

READING COMPREHENSION

PASSAGE

The term Fascist is sometimes applied today to any totalitarian state that does not pay lip service to Marxism, but it is historically more correct to regard Fascism as the political philosophy of the Italian government of Benito Mussolini. Mussolini was premier of Italy from 1922 to the Allied invasion of Italy in - World War II. So regarded, Fascism, unlike Marxism, is not a systematic political philosophy, but certain fundamental tenets of Fascist thought do distinguish it from other sets of political beliefs.

The first tenet of Fascism is that the rights of the state, as distinct from the rights of the individual, are supreme. Liberalism and Marxism, both in effect, regard the ultimate good as that which benefits individual people, but in Fascist thought, the ultimate good is that which benefits the State. The Fascist State is considered an organic whole, with its own purpose and destiny, to which the interests of the individual are always subservient. Because political activity must redound to the benefit of the State rather than to the individual, the primary virtues for the citizen are service and sacrifice. True liberty, in Fascism, consists not in doing what you please, but in accepting the authority of the state.

A corollary of this premise is that the State is morally unlimited by anything exterior to itself in its relationship to its citizens. The State does not exist primarily to protect the rights of its citizens, as is the case in liberal theory; on the contrary, individual citizens exist for the sake of the State. Therefore the State cannot wrong the individual by its actions. The word Fascist derives from the Latin fasces, a bundle of rods containing an axe with its blade projecting. These were carried by the attendants of the Roman magistrates and symbolized the power of the State to flog or behead any who challenged its decrees.

A second tenet of Fascism is that the destiny and ideals of the State are embodied in its leader, whose authority is, therefore, absolute, but who, in the exercise of his authority, protects the citizenry from mob rule and anarchy. Mussolini's seizure of power in 1922 was widely condoned by wealthy landowners, industrialists, the military, the Catholic Church, and many workers as well, because he appeared able to protect the social order against anarchy and communism. The leader governs with the assistance of an elite that embodies the genius of the people and that alone has the intelligence and knowledge to understand the problems that affect the entire nation.

This elitism of Fascism contrasts sharply with the egalitarianism of democracy and the rule of the proletariat under communism. Racism and anti-Semitism, central tenets of Nazism, were not particularly espoused by Italian Fascists until it became advisable to do so to please Hitler.

A third tenet of Fascism is that the Darwinian concept of survival of the fittest applies to the State. Because only the fittest State will survive, only the aggressive, self-serving State will win out in the struggle for survival. Imperialism and militarism thus become prominent features of the Fascist State. Corollaries of this aggressive nationalism are the rejection of pacifism, disarmament, and "universal embraces" with neighboring nations, along with glorification of the "virtues" of war to maximize human potential for the benefit of the State.

Another tenet of Fascism is that the best economic system is that known as the "Corporative State," in which the State has unlimited rights to intervene in the economy without owning all property and means of production outright. In Italy, the interests of landowning and monied classes were well protected, and the complaints of workers nullified or silenced, under a system of "corporations." Composed of both capitalists and workers, corporations-one for each branch of business or industry-were permitted, under State leadership, to set policy for that business or industry.

Fascism asserts the power of the State to be opportunistic in its own interest as it pleases. In 1919, Mussolini stated, "We allow ourselves the luxury of being aristocratic and democratic, reactionary and revolutionary, legalistic and illegalistic, according to the circumstances of place, time and environment. Fascism was never especially democratic, except perhaps within some very small confines, this comment is otherwise true and helps explain why a list of the essential tenets of Fascism is so short. The Fascists were always prepared to change policies to suit their convenience.

1. Which of the following best harmonises with what is conveyed in the passage ?
 - A. In Fascism, true liberty consists in not doing what one pleases, but in accepting the authority of the State.

