

L. J. - Sunoco. Thursday, Sept. 9, 1943.

LEAD

Here's a startling dispatch from Switzerland. It states that the Badoglio government of Italy is about to declare war ~~on~~ against Nazi Germany. The story is that the Italians are going to fight against their former ally, because of the formation of a puppet Italian government by the Nazis. The German radio has been broadcasting the creation of a phantom Fascist regime in the name of the overthrown Mussolini. This, the Nazis pretend, is the legitimate government of Italy, and, it has been broadcasting orders to the Italian forces to resist the Allies.

The story from Switzerland is that Badoglio regards this as cause for a declaration of war--as indeed he might. One nation erecting a puppet government in opposition to the regular government of another country might well be considered a hostile act. Moreover the German announcement states that the puppet Fascist outfit has been formed to keep Italy in the war and punish the traitors at home--number one traitor of course being Badoglio, in Nazi eyes. As a result of all this,

Badoglio, we hear, is prepared to break with Nazi Germany and take his country back into the war -- but on the other side -- our side.

NAPLES.

Early this morning, the greatest seaborne invasion in history landed on the Italian coast, and the place is one of high strategy--Naples, the great Italian harbor. Last night we had reports of a huge allied ~~army~~ ~~armade~~ streaming north from Sicily to take advantage of the surrender of Italy and strike up the coast to cut off the German forces in the southern part of the peninsula. And as dawn appeared on the Mediterranean today, myriads of landing boats swarmed to the shore at points suitable for inland drives to seize Naples. One was near Amalfi, famous as a place of scenic beauty--a favorite resort for tourists.

We are told that the landings were far greater than those that hit Sicily--the biggest ever. And they were supported by a tremendous naval and air bombardment. Weather conditions were favorable, with a calm sea, and apparently there was not much resistance. The dispatch from the invasion's headquarter^s merely mentions--"some German shelling."

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The latest is that the Neapolitan invasion is going well. Secretary of War Stimson stated today that it was progressing according to plan. From the scene of action, reports tell of heavy fighting as the American troops drive inland from the shore. The Germans are said to be battling desperately--furious because of the surrender of Italy, and alarmed by the danger of having all of their forces to the south cut off.

The invasion force is the American Fifth Army, under the command of General Clark--the officer who made the adventurous trip to North Africa, in negotiating for the surrender of the French Colonies there. We still have no word of that mysterious American Seventh Army, the veterans of Sicily under the command of General Patton. We can only surmise, ^{that} under cover of concealment, it may be moving for a landing at some point or other. There are rumors that invasion forces are at such places up the Italian Coast as the area ^{off} of Rome, Leghorn and Genoa.

At the toe of the boot, the British Eighth Army, under General Montgomery, is still progressing. The British,

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too, have made a landing up the coast--the coast of the toe. They made a seaborne flanking stab aimed to cut off German forces further south, and encountered some sharp resistance, but are getting along nicely.

Meanwhile, air power is still hammering the Germans--as they try desperately to extricate themselves from the trap which the surrender of Italy has thrown around them. ^{AP} A great fleet of Liberator bombers today hit Foggia, a key center of Nazi air power in southern Italy. And Flying Fortresses ^{also} blasted the town of Frascati, famous for that Frascati wine which is ~~a normal beverage for~~ ^{so popular in} Rome. Frascati is a town not far from Rome, and has been number one headquarters for the German forces. All the buildings in the place were taken over by the Nazis, and we hear that the Flying Fortresses left those buildings a roaring mass of flames.

The official Italian news agency states that at Frascati the German commander in Italy narrowly escaped being killed-- Field Marshall Kesserling. His quarters were hit and came

ITALY.

Fighting is ^{already} going on between the Germans and Italians in Italy--though just how much it is difficult to say. In the northern part of the peninsula the Nazis moved promptly to seize the important cities. They grabbed Genoa and blocked the harbor there. And they are disarming the Italian troops. In some cases these resisted. From neutral sources we hear of Italian troops putting up a savage fight against the Nazis. The Germans themselves admit Italian resistance, but minimize the amount of it--saying that in most instances the Italians were disarmed without much trouble.

The Berlin radio grows increasingly furious because of the Badoglio surrender, and states that he and the Italian King tried to spring a trap on the Germans in Italy. The Nazi news agency today stated that the King and Badoglio reinforced Italian troops on the frontier, with the idea of catching the Germans in a net. Also Italian units destroyed roads and bridges the Germans had to use. One report states that

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Italian troops occupied ^{the} Brenner pass, but it is not known whether this has any relation to the ~~the~~ alleged trap. Of course, if the Italians were to cut ^{the} Brenner Pass behind the Germans the Nazis in Italy would be doomed, all of them. But then, Italian forces isolated up there could hardly hope to hold that all-important Pass against the full weight of Nazi power.

We are told today about how Badoglio announced the bad news to Hitler when the capitulation was made public. He wired the Nazi Fuehrer saying:

"Italy has no longer the strength to resist." And he specified in the following terms: "There is not a single point in Italian territory that is not open to enemy attack, as has been shown by the enemy's ability to land where he liked, how he liked, and when he liked." And those are accurate words.

Badoglio further explained to Hitler that he was surrendering to prevent Italy's becoming what he called "the prey of foreigners." Foreigners of course would include both the Allies and the Germans. And I suppose the Italian Marshal meant that he

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wanted to keep his country from being ravaged as a battlefield for the contending armies. However, much of Italy is likely to be a battlefield.

