

12173-127

HEADQUARTERS DETACHMENT
2677th REGT. OSS (PROV)
APO 512, U. S. ARMY
Italian Division, SI, MEDTO

27 January 1945
COMMUNICATION NO. R-6

TO: Whitney H. Shepardson
Chief, SI
Attention: Earl Brennan
Chief, Italian Section, SI

FROM: Vincent J. Scamporino
Chief, Italian Division, SI, MEDTO

SUBJECT: Harte Reports

1. Enclosed are four reports filed by source Harte, dated 4 January 1945, 13 January 1945, 20 January 1945 and 26 January 1945.

2. From a reading of these reports you may gather what the source is doing, contacts he is developing, and how he reports his information.

3. I am certain that you will be able to note improvement in each report. This furnishes a fairly good sample of what an average agent experiences in the field and how he handles his material.

4. I do not intend to continue forwarding you these reports. However, you will from time to time receive reports from our various sources for the purpose of comparing the agent's earlier work with his present production, as a means of testing his progress.

5. Any suggestions from you are welcome.

Vincent J. Scamporino
Vincent J. Scamporino
Chief, Italian Division, SI, MEDTO

*Report on Russian Film Activity, dated JAN-13
was rec'd as JR-1564.*

12173 US

TO: MR. EARL BRENNAN

FROM: Harte

January 4, 1945

Today I had a very satisfactory talk with my number one prospect. My presentation was along the lines I had outlined to you. The individual is willing to attempt to obtain answers to specific questions. He suggests that I give him the questions on otherwise blank paper. And naturally any information obtained in reply must be most carefully guarded as to source.

I did not limit the field of my interest to this country or any group of countries. I purposely left that entirely open. You might wish to inform certain people there that you have this particular channel available. In view of the potential value of the source and its fund of information which would be coming to us at a very high level, I think the questions should be carefully selected and be on topics of considerable interest to us at the particular time. For obvious reasons the questions should be of a political, economic or social (or any combination thereof) rather than a strict military nature.

You could cable to me via our friends at the office the questions. Or if the time element is less important, the other means of communications would be satisfactory. Also our friends here may have questions that rate use of this source.

Meanwhile I have been and shall continue to be working on my other sources for general information. Everything is going well but, as we both anticipated, progress is going to be slow.

Attached are some notes.

Economic Revolution in Italy

Currently there is taking place in Italy what might be termed an economic revolution with the middle class suffering the most. (This applies to the liberated areas and does not take into consideration the sufferings caused by bombs and shells.)

It may be that it was planned this way or there is nothing that can be done about the situation. In any case it reflects poorly on the Allies, and on the Italians, that conditions--from a material point of view--are worse off than under the Germans.

Lack of space in ships and other transportation facilities does not explain the whole problem.

The inflation which makes many of the things otherwise available beyond the reach of so many of the people has other causes than just the lack of transportation and of goods. Efforts at price control have not been successful. The character of many of the Italian people is such that price control is difficult but that is not a real excuse for the Allies had and have all the real authority.

As in most difficult times, many of the rich make out best, either because they have a surplus of many of the necessities and minor luxuries or because they have the money to pay the high prices. Some of the poor have found employment directly or indirectly with the armed forces of the Allies and are doing well; others of the poor are in desperate circumstances. The middle class as a whole has been severely hit--savings are gone and prices make it virtually impossible to maintain even the appearances of the former standard of life. And this wounds also the pride of the middle class.

Unless successful steps are taken soon the middle class of white collar and professional workers--one backbone of any nation--will be bankrupt.

Sources: Several Italians of the middle class; personal observations.

Catholic Church in Russian-dominated Areas

Despite statements from Moscow and elsewhere to the contrary, there has not been any significant improvement in Russia's attitude towards religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular.

Russia is alleged to be using "Quisling" tactics in setting up churchmen subject to the Communist Government.

The Vatican has been cut off from communication with the Catholic bishops and clergy in Yugoslavia. There is concern that there will be serious trouble for the Catholic Church in all the areas held now or in the future by Red Army forces.



Comment: If Russia carries out her domestic policy towards religion in the foreign areas which she is dominating (many with Catholic and other religious traditions), it will be a very long time before there is real peace in central Europe. The Catholic Church would certainly resist everywhere and muster world-wide public opinion.

