

WASHINGTON

P.T. - Sunoco. Wed., Sept. 8, 1943.

tonight

Hope was expressed [^] that the Italian surrender will bring about the immediate release of some twelve hundred United States prisoners of war and from ~~in~~ fifteen to twenty thousand American civilians who have been interned. The only worry is about American prisoners who may have been transferred to Germany.

Also | Tonight in Washington, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill are considering new moves to be made. They heard the word of the ^{Italian} surrender this morning, and ~~we~~ were not surprised - obviously ~~we~~ not. They knew about it all the time.

The continued presence of Churchill in Washington had given the impression that something big was about to break. ~~He~~ was staying on and on, for no apparent cause. Now we know - he and President Roosevelt were merely waiting for the right moment when the surrender of Italy would be announced.

London makes the comment that today's event will cause Hitler's Balkan empire to crumble. The satellite countries have been shaking for weeks, and the conquered nations have been trembling with eagerness for a chance to get their freedom back.

London comment is that, with the United Nations in control of the Italian shore of the Adriatic, the Nazi position on the opposite coast, the Balkans, will be undermined. The Adriatic is a narrow sea, and the Balkan coast will be under the domination of allied air power. ~~Long~~ Landings may be made, although the terrain is so mountainous that it doesn't look like a good invasion point. However, those mountains are largely under the ~~xxxxxxx~~ domination of Yugoslav patriots, the Chetniks of General Mikhailovich. These anti-Nazi fighters are now easy to munition and provision for an intensification of their battle - which they have been able to wage virtually on their own for so long.

What about Mussolini? London has word that the former Duce becomes the number one prisoner of war of the Allies. Informed diplomatic circles in the British capital stated today that under the unconditional surrender agreement, Mussolini is to be turned over to the United Nations - he along with his son-in-law, Ciano, and other Fascist leaders. It will be interesting to know what will be done with Mussolini. Will he be tried at once?

Or will that be delayed until after the war? Any trial of the former Duce ~~xxx~~ with legal formalities ought to provide some interesting disclosures.

Here's a late one. The British Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East has issued an order to the Italians in the Dodecanese Islands. It reads:- "Italian forces in the Dodecanese will take over by force all points now in possession of the Germans".

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ITALY

And now for a summary of the events of this bewildering and joyous day.

The surrender of Italy would seem to come as much under the heading of entertainment as of war - highly dramatic entertainment of world wide import. For days we've suspected that there was an element of make-believe in the Mediterranean conflict, that invasion of the toe of the boot. And now it turns out that make-believe was right - a global mystification. The story is revealed eloquently in a special ~~bulletin~~ bulletin issued from allied headquarters in North Africa, a statement that followed General Eisenhower's announcement of the capitulation.

"Some weeks ago", says the bulletin, "the Italian government made an approach to the British and American governments, with a view to concluding an Armistice". Some weeks ago¹ that would mean shortly after the downfall of Mussolini, the Duce having been kicked out six weeks ago last Sunday. After that overthrow of Fascism there were insistent rumors that the Badoglio regime was negotiating a surrender, rumors entirely correct, as we now know.

Today's official story tells how a meeting between Italian and Allied representatives took place in neutral

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territory - just where we are not told. The Italians were presented with terms of unconditional surrender. They didn't accept these at once, and negotiations continued.

This was during the time when the conquest of Sicily was being completed, when the Germans were putting up such a ~~xx~~ stubborn resistance at the eastern tip of the island.

After the first meeting held in the neutral country, the scene of the negotiations changed. Today's bulletin states:- "further meetings were arranged, and took place in Sicily". That is, Allied and Italian representatives got together some place on the conquered island. And there they completed the ~~xx~~ agreement for the surrender of Italy - an Armistice was signed.

Now here is the most astonishing point of all - the Armistice was signed on September Third, five days ago, but was kept a secret until today. Today's official bulletin explains that strange fact as follows:- "The Armistice", it says, ~~xx~~ "was signed at Allied Advance Headquarters on September Third, but it was agreed with representatives of the Italian government that the Armistice should come into force at a moment most favorable

to the Allies and be simultaneously announced by both sides. That moment has now arrived".

