

L.T. SUNOCO - MONDAY, JUNE 10, 1940

GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY:-

For more than two thousand years, Rome has been the scene of world-shattering events -- and perhaps none more dramatic or more portentous than the one which unfolded itself in the Eternal City today. It may turn out to be the most momentous since the assassination of Julius Caesar, nineteen hundred and eighty-four years ago. But historians will decide that.

At any rate, even the murder of Caesar was but little less theatrical than today's show outside the Venezia Palace.

The great square was packed -- as it often is. Observers estimated the crowd as high as a-hundred-and-fifty thousand. In the streets surrounding the palace, also surrounding the French and British Embassies, were heavily armed troops. Out onto a second-story balcony stepped the short, stocky, bald-headed dictator who so often electrifies the Romans

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from that balcony. Grim and aggressive, wearing his Black shirt with Corporal's stripes on his sleeve. Mussolini held up his hand and silence fell upon that seething mob of over a hundred thousand Italians. And then Benito Mussolini, in his characteristic dramatic way, told his people that the hour had come. It was time for Italy to strike at the back of France -- France reeling from the onslaught of Teutonic fury.


Flowery as were the Duce's words, they were singularly few for such a momentous message. He was out on that Palazza Venetia ~~at~~ balcony barely fifteen minutes. And it wouldn't have taken him that long but for the thundering cheers that punctuated every other sentence.

"An hour signed by destiny, " said the Black Shirt Duce, "is ticking on the skies of our country -- an hour of irrevocable decisions. " With such words ~~he~~ announced the news that his Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, had just handed a declaration of war to the Ambassadors of Great Britain and France. The declaration is as of tomorrow -- meaning midnight, Central European time. And that was almost ~~an~~ an hour ago. ~~So at this~~

So, at this moment, Italy is at war, lined up with Hitler.

The Communists fought with the Nazis. And now so are the Fascists!

ES
Today's scene was not unexpected, the Allies had been forewarned. For all that, it was tremendously impressive and exciting. Most of Mussolini's words were typical Mussolini-Hitler rhetoric.



He talked about the "plutocratic democracies," the reactionary democracies of the west, ^(decadent nations) ~~who~~ who he said at all times have obstructed the march of the Italian people. Italy, he added, has a clear conscience or, as he put it, a tranquil conscience. He called the world to witness that Italy had done all that was humanly possible to avoid the storm. "The Allies," he said, "should have accepted Hitler's proposal before he started on his Polish campaign." Then he told his people:- "You will take arms to safeguard our frontiers and also ~~the~~ to solve the maritime problems. We want to break the chains which are keeping our seas closed. Forty-five millions of souls are not free unless they have free access to the ocean."

Then he made a point of reassuring the neutrals, mentioning them by name:- Jugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Egypt.

77 "Italy," said the Duce, "does not intend to bring other people into the conflict." He explained his action by quoting a statement he had made public in Berlin, which ran that according to the laws of the Fascist morale, when you have a friend you march with him to the end. So, he added, Italians will march with the victorious

armed forces of Germany.

But he didn't explain why he had waited all this time to get around to it.

Some people have been wondering, how ~~stupid~~ the proud old King Emperor, Victor Emanuel, could stomach this alliance with the Nazis. Said Mussolini:- "In this vigil of such important event,^S we think of the ~~Italian~~ Italian Emperor King", and the Duce added: "He has interpreted forever the soul of Italy." In other words, the King consents.

In a characteristically bombastic finale, Mussolini let go of a sentence that brought a sour grin to many people in other parts of the world. That was when he said:- "We shall win, to give a long period of peace to Italy, to Europe, to the world."

~~For us there is only one word - Victory.~~

that
Although the Duce announced the war would begin at midnight, his troops were already reported to be on the march. That news came by way of Berlin, when Hitler's Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, told the newspaper men that Mussolini's armies had started an invasion of the French Riviera *even before he*

Rome. *began to speak. This, however, was officially denied in*
in the classic tradition,

After Mussolini had made his declaration of war, it was revealed that he had done so in spite of a broad offer from the

Allies to settle all of Italy's reasonable claims. This bit of information comes from London. The offer from France and Britain to the Duce was conveyed by President Roosevelt, ~~and this,~~ as long ago as two weeks. Mr. Roosevelt, it was added, took no responsibility for ~~the~~ proposal. He merely acted, ~~it was said,~~ as a postman.