'War Fatigue'

One does not have to be in Italy many days before it is realized that the people here are tired of the war. Many of them lack even sufficient spirit to vigorously back and assist the Allied efforts to drive the German enemy from their own country.

The Italian 'war fatigue' is manifested in many things: Resistance in some places, even to the point of shooting and rioting, to avoid the draft for the Italian army; the desire, on the part of some, for a return to the conditions of Fascism where life was not so hard; scepticism, on the part of many, concerning the war aims of the United Nations and their ability to execute what they would like to see done.

Sources: Conversations with clergymen of four nationalities who have extensive Italian contacts. Personal observations.

Comment: The Italian 'war fatigue' is usually blamed on the two decades of life under Fascism. We would be deceiving ourselves if we accepted that as the entire truth. Of course it is partly true. But other factors which contribute to the situation are—the continuing effects of German propaganda on the Italians; the evident failure of the United Nations' propaganda forces to make widely understood what we are fighting for and why the Italians should all make it their fight too.

'Catholic Communism' Movement Condemned

The movement called "Sinistra Cristiana" (Catholic Communism or Christian Left) was condemned in a box printed in column one of the Osservatore Romano for January 2-3, 1945. The statement said, "In response to many requests which have come to us in this matter, we have been authorized to state that the principles and tenets of the organization "Sinistra Cristiana", notwithstanding its second name, are not in conformity with the teachings of the Church and hence those who proclaim them have no right to speak as representatives of Christian thought and so much less to claim that those Catholics, who wish the true good of the people, must adhere to their movement."

Comment: The method of presentation and wording of the statement shows that the condemnation is official by the Catholic Church. The only stronger presentation would be an official statement of the Pope, speaking as head of the Church. This is done only on rare occasions and on matters of considerable importance.

The statement would not have been issued had there not been some concern among Catholics on this issue. Also it would not have been issued if there were any doubt about the conformity of the "Sinistra Cristiana" principles and those of the Catholic Church.

The statement may be expected to have an influence not only on Catholics in Italy but elsewhere that efforts are made to fuse Communistic and Catholic ideologies.

Morale of Polish Troops in Italy

While the Polish forces in Italy are continuing to fight, their heart is gone. Many believe that developments affecting their homeland in the very near future may make it impossible for them to go back there--or they might not wish to go, if they were free to do so. This is naturally a hard blow to men who have been fighting more than five years. The Poles look to the United States as their only hope. Many of them do not care too much about a boundary line but they do not want to live under Communism. It was alleged that a free election in Poland now would not reveal more than a one percent Communist vote.

Source: A Pole who was captured with the Polish army defending Warsaw, eventually escaped, made his way to Italy, was put in a concentration camp, escaped, was captured by the Germans again, escaped.

Attitude Towards Allied Troops

The American troops are more popular than the British. The attitude of Allied troops, especially American, in churches has been a subject of extensive favorable comment. The colored American troops are blamed, perhaps disproportionately, for sexual crimes. While most of the Italians strongly disapprove of the girls running after Allied soldiers and officers, the latter have also come in for considerable criticism. Some of these matters may be long remembered, even after most of the material damage of the war has been erased.

Sources: Several Italians of diverse backgrounds and several non-Italian clergymen.

Harte

Jan-13-1945

log 798

SOURCE: HARTE

DATE: JAN. 13, 1945

Russian Film Activity

JOS 798

FILED 18.

(12173-127)

This was rec'd
AS JR-1564

The Russian government has made extensive use of the motion picture for propaganda purposes at home and abroad for the past twenty five years. In Italy at the present time there is considerable Russian film activity.

The Russian Embassy has set up as the Italian distributor of Russian films Giovanni De Bernardinis, an Italian who was not previously in the film business. De Bernardinis trades as G.D.B. with offices in a large home at Via Nomentana, 309. One Bolmas serves as general manager of G.D.B. Bolmas was formerly connection with Minerva Films in the capacity of sales manager. A secretary at the Russian Embassy, Gurkov, is said to be the responsible director of Russian film activity in Italy.

Out of the alleged propaganda fund of \$2,500,000 the Russians have evidently allotted a considerable sum for film activity--of a direct and indirect nature. Russian pictures released in Italy to date have been given a disproportionally large advertising campaign with extensive use of posters. There has been published a large-size 16 page propaganda magazine in Italian, "Il Film Sovietico" which is selling for 15 lire in Rome and 20 outside the city.