Why the secrecy? Who was it meant to kid? The mere public - or somebody more important? Word from Allied headquarters in North Africa is that the capitulation was arranged without the knowledge of Hitler - a secret surrender with the Nazis not knowing anything about it. They were being kidded.

Should you like still another extraordinary fact? The Armistice was signed on September third, last Friday, and that was precisely the day of the invasion of the Italian Peninsula. With the secret surrender of Italy an accomplished thing, signed on the dotted line, the British Eighth Army was swarming across the Straits of Messina, landing on the coast of the Italian mainland, and pushing on to conquer the toe of the Italian boot. So it was all stage play, a mock invasion.

It is difficult not to surmise that it was all a part of a theatrical game to keep Hitler in darkness - unaware that Italy was surrendering.

Now we can understand the remarkable lack of resistance at the toe of the boot. Nobody got hurt. In fact, why hurt

anybody when the war ~~is~~ was over?

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~~At the time on this program we wondered, would this invasion of Italy satisfy the Soviets? Would Stalin consider it a second front? The answer now is a laugh.~~

Of course, we do remember accounts of some bombings of Italy since that memorable day of September ~~th~~ third, when the Italians signed the surrender. The news told of Allied Air Forces hitting ~~the~~ military installations at such places as the vicinity of Naples. Why, after the war with Italy was really over? Today we have the explanation that the bombs were directed at Nazi targets exclusively - a bombing of Germans and not ~~the~~ Italians. The air attacks, like the sham battle invasion, could also help to fool the Nazis about the secret surrender,

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The supposition of a game ~~is~~ to kid Hitler is strengthened by a most interesting passage in today's bulletin from Allied North African Headquarters. The Allies and Italians agreed that the surrender should be proclaimed on both sides. But suppose the Germans should find out and try to keep the Italians from announcing the capitulation.

The bulletin states: "The possibility of a German move to forestall publication of the Armistice by the Italian government was discussed during the negotiations. To meet this eventuality", the account continues, "it was agreed that one of the Senior Italian representatives should not return to Rome. He is now in Sicily" the bulletin adds. In other words, one of the high ranking Italian officers remained with the Allies to do the proclaiming as a representative of the Bagoglio government, in case the Germans should interfere in Rome.

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~~And still another measure was taken, with today's bulletin stating: "Further, Marshal ~~Bag~~ Badoglio arranged to send the text ~~in~~ of his proclamation to allied headquarters". Meaning - the Allies, ~~the Allies~~ would issue Badoglio's proclamation of surrender, if he himself were prevented from doing so.~~

These precautions were needless, for *T* today, following General Eisenhower's announcement of the capitulation, Badoglio broadcast his own statement on the Rome radio. And it turned out to be quite an interesting document.

Badoglio spoke of the overwhelming power of the Allies, and said his object was to avoid further damage and destruction

to Italy. So he had requested an Armistice from General Eisenhower, and the request was granted. To this he added an order, which may have all the meaning in the world. These are the precise words: "The Italian forces", Badoglio commanded, "will therefore cease all acts of hostility against the Anglo-American forces wherever they may be met. They will, however", he added, "oppose attacks from any other quarter".

el { Now, from what other quarter might the Italians expect attacks - which they are ordered to resist? The only possible supposition is - Hitler, the Nazis.

To this formal order given by the head of the Italian government, let's add a quotation from a United ~~Sta~~ Press dispatch filed at Allied Headquarters in North Africa - and passed by the censor there. It ~~reads~~ reads: "Under the Armistice, the Italians not only agreed to all the terms laid down by Eisenhower, but pledged to use force against Germany, if the Nazis tried to prevent them from carrying out the terms of the agreement", says the dispatch.

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General Eisenhower, himself, ^{(suggests that the Italians} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ might help to drive the Germans out of Italy. In his announcement of the surrender, he states: "All Italians who now act to help eject the German aggressors from Italian soil, will have the assistance and the support of the United ~~St~~ Nations".

