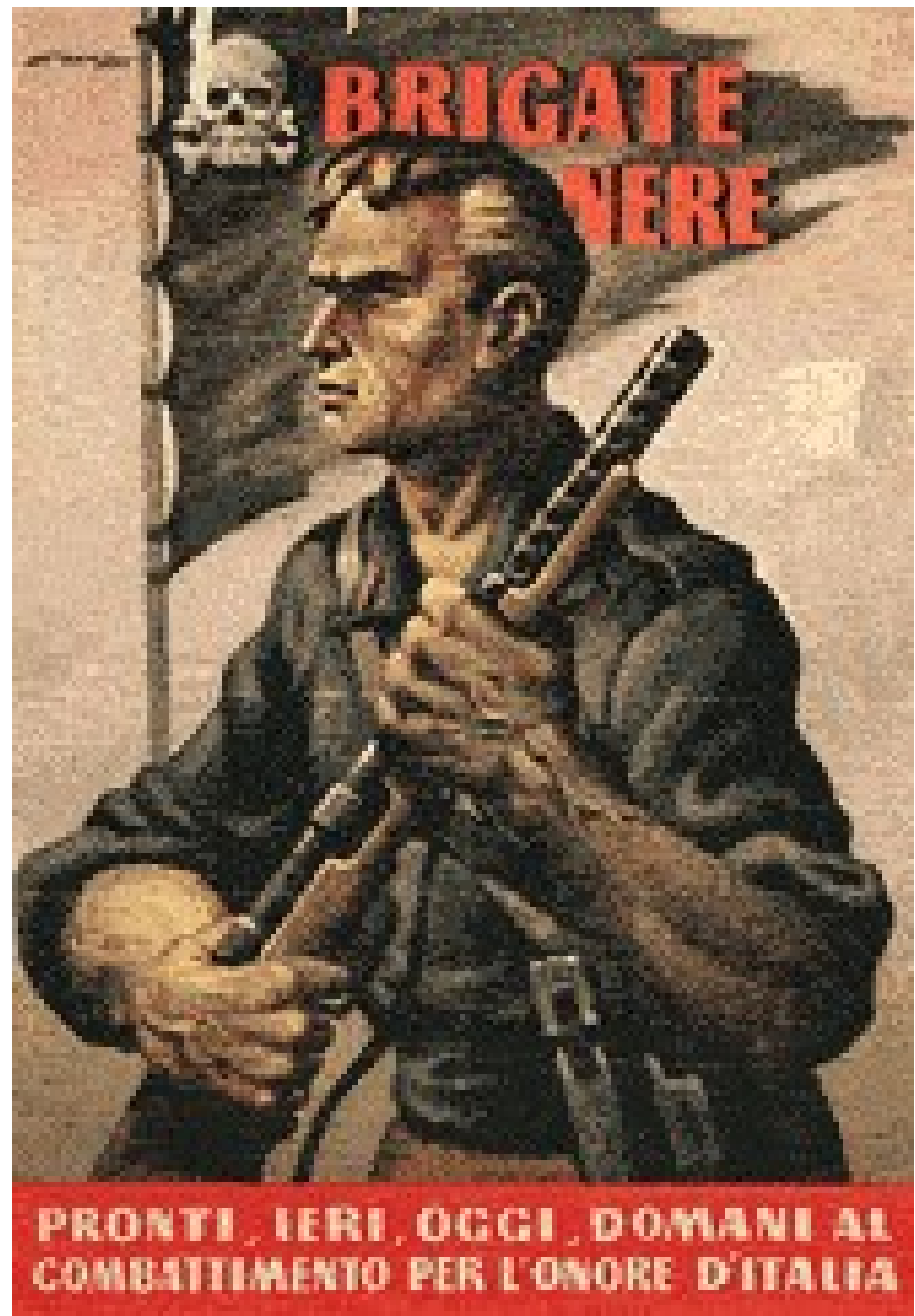


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During the war special fascist army units called 'Black Brigades' were set up to fight with the Germans against the Allies and Italian partisans



Member of the Black Brigades welcomed by supporters



Fascist
Poster:
shows
anti-fascist
partisans
being
crushed



Italian anti-fascist partisans



Salo Republic, the Partisans, and the death of Mussolini

- Mussolini rescued by German commandos
- Salo Fascist Republic (German Puppet State) set up in North with Mussolini as leader
- Partisans begin guerilla war against Germans & Fascists in Northern Italy
- Allies gradually advance north
- Mussolini captured and killed by partisans in April 1945
- Allies get control of all of Italy