"Il Film Sovietico" is a well produced publication with many illustrations. Its propaganda line is skillful--stressing that Russian films are not merely propaganda but contain music, dance, and comedy. The only advertising material is three small ads of the G.D.B. firm for three Russian films--"Chiara Cammino", "Kutuzov" and "Arcobaleno".

The article entitled "Sugli schermi italiani" has the following lead:

Although the Russian films have always a didactic end, in the widest sense of the term, he who sees in every Russian film only a work of propaganda is wrong.

The history of the Russian film shows that alongside films of a character celebrating exclusively the glorious red struggle of '17, all the problems of the Soviet Republics are depicted extensively both in the social sense and in the artistic and cultural. Popularizations of novels and literary works of the present time and of the past, satire and comedy form the vast material from which the Russian film draws to create its chief works. In the productions

which we shall see on the Italian screens all the extent of these subjects, and it will allow us to form an idea of the customs, costumes and problems of that country which for more than twenty years has been surrounded for us in an air of mystery.

About 20 Russian films are listed for presentation in Italy this theatrical season which started last Fall.

Up to the present time the Russian film activity is the first of any Allied country to be on a commercial basis. G.P.B. rents Russian films to exhibitors and receives money. It is said that the aim is distribution rather than revenue and small rentals are accepted.

All American and British pictures brought into this country since the war, or old copies put into circulation again, are controlled by the P.W.B. The Russians do not participate in the film activity of the P.W.B.

The head of the film section of the P.W.B., Lt. Pilardi Levi, AUS, has been trying to cooperate with the Russians in film distribution in the hope of cooperation from them in return--perhaps for the benefit of the Anglo-American P.W.B. film interests in the Balkans. Lt. Levi has helped the Russians get bookings with the cinema managers whom he knows. But when there was a Russian feature shown in one cinema he arranged to have the Anglo-American newsreel of the Liberation of Paris included on the program. He reports that the Russians were not pleased.

Italians familiar with film customs in Italy report that the Russians up to now have not been skillful in the selection of films for Italy. The first Russian pictures were of too much a propaganda character and of a nature which does not appeal to the Italians. Special resentment was aroused one week when the Russians had their films playing in four of the first run cinemas in Rome. This fact made it necessary for many film fans to see one of the Russian films or stay away from the better cinemas that week.

Sources: Several of the best informed members of the film business in Italy; the P.W. B. film section; the publication "Il Film Sovietico".

Telephone Equipment at Rome

The story behind the saving of essential telephone equipment which would have enabled immediate organization of partial service even if the Germans (as at Florence) had destroyed all the exchanges at Rome may be of interest for the record and for the method.

During the German occupation of Rome an engineer with the telephone company realized that steps should be taken to preserve essential equipment in a safe place. That equipment would be needed--if the Germans destroyed everything when they retreated--to establish emergency service for the military and essential civilian services, as hospitals. Realizing that the only safe available place was the Vatican, the official took the problem to a person at the Vatican. The latter, after the problem was explained, expressed a desire to cooperate but did not know what to do--any open movement of such equipment without a good explanation would have caused trouble. Then the official engineer of the telephone company and the Vatican person worked out a plan. A letter was written from the Vatican calling attention to the fact that their own exchange was in the open and might be destroyed by bombing and requesting installation of a complete underground exchange in the Vatican territory. The engineer was empowered by the company to work out the exchange of letters. It was agreed by the telephone company that the material could be furnished but it was not known when the work could be completed--but a price was quoted. The reply from the Vatican came to the effect that that was all right but they wanted the equipment immediately because they thought it might be harder to get later.

The engineer took a picked crew of men and rounded up the equipment he desired. He had that crew of men take it to a warehouse. They then took a different crew and moved the stuff into Vatican extraterritorial property in the city of Rome. From there it was moved into Vatican City--the last step in Vatican trucks. It was stored in a part of the Vatican Museum. For the job the engineer in question was equipped with papers stating that he was an employee of Vatican City.

Source: A person directly concerned.

Allies' Master Race Complex

The general impression made on the Italians by the Allies is that the latter consider themselves a 'Master Race'. Many Americans and Englishmen have been going about in liberated parts of Italy in such a fashion that an observer would conclude that they consider the Italians as inferiors. It is true that certain Italians, men and women, have cooperated in fostering this sentiment but people who lack food, shelter and clothes can not be held completely responsible. The Germans--the Nazis--actually consider the Italians as beneath them and impressed that fact on them during the occupation. But in many ways the Germans were more subtle and less conspicuous in developing such an impression on the Italians than the Allies have been.

