

Benito Mussolini: “What is Fascism?” (1932)

Fascism believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace. It thus repudiates the doctrine of Pacifism. War alone brings up to its highest all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have courage to meet it.

After Socialism, Fascism combats the whole complex system of democratic ideology, and repudiates it. Fascism denies that the majority, by the simple fact that it is a majority, can direct human society; it denies that numbers alone can govern by means of a periodical consultation, and it affirms the immutable, beneficial, and fruitful inequality of mankind, which can never be permanently leveled through the mere operation of a mechanical process such as universal suffrage....

...given that the nineteenth century was the century of Socialism, of Liberalism, and of Democracy, it does not necessarily follow that the twentieth century must also be a century of Socialism, Liberalism and Democracy: political doctrines pass, but humanity remains, and it may rather be expected that this will be a century of authority...a century of Fascism.

...The Fascist State organizes the nation, but leaves a sufficient margin of liberty to the individual; the individual is deprived of all useless and possibly harmful freedom, but retains what is essential; the deciding power in this question cannot be the individual, but the State alone....

...For Fascism, the growth of empire, that is to say the expansion of the nation, is an essential manifestation of vitality. But empire demands discipline, the coordination of all forces and a deeply felt sense of duty and sacrifice: for never before has the nation stood more in need of authority, of direction and order. If every age has its own characteristic doctrine, there are a thousand signs which point to Fascism as the characteristic doctrine of our time...

Questions: For each question, cite from what lines you got your answers

1) According to Mussolini, what is the fascist view of war and empires? _____

2) Who makes decisions in a fascist government? _____

3) Why does Mussolini believe democracy is flawed? _____

4) Based on this reading, why do you think people would be happy under a fascist government?