He is reported to have told Mussolini ~~that~~ the Allied governments acknowledged that Italy had a number of grievances. That was one point. Secondly, ~~they announced that~~ they were willing to discuss those grievances and settle all reasonable claims as soon as peace is established. In the third place, they ~~were~~ ^{agreed} ~~perfectly willing~~ to admit Italy to the peace conference, let

Mussolini have a voice in the terms on equal footing with ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{belligerents.} ~~Allies.~~ The Allies made this offer through the President of the

United States, because they wished the Government of the United States to be ^a witness to their promises. The understanding is that [^] Mussolini replied that Italy had pledged her word to Hitler and would keep her promise.

President [^]Roosevelt had another try about three days

ago, and made an attempt at the eleventh hour to dissuade the Duce.

It was reported in London that Mr. Roosevelt used a quotation from the Bible to describe Mussolini's reaction. The Nazi Fuehrer, he said, had taken the Fascist Duce on a high mountain top and shown him all the kingdoms of the earth. And that was what tempted the Duce.

Well, the Allies seem to be confident that the next action in the world drama will be a declaration of war by Turkey. Last October a treaty was signed between Turkey, France and the United Kingdom. The second article of that treaty reads that "in the event of an act of aggression, leading to war in the Mediterranean area in which France and the United Kingdom are involved, Turkey will collaborate effectively with France and the United Kingdom and will lend them all the aid and assistance in her power."

However, it is pointed out that Mussolini can keep Turkey out so long as he does not carry the war into the eastern end of the Mediterranean, if he restricts his fighting to the frontiers.

between France and Italy, ^{and to} ~~also~~ Libya and Tunis and the rest of
^{Then} the western Mediterranean, [^] Turkey would not be obliged to take
[^] any part in it.

ITALY

Let's take a look at the forces that Italy can throw into the war to help crush the Allies.

Mussolini, in ^{his own modest} ~~characteristic~~ fashion, has proclaimed to the world that he can muster ten million bayonets. Military observers, who are not quite so rhetorical, say that an effective force of two million fighting men is probably a bit closer to the mark. But in addition to those, the Duce has a formidable first line ~~of~~ air force of fighting planes, anywhere from two ~~hundred~~ thousand five hundred to three thousand five hundred. ^{and} That's not his total strength in the air. ~~That would be~~ ^{is the total.} somewhere between five and six thousand planes. He has about ten thousand trained pilots. ^{If his factories are not bombed he can} ~~He could~~ replace his ~~sixty~~ airplanes at the rate of ^{about} ~~somewhere like~~ three hundred a month, ~~but that might be~~ stepped up.

Then, too, there ^{is} ~~is~~ quite an Italian navy, six dreadnoughts, twenty-one cruisers, a hundred and ten submarines, and smaller men-o-war to the tune of two or three hundred. Of the dreadnoughts, two are brand new - thirty-five thousand ton ships of the line, with nine 15-inch guns. In addition to his twenty-one

cruisers, Mussolini is building fourteen or fifteen more.

~~In his announcement he indicated that his first act of~~

~~war would be an attack upon the southeast flank of France.~~ Along

the French

~~that~~ frontier he has his largest massed concentration of troops,

perhaps a million men with tanks and airplanes ready. But of

course he also has to keep a sizeable force to ^{keep} ~~protect~~ Albania ~~subdued~~.

In the Dodecanese Islands, off the Turkish coast, ~~there's a~~ *he has a*

^{from} garrison of seventy-five thousand to a hundred thousand men.

There are also many divisions to protect Sardinia and Sicily,

just how many no one seems to know outside of the Italian command.

And His second largest concentration of troops is in Africa, (more than

54 { a quarter of a million in Libya; ^{also} ~~and~~ a hundred thousand or more

in Eritrea and Ethiopia.)

REACTION

In one city, the news from Rome was taken with at least
— *almost* *is* *calm.* *That* *city*
an outward calm, ~~of~~ philosophy, ~~That~~ was London, where you'd think
it might have precipitated dismay. The gist of the British attitude
was, "Oh, we had been ~~expecting~~ *awaiting* that long since. As a matter of fact,
we were ready for it. ~~The~~ *That* Allies have made full preparations.
When Italy draws the sword, ~~we will~~ *they would* meet sword with sword." A British
government spokesman added, "Of course we expected Mussolini to wait
until we were most embarrassed, ~~to~~ *and then* stab France and Britain in the
back. But at any rate, ~~"~~ *said he,* we were not caught napping. *Our preparations*
are complete."

London says that the British Ambassador to Rome had been
telling Downing Street for ten days that Italy's entry into the war
was inevitable. *And Allied fleets in the Mediterranean*
have been disposed accordingly.