- B. The fascists used to change policies to suit their convenience.
 - C. The destiny and ideals of the State are embodied in its leader.
 - D. All of the above.
2. All of the following are true, with respect to the passage, except that :
- A. individual citizens exist for the sake of the State.
 - B. the rights of the State are supreme which is distinct from the rights of the individuals.
 - C. the ultimate good is that which benefits the individual.
 - D. only the aggressive self-serving State will win out in the struggle for survival.
3. As per the passage, in Fascism, true liberty lies in :
- A. doing what one pleases but in accordance with the laws of the land.
 - B. accepting the authority of the State and in not doing what one pleases.
 - C. kowtowing the leaders in complete subjugation and submission.
 - D. fighting the antinational forces out to undermine the sovereignty and unity of the country.
4. "Corporative State", as described in the passage :
- A. is one in which the State has unlimited rights to intervene in the economy, without owning all property and means of production outright.
 - B. comprised both capitalists and workers under the leadership of the State, to frame policy for that business or industry.
 - C. is a tenet of Fascism and constitutes an effective economic system.
 - D. All of the above.
5. As per the passage, the prominent features of the Fascist State are best enshrined by which of the following ?
- A. Rejection of pacifism and disarmament.
 - B. "Virtues of War" are glorified to maximise human potential for the benefit of the State.
 - C. Liberty to people to elect their leaders.
 - D. All except (C)
6. As per the passage, Liberalism and Marxism differ from Fascism, in that :
- A. the former is based on an ideology whereas the latter is a fallout of the exigency.
 - B. the latter was forcefully imposed on the masses and the former was mildly sold out, resulting in the acceptability of the former.
 - C. the latter regarded the ultimate good as that benefiting the State whereas the former had the ultimate good reaching out to the individual.
 - D. the former was synchronistic and the latter anachronistic.
7. As per the passage, a leader who is a Fascist :
- A. enjoys absolute authority.
 - B. protects the citizenry from mob rule and anarchy.
 - C. symbolises the destiny and ideals of the State.
 - D. All of the above.
8. Benito Mussolini's seizure of power, as per the passage was :
- A. not resisted by industrialists, wealthy land owners, the workers, the military and the Catholic Church.
 - B. the herald of democracy and end of aristocracy.
 - C. the beginning of an era of despotism and whimsicality.

D. best characterised by an impressive radio broadcast and a smooth takeover of the reins of administration.

9. Which of the following was not the basic characteristic of Fascism, as made out by the passage ?

- A. Aggressive nationalism, all out to win the struggle for survival.
- B. Imperialism and militarism, to aid aggressive nationalism.
- C. Racism and anti-Semitism which were central tenets of Nazism.
- D. None of the above.

10. A suitable title for the passage is :

- A. Liberalism And Marxism.
- B. Communism-A Concept That Failed.
- C. Fascism-A Need Of The Times.
- D. Corporative State-A Utopian Notion.

Answer Keys

1.(4) 2.(3) 3.(2) 4.(4) 5.(4) 6.(3) 7.(4) 8.(1) 9.(3) 10.(3)

FILL IN THE BLANK

11. Is there a public call box near here? I have to _____ a phone call.

- A) do B) make C) get D) hear

ANSWER-B

12. First she said "Yes", then she said "No", but in the end she _____ up her mind to marry him.

- A) did B) made C) got D) said

ANSWER-B

13. When you're not sure what to do, the best thing is to _____ nothing,

- A) do B) make C) get D) hear

ANSWER-A

14. Ssh! You mustn't _____ a noise. The baby's asleep.

- A) do B) make C) get D) hear

ANSWER-B

15. My teacher says I must work harder, but I can't work any harder. I'm _____ my best.

- A) doing B) trying C) making D) showing

ANSWER-A

16. We asked to see the manager and we _____ a complaint about the terrible service in the restaurant.

- A) did B) made C) had D) heard

ANSWER-B

17. At first I found learning English very easy, but now I don't think I'm _____ any progress at all.

- A) doing B) making C) showing D) getting

ANSWER-B

18. Could you _____ me a favor please? Could you give me a lift to the airport?

- A) make B) do C) give D) want

ANSWER- B