Does all of this suggest the possibility that Italy might eventually wind up in the war on our side? That possibility is posed vividly by an Allied appeal to the ~~Italian~~ Italian people, issued immediately after the surrender - an appeal made by radio and by leaflets dropped from planes.

The news of the Armistice is given, and the appeal states:- "Italians backed by the might of the Allies, Italy now has the opportunity of taking vengeance on the German oppressor and of aiding in the expulsion of the ~~her~~ eternal enemy from Italian soil".

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The appeal also gives a command which is phrased in these words: "Italians - here are your battle orders for this phase of the war for the liberation of Europe". The orders direct the Italian people to do nothing whatever to assist the Germans. Transport workers, in particular, are directed to stop

the movement of German supplies. The Allied message exhorts the workers in these terms:- "By your disciplined resistance against the Germans, you can paralyze their communications lines, and so help the Italian war of liberation". All in all, there would seem to be a determined effort to get the surrendered Italian nation on our side of the war. And this applies also to the Italian fleet - that naval force known to have excellent ships that have done next to nothing in the war.

Following the capitulation, British Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Mediterranean Fleet, appealed to the Italian Navy and Merchant Marine. He urged officers and sailors not to let the Germans seize their ships and not to scuttle them, but to bring them over to the Allies at once. ~~And Admiral Cunningham gives precise directions that will enable Italian vessels to be recognized when they come to join the Allies. "Your ships are urgently needed," says the Admiral, "to assist in the work of carrying supplies to ~~the~~ Italy".~~

And so Italy has surrendered - the first of three major axis countries to be ~~knock~~ knocked out of the war. The

capitulation was announced this morning and was made effective at twelve thirty P.M. Eastern wartime, when General Eisenhower on the North African radio said: "The Armistice becomes effective this instant, hostilities between the Armed ^{Forces} ~~Forces~~ of the United Nations and those of Italy terminate at once".

Following the great break of news, a whole series of further dispatches have been flashing across the wires.

London reports tens of thousands of fresh allied troops streaming into Italy, with landings further up the coast. London calls it a race to cut off the remaining German ~~fox~~ forces ⁱⁿ southern and central Italy - and also a race to protect the ~~Italy~~ Italians from the fury of their recent allies.

All of which points up another mystery - what about the Germans in ~~Italy~~ Italy? What forces have they ^{there?} - and where?

The general belief is that they are mustered in heavy strength in the northern part of the country, along the line of the Po, which they are expected to try to hold.

Nevertheless, considerable numbers of Germans must be in the center and south - surprised by the surrender so secretly arranged and dramatically ~~spring~~ sprung. These the swiftly moving

Americans and British will try to cut off, and one of the best ways of doing that would be to land near Rome, occupy the capital, and cut the railroad system - the bottleneck of which is Rome.

The mention of the Allies protecting the Italians from the fury of the Nazis raises the whole question of future relations between the German troops and the people who have turned against them - that is especially in northern Italy where the Germans were expected to make their stand. Will the Italians sabotage them or even rise up against them - in accordance with the orders issued by the United ~~in~~ Nations command today? Much of this will be ~~is~~ answered by the speed with which the United Nations armies occupy Italy - a thing that the ~~Italian~~ Italian government will want them to do in a hurry.

Just before the news of the capitulation today, Berlin announced two big allied convoys, totaling two hundred transports - which were moving north from Sicily.

Today the Hitler government withheld from the German people the news of Italian surrender, withheld it for nearly four hours. The Berlin propaganda comment[†] is that the Nazis were not

taken by surprise, and would go on fighting the war.

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8/12
Now here's the latest. The official Nazi news agency comes out tonight with raging fury, calling the Italian surrender - open treason. It describes the capitulation signed by the Italian government, "a treacherous outrage against the defenders of Europe".

The Swiss radio reports that wild demonstrations are sweeping Italy tonight, the people racing through the streets and shouting their joy at the capitulation. And on this side of the water celebrations are on in many a little Italy - jubilations among Americans of ~~xxx~~ Italian origin.

Yes, we are all feeling jubilant tonight. How about it, ~~Hugh?~~ Don Lowe.