At the same time, neither the British nor the French are
making light of ~~the~~ *Italian* military strength, ~~of Italy, even though they do~~ *and they admit*
to put it mildly, " ~~express it in moderate terms saying~~ that it will add greatly to
their difficulties. " Italy's air force is ~~not to be sneezed at,~~ *a powerful one —*
as strong as ~~considering that it is as~~ strong *as* ~~as~~ that of France. And in the
Mediterranean, ~~the~~ Italian submarines and motor torpedo boats
can, as the British Admiralty ~~puts it,~~ *says* make themselves quite a
nuisance.

Despite the sore plight ~~ix~~ in which the Allies find themselves, and despite the strength that Italy throws in against them, the British spokesman declared this evening, "This is to be a long war;" and he added: "There can be no hope of Italy obtaining great success in a short while and at little cost." The British said further that Italy will be called upon for great sacrifices to the advantage only of Germany. "Italy", he declared, quote:- "with cowardly policy, hoped to secure with safety such plunder as Germany would permit her to have. But, that what the Italians will get instead will be the contempt of the world and the armed might of two empires which Italy has wantonly attacked."

have been prodigal in such assurance in the past," says the British Ministry, "as Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and Luxenbourg have learned to their cost."

Elsewhere, too, this was a black day for the Allies.

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First of all, the humiliation of the surrender of Norway. Then the British Admiralty had to admit a serious naval loss. Two of Hitler's pocket battleships sank the big British aircraft carrier GLORIOUS, a twenty-two thousand ton ship, off the coast of Norway.

With her went down two destroyers, a transport ship and a tanker.

So altogether, the Royal Navy lost more than fifty thousand tons of shipping.

And that was the worst single misfortune that the Royal Navy had sustained since the war began. The Admiralty rates the sinking of the destroyers as even more serious than the loss of the aircraft carrier, the second of her kind to be sunk since September. Britain has five new aircraft carriers under way. The British did not say where the GLORIOUS ^{and} her escorting ships had been sunk, but the German high command declared that this naval action was fought off the coast of Norway. Presumably this had something to do with the

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evacuation of the Allied troops from the Scandinavian peninsula.

by the way,
King Haakon with his family and staff arrived safely in

London today.

Meanwhile, what of the war in France? What's

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happening to the French and British on that two hundred and ten mile front from the Channel to the Swiss border? Frankly, the outlook

is pretty grim. Paris admits that the situation is serious but insists that it isn't desperate. But the Germans declare that the fate of France is sealed, that they are flanking General Weygand's armies at the edge of the Maginot Line. Nazi tank columns have broken across three rivers, the Seine, the Aisne and the Oise.

Three of the spearheads of the Nazi striking force have reached

less than
points ~~barely~~ thirty-five miles from Paris. Northwest of the capital they have penetrated *south of* ~~as far as~~ Beauvais, *which is only 30 miles away* The Weygand Line, they say, has been overrun and the position of the French army

is hopeless. And they claim to have cut communications on the

River/Seine between Paris and LeHavre. Italy's entry into the war,

just
say the Nazis, marks the final phase of the destruction of France.

Premier Reynaud admitted that his armies are retreating,

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but he says they ~~are~~ only retreating slowly and their military position is good. France may be in difficulties, but she is not

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conquered. At the same time, it became known that several

departments of the French Government have left Paris. In fact, though it isn't officially admitted, the government is evacuating the capital.

The British, for their part, announce that they have rushed reinforcements, men, tanks and airplanes to General Weygand. This they have done even at a cost of weakening the defenses of Great Britain itself. The Royal Air Force has delivered smashing attacks behind the German front lines and British warships in the Channel are shelling the Nazi armies on the French coast.

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British air fighters have ~~been~~ delivered some of the most slashing attacks on the Nazis in the Argonne forest, which is reported to be in flames from British bombs.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced that he would send General Weygand still more reinforcements with the utmost speed. ~~The truth is,~~ ^{and} they are sorely needed. It is now calculated that Hitler has thrown no fewer than a million and a half Nazis into the ^{in France} ~~French~~ front lines and four thousand tanks.

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Here's the very latest from Berlin. A spokesman for the Nazi army declares that in the last five days ~~of~~ the Battle of France, Hitler's forces have advanced fifty-six miles. The natural line of defense of the French north of the Seine has been cancelled out. With the Germans in command of the Seine, the French are no longer able to bring supplies up the river into Paris.

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CANADA

By seven o'clock Eastern Daylight time, one minute from
now, the Dominion of Canada will be at war with Italy.

And now Hugh.