

"The revolution," said Mussolini, "has been made with sticks. What have you in your hands now, all you to whom I speak? (The Fascisti shout out "Rifles!" and lift up their rifles and brandish them in the air.)

"I want to have a talk with you and I am sure your replies will be clear and bold. My questions and your answers will be heard not only by yourselves but by all Italians and by all mankind, because today, after a lapse of centuries, Italy once again is giving a lead to the course of the civilized world" (Applause).

"Black Shirts, I ask you: If the sacrifices of tomorrow should prove heavier than those of yesterday, will you sustain them?" (Vociferous shouts of assent)

"If, tomorrow, I asked from you what may be called the sublime proof of discipline, would you give me this proof?" (Enthusiastic Fascist shouts of "Si! Si! - Yes! Yes!")

"If tomorrow I gave you the watchword, the watchword of the great days, of the days which should decide the destiny of the peoples, would you stand by me?" (Outburst of enthusiastic cries: "Yes, we swear it!")

"If tomorrow, I were to tell you that we must resume and continue the march and advance in other directions, would you come?" (More shouts of "Yes! Yes!")

"Are your hearts ready for all the ordeals which discipline may demand from you, including the humble obscure ordeals of your regular day's work?" (Fascisti unanimously, "Yes! Yes! Yes! ")

Fascism - I repeat - is the latest in date of those crusades that come from time to time to reinvigorate mankind with a martial idealism that makes serious count of realities and presents in its novel outward appearance the attraction of new methods and forms, when those that the same eternal instinct had inspired at an earlier time have become worn with long use and grown unattractive by familiarity. When the essential and practicable object of such a movement have been attained, it may be that, as the high-souled and disinterested pioneers disappear or fall away, it may sink into the decline of utilitarian materialism. There is the ceaseless swing of the pendulum, changing its direction, it may be almost invisibly at first,

Copied from Sarfatti's "Life of Benito Mussolini -

than faster and ever faster. It reminds us of the old myth of the phoenix, which as it grows old prepares its funeral pile and arises from it renewed in life and vigour.

In such times of change it is rarely that we find men with such elastic temperaments and many-sided gifts of mind as to make it possible for them to play a leading part in the movements of two successive eras, or to hold a prominent place in one such movement and themselves set in motion, and guide that which follows. Such was Napoleon, the instrument of, and a leader in, a Revolution, who then became the creator of an Empire. Such too is Mussolini.