The current manifestations of the Allies Master Race complex here are many. One of the most objectionable to the Italians (and to the hopes of an early restoration of something approaching normal in Italy) is excessive requisitioning. The Allies have taken over far too many schools, public buildings and private property of all kinds. The Allied control and government have been made far too much in the open.

Requisitioning of all kinds still continues. The effects can be to only further weaken what is left of a very tottering economic system. In the end it will possibly mean greater loans in goods or money from the United States. Now the Italian Government is supposed to be responsible for losses suffered from requisitioning. But the Italian Government is generally regarded as merely a tool of the Allies and not a free government at all. (In kind but not in degree it is compared to Nazi quisling governments.) Furthermore the Italian Government will probably not be able ever to raise funds to pay war costs, direct and indirect.

The psychological effects of the general requisitioning policy may be even greater, from an adverse point of view, on the Italians. The presence of the Allies in such a conspicuous way is certain to be compared unfavorably with appearances of things under the Germans. Also even at this late date an individual does not know when anything he has may be requisitioned.

Allies' Master Race Complex-p 2

Naturally no one with right principles objects to necessary steps to advance the war or the necessity of controlling matters here in Italy at present. But the manner in which certain things are done is open to serious question.

In some cases individuals have set themselves up as virtual dictators in their particular field. Some are making a "good thing" for themselves out of the problems here. For example the greatest part of the black market would collapse immediately if the source of supply of Allied goods were cut off. Both the Allies and the Italians themselves are responsible. The blame can not be put all on one side. Individuals in many sectors of activity are demanding their tribute of one kind or another.

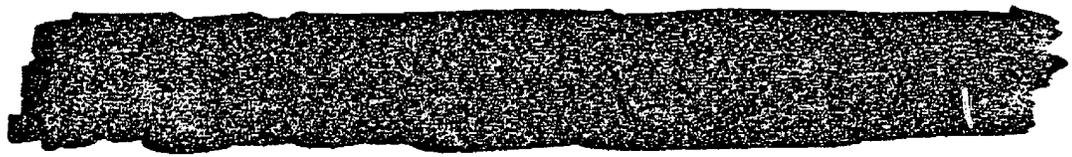
The attitude on the part of some of the English and Americans is that the people here deserve their suffering---any people who stood for Mussolini for over 20 years deserve to suffer. The theoretical question of guilt does not help one way or another an individual here who finds things, materially speaking, vastly worse now than under Fascism or under the Nazis.

The soldiers generally have plenty of money to pay the prices asked so they naturally do not realize that many of the natives can not pay the prices. The Allies have allowed soldiers and officers unnecessarily to compete for the small amount of civilian goods available. It was only very recently that restaurants and other places serving food were put out of bounds to military personnel. The bulk of the damage had already been done and also the rule, at least until present writing, has not been very strictly enforced. The restaurant owners were glad to be able to sell what they had to the highest bidder.

Among other things that have been done here to the Italians which would not be tolerated in England or America may be mentioned the cable situation. On November 16th it was announced that cables could be sent to the U.S., England and possessions and dominions. Thousands of messages were filed--at £ 15 per word--and only this week was it announced in the press (though many knew for a long time) that none of the messages had been transmitted. The costs in human values and good will in that kind of stupid handling of a matter can not be measured.

Treatment of American Nationals

There has been considerable criticism among the American nationals caught in Italy during the war regarding an alleged lack of assistance to them. It is asserted that no one seems to have the responsibility in this matter and that only promises of a vague nature are received. The only concrete help has been, it is said, an increase of the bread ration from 200 to 300 grams a day. It was further said that the increase was so trivial in proportion to the pressing needs that it could hardly be regarded as a benefit. Even the 300 is not regarded as a basic minimum.



Comment: As countries are liberated it would seem that some officials should have the job of taking good care of Americans both to develop what should be fine sources of information and secondly to remove any basis for the thought among the local population that the U.S. does not look out for its own citizens ahead of others.

Pro-Allied Argentine Church

While the Argentine government has been pursuing its neutral or pro-Axis line, it is interesting to report that the Catholic Church at Rome (Piazza Buenos Aires) for Argentine nationals, and directed by priests from that country, served as a refuge for a number of persons sought by the Germans. It is further said that there was sheltered there for a considerable period an Allied agent who was engaged in obtaining military information concerning airfields and disposition of the Nazi airforce in Italy.

