

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 3 ☒ Question 4 ☒ Question 5 ☒
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There is no doubt that between the years of 1922-26, Mussolini established himself as a fascist dictator. To a large extent, this was due to the weakness of opposition, who failed to challenge Mussolini's rise. For example, the ease in which the ANI merged with his PNF and the acceptance of Conservative elites demonstrates the weakness of groups within Italy. However to a larger extent it should be argued that Mussolini himself enabled the dictatorship, through his control of the PNF through the fascist grand council, and his ability to eradicate opposition, such as Matteotti.

The ANI stood as Italy's nationalist party before the PNF rose as a political force. The ANI agreed to merge with the PNF, meaning Mussolini removed one form of opposition, and also gained additional support for future elections. Although Mussolini's right wing attitude made the ANI comfortable with the change, they still displayed weakness as they failed to stand individually as an opposition party. The change meant that when Mussolini pushed something in the Court of law,



original members of the ANI would be unable to disagree. This aided Mussolini's stability as a new dictator.

Similarly, the Conservative elites had originally proved to be large scale forms of opposition to former Liberal Governments, however, they were manipulated into accepting Mussolini's establishment as a dictator.

Mussolini allowed for the ~~past~~ Courts, army and Civil Services to be ran independantly without the intervention of Government policies. This pleased the Conservative elites and so they provided little to know opposition as Mussolini's presence as a dictator became ever present.

From this, it is clear that both the ANI and Conservative elites were manipulated by the negotiation skill set of Mussolini. Both believed they were provided securities under his rule, so decided not to provide opposition - something which underlines political fragility.

However, to a larger extent it can be concluded that the rise of Mussolini's dictatorship between 1922-26 was mostly due to his influence and strength as a political leader. Firstly, Mussolini had control over the PNF, where those within the party lacked the ability to challenge his ideology of a strong, militarised country. The fascist Grand Council was



set up by Mussolini in order to centralise his power. The laws of December 1925 granted Mussolini the ability to select those who were involved with the Council. In effect, this meant only trusted people were employed to aid the decision making behind the PNF's direction.

Mussolini also established local governments with selected prefects having high levels of control amongst Italy.

The prefects imposed a policing role in each ~~region~~ region and they reported any dissent behaviour back to the grand council. This ~~is~~ imposed the fascist ideology amongst Italian towns and prevented outspoken opposition against his dictatorship.

A further example of Mussolini's leadership which aided his dictatorship was his actions taken against opposition which was outspoken. ~~The~~ By 1924, the fascist grand council had passed laws to remove the problem of proportional representation. The Acerbo law stated that $\frac{2}{3}$ of seats would be granted to the party which gained over 25% of the vote, something which effectively ended democracy even prior to his complete banning of parties in later years. Matteotti was a passionate socialist in the summer of 1924, who publicly criticised the Acerbo law, warning of Mussolini's intention to establish himself as a dictator. He was kidnapped in ~~August~~ June before his body was found two months later, dead.



The blame for the murder was placed on an army general known as Biondi, however historical books, backed with clear indications strongly assume Mussolini was responsible for his ~~own~~ abduction. This demonstrates how the brutality of Mussolini was the real contributor to his stability as a dictator, even when faced with strong political opposition.

In ~~conclusion~~ conclusion, there is no doubt that the weakness of key political groups was key to the ease by which Mussolini established himself as a dictator, evident from the voting on the ANI and conservative elites. However, the main factor to the stability of his rule was himself and the nature of his decisions. The fascist grand council granted Mussolini full control over powers and his murder of Matteotti demonstrates that despite opposition, Mussolini's character allowed him to create stability for the coming years.