~~The Germans are broadcasting the formation of an Italian Fascist Government--another one of those puppet things of theirs. This phantom's Fascist government has been constituted in the name of the overthrown Mussolini, and orders the Italian forces to resist the Allies. It is easy to surmise how far these orders will be obeyed in a country that is rejoicing over the arrival of the Allies.~~

London gives us a rumor that most of the Italian fleet is on its way to join the United Nations. Reliable reports are said to indicate that ^{nearly all - or all -} ~~most~~ of the warships are obeying the order issued by British Admiral Cunningham, and will steam into Allied ports. Stockholm has unconfirmed rumors that three thirty-five thousand ton battleships have left Spetzia and are on their way to Sicily to surrender.

MU^{SS}solini

Today we have another version of the drama of the downfall of Mussolini and this time the story comes from Berlin, with the Nazis giving, what they call--"an authoritative account." Like other versions, ^M_A this one tells of a climactic meeting of the Fascist Grand Council, after which the Duce went to the Royal Palace for an interview with the King. Its purpose, says the German story, was to get the King's approval of energetic measures to be taken against elements in Italy that were sabotaging the Nazi-Fascist war. Among these alleged saboteurs were high generals and big industrialists.

At the Palace, the Duce made his report to King Victor Emanuel, who listened attentively until he was through, and then said: "I wish to inform you that your successor as Prime Minister has already been designated. He has already assumed his new duties, he is," continued the king, "Marshal Badoglio. Will you please put yourself at his disposal."

Mussolini was astounded--never knowing that the King and Badoglio had already arranged for his downfall. *In fact they had*

secretly appointed a new chief police of their own and had forces of police ready.

Mussolini defied the King. He shouted that he was strong enough to resist the Crown and even the Army. Whereupon he left the Palace to go to his automobile--where he had left his *OWN* bodyguards. But neither automobile nor bodyguards were there. They had been removed during the interview with the King. Instead, an ambulance was waiting, with a force of police under the command of a Colonel. The Colonel walked up to the Duce and said: "Your excellency, I have been ordered to arrest you."

Whereupon Mussolini put up a fight. He always was strong and burly, and in good athletic condition--though some sixty years old. So he was able to stage a lively battle. The German story says--"He resisted violently." But a squad of policemen bore him down, and he was forced into the ambulance and strapped to the seat." Thereupon he was taken to the police barracks and later transferred to a place of confinement. Several places, in fact, one after another.

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Such is the official German version of the downfall
of the Duce. He ended his Dictator career battling against
the cops.

~~Lowell Thomas~~
~~Brooklyn Club.~~

~~The following is a treasury department request:~~

BONDS.

Today Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau made some apt comment on the great event in Europe. "The fall of Italy is glorious news," said he, "if we take it as end of round one instead of the finish of the fight. The War Bonds you have bought," he added, "have paid for our victory over Italy in part," and the Secretary called upon us to buy more bonds in this Third War Bond drive, ^{devoting} ~~investing~~ our money ^{to} ~~to~~ superior equipment, to save American lives.

DEWEY

In New York state today, Governor Dewey made an appeal to the Army, asking for Italian prisoners of war. There is an acute labor shortage on New York farms, and army restrictions forbid the use of prisoners of war as workers in the coastal districts of the United States. The interior, okay--but not the coast,

Today in a letter to the chief of staff, General Marshall, Governor Tom Dewey pointed out that the surrender of Italy should lift the ban on Italian war prisoners, and asked for the following: "I urgently hope," said he, "that you can approve of the use of at least twelve hundred Italian war prisoners for New York State."

He explained that they are urgently needed for work on farms and in canning factories, in areas where the labor shortage is threatening to cause the spoiling of two million tons of fruits and vegetables.

~~10---~~

AIR WAR...

Across the English channel today, flew the greatest masses of war planes in history. They were led by the giants, Flying Fortresses and Liberators. These smashed at Nazi points in occupied France, and swarms of smaller planes did the same. The Invasions Coast was blasted so heavily that the British shore was rocked by the reverberations from across the channel. In the last forty-eight hours, there have been two thousand fighter sorties and a thousand bomber sorties. A sortie ^{being} is a flight made by one plane. During daylight today there were a thousand sorties. Those are the figures for stating that today's air activity across the channel was the greatest ever.

And meanwhile the British were staging invasion maneuvers. On their side of the Channel, they went through stupendous exercises, rehearsing ~~just for~~ what would have to be done to ~~launch~~ launch an invasion of France.

The Germans for some reason or other, circulated an insistent rumor that the actual invasion was on. But, it was only a rehearsal on the largest scale.

RUSSIA.

The triumphs of the Soviets continues. Late Moscow reports place the Red Army within eighty miles of Kiev, capital of the Ukraine and the biggest objective at which the Russians could strike. Stalin announces the capture of Bakhmach called the key to Kiev--a railroad junction that dominates the network of rails in front of the Ukrainian capital. ^{IP} And, the recapture of towns and villages goes on--hundreds of them retaken. Today, the Russians report eighty more.

BROOKLYN

I ran into a rather interesting baseball story over here in Brooklyn today. In fact, several of them. There was an early game at Ebbets Field between the fast raveling thiřd place Dodgers, who according to the statistics may tonight be in second place -- it's that close; a game between them, and the Phillies. Former President Hoover, Brooklyn Eagle Publisher Frank Schroth, and a number of other equally distinguished people were sitting in the Dodger President's box, with the dynamic Branch Rickey. And, Branch Rickey was pointing out to us some of the effects the war has had on the national pastime. For example, he pointed to the shortstop position. Lo and behold, out there playing short was the redoubtable Mickey Owen, one of the best known catchers in baseball. But, so many of the younger players are now in the armed forces that Manager Leo Durocher and Branch Rickey had sent Catcher Mickey Owen to play shortstop, and try him there. That chapter in Mickey Owen history

was over rather quickly. After six or seven innings they became convinced that as a shortstop he's a catcher, so back behind the bat went Mickey. And back to Manhattan go we, to hear a final word from my Blue Sunoco sponsor.