Source: An Italian who claims that shelter was promised him at the Argentine church, if he found it necessary to flee from the Nazis.

Attitude Towards Russia

In Italy it is not only the Italians that feel a certain amount of scepticism towards Russia but also some members of the Allied Forces. The feeling here among the latter may be somewhat more acute than in other parts of the world because this front was weakened at a time when it could ill afford such action to send three British divisions to Greece. At least some of the British feel that the situation in Greece would not have arisen without Russia's approval. In any case the withdrawal of British Forces to Greece from Italy has made the difficult task here this Winter even harder.

The problem about Russia's policy is increased when other points besides Greece are considered in the light of the viewpoint of Allied Forces in Italy. The advance to the outskirts of Warsaw and then the withdrawal of 50 miles disturbs others of the Allies besides the Poles. There is question why Russia moved just so far and no further in Yugoslavia. But above all, of course, there is the matter of the quiet Northern front which one person (who may or may not know) alleged here that the Germans were able to move 30 divisions to the western front making possible their great December offensive.

It is said that wonder is increased when it is thought that Russia has great stocks of war materials and men. Here it is said the planned December offensive (which was called off) was to be mounted with only 500 shells per gun on the Eighth Army front and 300 per gun on the Fifth Army front--enough only for three or four hours firing per gun. Also with regard to manpower the comparison is as sharp--here it is said the Allies have never been able to maintain more than a general 1 1/2 to 1 manpower superiority.

The Italians of conservative traditions are worried about Russia in a general way. They do not feel that they know what Russia wants and they are not generally well informed about Russia. But many doubt that the Italian character and communism can go together.

Sources: Allied army chaplains of several nationalities; Italians in several walks of life, etc.

SOURCE: HARTE JAN. 20, 1945

Japanese Representation at the Vatican

The Japanese representation at the Vatican is composed of Ken Harada, ambassador, Masahide Kanayama, secretary, their families, and a Japanese Catholic priest, educated in Rome, who serves as unofficial adviser. A significant fact is that the secretary is a Catholic as is his wife and the ambassador's wife.

Although the Japanese regard with suspicion Catholics because the religion is an international one and not something exclusively Japanese, the Japanese Government has organized its representation at the Vatican so that Catholic influences are strong.

It is reported that the Japanese representatives at the Vatican are not well informed about Japanese policy. This is said to be in line with the general practice of using the foreign office men abroad as mere tools of the military.

Attitude of Japanese Catholics

The attitude of Japanese Catholics, individually and as a group, may be of major importance when Japan is occupied. Japanese Catholics are not very numerous but occupy some important places and a number of the higher class Japanese families have sent their children to schools run by Catholic priests or nuns.

Japanese Catholics are held in some suspicion at home by their fellow Japanese. The mentality of the East is so different from our own that we too should regard with some suspicion the Catholicity of the Japanese. It would be necessary to proceed with caution but the Catholic Japanese may be expected, as a group, to have a more highly developed international sense than other Japanese. This should make it easier for the Catholic Japanese to understand what is wanted by the United Nations at the time of, and during, the occupation of Japan and Jap-dominated areas.

One of the most outstanding Japanese Catholics is Admiral Sinziro Yamamoto who was the first convert to Catholicism in 1893 of the French Marianists' School in Japan. He has traveled widely, especially in Europe. In early 1938 Yamamoto told friends in Rome that conflict between Japan and the United States was inevitable because of the clash of races and of commercial interests; that Japan was preparing for

Far East notes

that war, and when the first blow would be struck it would be a terrific one. At about the same time Yamamoto spoke about the attitude of the Catholic Japanese towards the war with China. His points probably represented, at least then in the viewpoint of the military Catholic Japanese, a summary of opinion. The arguments were: 1) the struggle is against Communism, 2) it is to protect Japanese commerce, 3) it is to stop anti-Japanese movements, and 3) it is to defend Japanese rights in North China and Manchuria--from those assertions Yamamoto concluded that the war was morally justified. It is possible that the years of war and a propaganda campaign on the moral questions involved might have some effect on the Japanese Catholics. At a minimum the attitude of the Japanese Catholics should be less difficult to handle than the attitude of the Japanese in general.

