

hold a public commemoration of Matteotti outside Parliament and to publish a manifesto demanding a return to constitutional liberty. The judicial proceedings then pending against De Bono and other prominent Fascists had revealed, they declared, an organisation "set up outside the law to execute sentence on political opponents," directed by persons in the confidence of the Head of the Government, "a tangle of corruption and trafficking defiling the body public," and "a sinister association for the purpose of upholding by all and every means, the positions of vantage and power which have been audaciously captured."

Nevertheless, the Opposition Parties, in view of these tragic facts, declared their protest "based solely on moral grounds." It was not their purpose to secure political power. Consequently their action was abortive; Mussolini's reign was unchallenged.

Having withdrawn from Parliament at this time, the Opposition Parties remained absent and held their own Assembly, termed the Aventine, but their unwillingness to assume the responsibility of forming a government robbed their movement of reality.

Fascist atrocities and Fascist defiance continued; it was not until November 15, 1924, two years after Mussolini was called so calamitously to power by a craven sovereign, that Giolitti openly broke with the Fascist Government. Orlando and Salandra followed suit two days later. Salandra was at that time Chairman of the Budget Commission and Representative, at Geneva, of the Fascist Government. These old Party leaders, long in government control, who during the two first crucial years of its existence supported Mussolini's Government and who aided him to power cannot be held guiltless of his misdeeds. Giolitti of all the old Ministers was the most responsible. The withdrawal of their support for him only came when Mussolini was beginning to place the Press and the law courts under Fascist control. In 1925 was inaugurated the policy of "all power to all Fascism," the "most Fascist laws" leading to the one Party State, the replacement of Parliament by the Corporations. Thus the time had come for the old fellow travellers with Fascism to pass into retirement—they could serve the dictatorship no more.

Giolitti, says Sforza, was "a great Liberal statesman of the nineteenth century; he firmly believed that all factions and all interests would find their compromise in Parliament. Indeed, he only broke openly with Fascism when it practically suppressed the right to vote." It is, however, clear that from the very commencement, the whole conception and practice of Fascism, with its squads of armed bullies, was a suppression of the right to vote, a suppression of the right of free choice, and of free expression of opinion in every aspect of corporate life. There can be no doubt that Giolitti had hoped to profit by fascism, that he broke with it only when he was forced to understand that Fascism would presently exclude him and his followers from the political life of Italy. He saw that the armed men he had brought to power, had destroyed, for the time being, the political conditions in which he and his like had operated.

FALL OF MUSSOLINI THE EMIGRÉS RETURN

When Mussolini declared war on Britain and France in 1940, the Italian emigrés in the United States were divided between those who counted on a vast expansion of the Italian Empire, and those who began to speculate on the possibility of returning to a liberated country. When Britain was seen to have survived her darkest hour, and the United States entered the World War, in December, 1941, the Italian anti-Fascists abroad became more emphatic in their opinions; their numbers swelled considerably, and anti-Fascist sentiments became vociferant among some who had hitherto been prominent in support of the regime.

When the occupation of Sicily and a portion of the Italian mainland by the United Nations led to the resignation of Mussolini, King Victor Emmanuel of Italy appointed as Prime Minister Marshal Badoglio, who had conducted the war in Ethiopia (after the removal of De Bono) and had advanced his armies by the lavish use of poison gas. On September 8, 1943, it was announced that Badoglio's Government had surrendered to the United Nations and had pledged themselves to assist in expelling the German forces from Italian soil.

Count Sforza, on September 23, sent letters to Marshal Badoglio and to the United States Government, through Mr. Berle, declaring, "in my view, it now becomes the paramount duty of all Italians, irrespective of political and party differences, to support and assist in the struggle to crush the German armies, and to drive every German soldier from Italian soil, so long as Marshal Badoglio is engaged in that task, and is acceptable to the Allies. I consider it criminal to do anything to weaken his position. I am prepared to offer my full support, so long as he is thus engaged. Matters of internal politics can and should be adjourned for the period of the struggle, and the activities, military and political, of all Italians should be devoted to supporting the organised forces endeavouring to throw out the common enemy. I pledge my honour to do this myself, and to urge this course upon my many friends and associates."

On this understanding, facilities were given for Count Sforza to return to Italy. Mr. Churchill, who was not fully satisfied with Count Sforza's attitude, owing to statements of a different character which had been published, and also perhaps with memories of the negotiations which followed the First World War, interviewed Count Sforza as he passed through London, and went through the above letter which Sforza had written, almost line by line; Count Sforza assured him that this letter represented his most profound conviction.

Leaders of the various defunct political parties which had formerly existed, but which had been abolished under Fascism, were now invited to join a government under Marshal Badoglio.