

# Opposition in Mussolini's Italy

## Identify

→ The pope, Socialist/Communist (Matteotti, Amendola, Rosselli Brothers), Jewish opposition, Elitist vs Ras.

## Matteotti

- ❖ One of the spokesmen against the Acerbo Law was a Socialist deputy from Rovigo called Giacomo Matteotti.
- ❖ He was a highly respected politician who was critical of Fascism.
- ❖ 1924, Matteotti was kidnapped by Fascist thugs and beaten to death, his body thrown in the river.
- ❖ This became an Italian political crisis as the thugs were associated with the Fascists and ultimately Mussolini.

## Giovanni Amendola

- ❖ A political opponent of the far rightist.
- ❖ Most famous for publishing the Rossi testimony during the Matteotti Crisis where he directly accused Mussolini of murdering him.
- ❖ Killed by black shirts in 1925.

## Carlo Rosselli

- ❖ Anti-Fascist Journalist, Historian and Politician.
- ❖ Non-Marxist Socialist who was inspired by the British liberal socialism.
- ❖ Founded an Anti-Fascist military group called Giustizia e Libertà
- ❖ Also, the Rosselli brothers were inspired to fight against Mussolini's regime after the brutal death of Giacomo Matteotti
- ❖ In 1936, Roselli went to Spain to join the civil war on the Republican side
- ❖ Both Carlo and his brother, Nello, was murdered by French Fascist and it is believed that Mussolini's regime authorized the murders.

## The Jewish 'Opposition'

- ❖ In 1929 Mussolini had the viewpoint that the Italian-Jewish population was demographically limited but culturally significant. He had a Mediterranean's viewpoint meaning that all Mediterranean cultures including the Jews had a bond.
- ❖ However, these views contradicted Nazi Germany's views, to whom Italy became increasingly subordinate to.
- ❖ This leads to Mussolini adopting racial values borrowed from Nazi Germany and this lead to the introduction of the anti-Semitic racial laws.
- ❖ These racial laws, according to historian Federico Chabod, lead to a decrease in public support for the Fascist Italian State.

## Pope Pius XI

- ❖ 1870 The relation between the church had been soured when Italy had annexed the Papal States during the Italian unification.
- ❖ They also have different ideas about education and indoctrination of young people.

## Elitist vs Ras

- ❖ Pressure from different political sides
  - Ras, they were radical fascist who wanted a fascist revolution.
  - Moderates and elite who wanted to restore law and order and bring stability to the political climate.
- ❖ Mussolini had to balance these two political opposites which meant that there was always opposition to his decisions.

## How did Mussolini deal with opposition?

- ❖ Purges
- ❖ Established only one-party dictatorship.
- ❖ Secret Police (OVRA) arrested and imprisoned people.
- ❖ Media is under the state which leads to propaganda and censorship.

## Results

- ❖ Mussolini centralized his power and became a dictator.
- ❖ Although Mussolini could still be dismissed by the King (Although they had and had to compromise with Non-Fascist including the King and in the beginning with more moderate elitist.
- ❖ The Lateran treaty/pact/accord which was a treaty between Italy and the Vatican (the pope) where the pope recognized the state of Italy and the Vatican got independence.
- ❖ The Acerbo Law made the Fascist government more politically independent, which meant that they did not have to rely on other political parties to enforce their policies.
- ❖ Mussolini eventually was forced out of office in 1943.