Italian Japanese Specialist

Gian Carlo Castagna is an Italian priest who has specialized in Japanese affairs. At least until the outbreak of the war in Europe he was extremely pro-Japanese. If his attitude has changed he might be a useful source of information as he traveled in Japan and had many contacts with Japanese. He is reported to be in Northern Italy living with his family.

Rev. Castagna has published a half dozen books on Japanese matters at the Libreria Emiliana Editrice press of Venice. Titles of the books are: "L'Ora del Giappone", "Il Giappone oggi", "Giovinezza nipponica: Come si forgiavano gli eroi", "S.S. Yamamoto", "Altri 450 milione di Bolsceviki?" translated from the German of G. Ritter von Kreitter, and "Il posto del Giappone nel mondo" from the English of J. Grande.



Anglo-American Difficulties Regarding Italy

The U. S. Secretary of State for the present, at least, is persona non grata to the British Government, ^{on account of his statement in the Storsa matter} that explains why Harry Hopkins and not Mr. Stetinius has made the trip to London to work on problems in preparation for the meeting of the Big Three.

British objections prevent^{ed} the President from sending La Guardia to Italy.

British criticisms of the report of General O'Dwyer are among the chief reasons why he has not been returned to Italy.

A half dozen U.S. colonels in charge of important departments requested and obtained a change of duty when they found British colonels put in over them subsequent to the liberation of Rome by the Americans.

Increased Sale of "Il Popolo"

The central committee of the Christian Democrats was delighted when the sale of the party newspaper rose 20,000 on the day the Corriere di Roma ceased publication under the auspices of the F.W.B. "Il Popolo" was reported to be sold out by 8:30 AM that morning.

Source: An Italian closely connected with the Christian Democrats.

Vatican Aid to Those Fleeing the Germans

During the time of the German occupation the Vatican and religious organizations and churches throughout Rome sheltered a large number of those fleeing the Nazis. Some indication of the numbers may be gained from the increase of ~~the number~~ one of the Vatican guards from 600 to 2000. The increase had no real purpose of defense for all guards were forbidden to open fire no matter what happened.

Businesses Enjoying Prosperity

Despite the extremely difficult economic conditions in Italy at the present time several businesses are enjoying remarkable prosperity. (This does not include consideration of the many black market businesses and industries.) Circumstances necessary for good business are to have something to sell which the public needs or feels it needs and a system of cash and no credit transactions. Two outstanding successes today in Italy are the transportation and cinema businesses. Doubtless fortunes are being made in both. Transportation is so scarce that extremely high prices are asked and received. Theatre and cinema business is good for a number of reasons: the public feels a need for escape entertainment, soldiers and persons who have soldiers' money go to theatres and cinemas, some good films (American) are available after an interval of from three to five years depending on the producer, the emphasis of the P.W.B. handling most of the distribution has been on getting films shown rather than on revenue, and finally the system of checking on theatre and cinema revenue has just about collapsed on account of war conditions so some theatre operators are submitting fake returns and pocketing a high percentage of the admission money. Likewise transportation is sold generally on a cash basis and sometimes let to the highest bidder, so prices constantly rise.

Sources: Various persons connected directly and indirectly with cinema and transportation businesses in Italy.

Pride of the Italians of the North

The character of the Italians in the North may greatly change the situation when the Germans are driven out. An instance of the type of character in the North is shown in the following account. A few days ago representatives of an American relief organization called on the Cardinal of Florence. He said, "The Americans are very kind and generous. But we have good people here too, and we shall need very little help."

Source: An individual present at the meeting in Florence.

Attitude Towards England

The Italians are of such a nature that they find it very difficult to understand the British and the reasons behind British foreign policy, especially as it relates to Italy and her interests. From the Italians point of view, the Englishman is hard, rigid and legalistic. He is not considered to be generous or sympathetic. The Italian also is suspicious of some ulterior motive in all British activities.

Comments this week by Churchill and Eden in the House of Commons have not helped the Italian attitude towards England. Some people here, perhaps many, believe that England--for some reason--wants to keep down the amount of food and supplies sent to Italy and has exerted pressure on the United States to this end. Publication by Drew Pearson of items to this intent was interpreted by many as a mean used by the U.S. Government or prominent officials of the Government to get the point made that it was England and not the United States which was obstructing shipments to Italy.

