

FASCISM

WHAT IT HAS DONE TO THE ITALIAN PEOPLE

Sir Oswald Mosley and Lord Rothermere are busy telling the British public the marvellous things Fascism would do if it went into power, hoping to persuade Britons to become slaves in return for such a millennium of prosperity.

Shall we see what Mussolini and Fascism (who are taken as the model to be copied) have done to Italy during the eleven years of unrestricted domination they have enjoyed? Surely no better and more convincing proof could be given, and the following facts are all taken from Fascist or League of Nations statistics and publications, and have therefore an indisputable value as proof; we are ready to give to anyone the exact date and where these documents can be seen and checked, and we can therefore guarantee their truth.

Let us begin with trade; the best indices are undoubtedly the number of bankruptcies, the amount of promissory notes protested for non-payment, railway traffic, course of shares and amounts invested in limited companies.

THESE ARE THE OFFICIAL ITALIAN STATISTICS

And have special significance to business people.

Bankruptcies (monthly averages)

- 1922 (last year of democratic rule) 321
- 1928 (after six years of Fascism) 970
- 1932 (after ten years of Fascism) 2,003

Over 6 times greater than 1922

Promissory notes protested

1922	306,703
1927	1,096,447
1931 :	1,663,716

Over 5 times greater than 1922

Railway Traffic

Passengers carried

In 1923.	100,145,000
In 1932	80,272,000, 20% less

Goods carried

In 1932	44,540,000 tons
In 1933	36,970,000, 18% less

On the Stock Exchange of Italy, Great Britain and U. S. A. the average rate for shares fell from December 1925 to December 1932 in the following percentages,

Italy	61%	(from 164.74 to 64.26)
U.S.A.	48.65	(„ 88.4 to 45.4)
U.K	6.1%	(„ 116.5 to 109.4)

Another source of information is the number of forced sales of real property for non-payment of taxes; the increase is tragic.

1922	1,357
1931	8,190 or 6 times as many.

Unemployment is far greater than it appears from the official figures, and it is impossible to ascertain its correct amount; a newspaper that cannot be suspected of anti-capitalistic tendencies, the "Financial Times", some time ago reckoned the number of unemployed at twice the official figure, which is well above the million mark.

Poverty and destitution are appalling and increasing, while the standard of living is steadily falling, as is amply proved by the following figures:— The consumption of sugar has fallen from 3,470,000 quintals in 1927 to 2,995,000 in 1932, or 18%; this gives a yearly consumption per head of about 15lbs, against one of 98lbs in Great Britain, and of 55lbs in France.

Another commodity of absolute necessity, table salt, has also fallen heavily; from 295,000 tons in 1927, down to 178,000 in 1932, a figure 40% lower.

And if we look at something not absolutely necessary, we find, naturally, even greater falls; beer, for instance, has passed from 987,000 hecto-litres in 1929 to 330,000 in 1932, equivalent to 66% in 5 years. The consumption of chocolate in Italy is equivalent to 6 ozs per head, per year, against 3 lbs in Great Britain.

Taxation has increased 50%, and is spent mostly for political and military purposes. It is characteristic that in the last budget (for 1932/3) the allocations for public works were reduced by an amount of 1,600 million Lire, while 600 millions were given to armaments.

Salaries have been reduced again and again, so that now they are from 35 to 50% below the rates for 1921, the year before Fascism; the textile workers and peasants have suffered most, for instance, the peasant who works for long hours in a rice field, with water up to his knees received Lire 21.80 per day in 1926; now he gets Lire 10.64; and he is well paid because the legal salary for an adult woman working in the fields is 0.65 lira (equal to 2½d) an hour, in the prosperous Milan district.

Coal consumed in Italy in 1932 was 5.8 million tons less than in 1929.

The total payroll was 6,040 million lire in 1929, but in 1932 it was only 4,100 millions.

We will give a few statistical data that will reveal in full the most tragic aspects of the misery.

Crimes against property (such as theft, house-breaking, frauds, etc.) have increased from 256,395 in 1931 to 304,909 in 1932, the increase is mostly due to petty pilfering and theft, often of foodstuff, caused by poverty.

And, last of all, deaths among babies on account of immaturity, weakness and defects at birth has risen 48% from 2,933 in 1926 to 4,340 in 1931.

Graft and corruption, protected by the lack of public control have reached incredible heights, but the press muzzled, cannot make it known.

This is the ghastly picture that truth gives us of the effects of Fascist Dictatorship in Italy; and the unhappy Italians have paid this disastrous economic result with the loss of all personal liberties; they can be arrested and kept in prison indefinitely, on suspicion, without trial. There is a terrible Special Tribunal, composed of Fascist officers, which in its first five years of life has sent 9 people to death, and 1,656 others to prison (and to what prisons!) for an aggregate of 10,321 years. People can be arrested (and are arrested in large numbers) on the flimsiest suspicion, and deported for periods up to five years to little insanitary islands, "without any trial". No one, who is not a Fascist, can obtain a job on public bodies; and for the non-fascist it is difficult, or altogether impossible in some cases, to obtain any work. There is no free Press whatever, no elections, no possibility of meeting for discussing anything unorthodox. For short, there is not ONE of those liberties that distinguish a free man from a slave.

Therefore we have no hesitation in stating that all propaganda describing Fascism as the "way-out" of the difficulties that beset democratic countries is a delusion, and we appeal to all true MEN to fight relentlessly against Fascism, for our natural right, FREEDOM.

This pamphlet has been issued by the Italian League for the Rights of Man, London Branch (Central Committee in Paris, as the League is forbidden in Italy). Our League stands for those fundamental rights of thought, speech, Press, association, meeting, etc., without which no free and civilised state is possible; it is strictly non-political, and the only condition it puts to its members is a real respect for the democratic principles it stands for.

The Hon. Secretary (54, St. John's Road, London N. 19) will be glad to give any information to bona-fide inquirers.

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