Confusion about British policy is further increased by the fact many here believe that a very weak Italy would in the end hurt England by not being a satisfactory ally or by going into the sphere of influence of Russia.

Sources: Italians in several fields of activity.

Attitude Towards America

The Italians still look to America for the solution of Italy's problems despite many clear indications that the United States is not taking any directing part in Italian affairs. Most Italians realize this but continue to hope. They know the money and other supplies and much manpower come from the U.S. They do not comprehend that the U.S. has no interest in Italy, but England alone. The Italians find Americans, on the whole, temperamentally akin to themselves. Naturally they like the American's generosity and frankness. They would like to be in the sphere of influence of the U.S. rather than of England or of Russia or any other country. Eventually, however, the U.S. will probably be hated here on the grounds that it should have taken the guiding hand but did not.

Sources: As above.

1/27/45

Hate.

Italy + Communism

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SOURCE: HARTE -

18

Italy and Communism

JAN. 26, 1945

Certain factors involved in Italy's relationship with Communism are of a nature that makes them easily apparent. The Communist line is proclaimed by the official spokesmen of the party through newspaper, magazine and motion picture outlets. The hopelessness of many Italians who may be expected to grasp at any proposed solution of their problems is likewise manifest.

But other factors are less obvious. Among these are: 1) the lack of a clear Allied economic policy towards Italy; 2) the character of the Italian which makes him, in general, a rugged individualist of the most unreconstructed type, and a traditional Catholic despite changes in the political scene; and, 3) the affiliation of a part of the Fascist party's former membership with the Communist party.

If the Anglo-American Allies have an economic policy with regard to Italy, they have not made the fact known to their own officers and Italians directly concerned. At any rate there are no concrete favorable results to indicate the existence of such a policy. At present all that is happening is that, from an economic point of view, a thoroughly defeated and battered country is being further ruined and its chances of recovery are being delayed and handicapped. The final effects of this state of affairs are clear-- if Italy is not kept in what may be termed the capitalistic economic orbit it is likely to go into some other and to be lost for an indefinite period as a market for both American goods and American ideas of life and living.

Temperamentally the Italian is extremely individualistic to the extent that he does not work well together with his own countrymen. This phase of his character tends against acceptance of a Communistic system. Having just thrown off one system not temperamentally pleasing to him, it is not likely the Italian would adopt another of a similar nature, if given a free choice. The absence of a community or national spirit in the average Italian is causing deep effects today. Many Italians appear not to care what happens to other Italians. This seems to be one of many reasons for the extent of the 'black market' and spirit of conflict of most Italians against most other Italians.

19

The Catholicity of the Italian makes possible the real contradiction of individuals claiming to be both good party members and practising Catholics at the same time. In part this is due to the fact that many Italians have their own idea of what Communism is or should be. Currently many Italians are playing Communism for its value as a balance against the present Anglo-American weight of control. There is an old Italian proverb, and custom, about 'fishing in troubled waters.' Furthermore there is little likelihood that the Communist party would gain control of Italy in any general elections, assuming that the Allies assure free elections, because so many of the top intellectual circles and the masses of the people are practising Catholics.

The question, "You talk like a Fascist, are you a Communist?" would bring a considerable number of affirmative replies, if answered frankly. The Communist party has been accepting freely rank and file members of the Fascist party. It is certain that all the former Fascist party members are trying to find a means of protecting their person and their property. Some have elected to try the Communist party; others other parties. But tactics and methods of the Communist party, by nature, have a deep appeal to former rank and file Fascists. Workers in certain activities have found that the substitution of a Communist party membership card for the old Fascist union card is a convenient, or essential, aid in obtaining work.

Of all factors the only one over which the Allies have real control is their own economic policy towards Italy. That may in the end be the force to swing the country one way or another. It is not a question of mere material help alone but also how much the Italians are helped to help themselves in the economic field. At present, and naturally, they feel very much at sea. If no help is given to the rebuilding of Italy on the traditional economic lines, it is likely that she will turn to economic and social experimentation which eventually might be very displeasing to America and England from both a trading and an ideological point of view.

Sources: Italians in several fields of activity and social positions, a few Allied officials, personal observations.

no

U.S. Clerics at the Vatican

The Delegate of the American Bishops to the Vatican is Monsignor Walter Carroll of Pittsburgh who has been in the United States recovering from a serious heart condition which developed last Summer. Mons. Carroll succeeded the present Bishop of St. Augustine, Joseph F. Hurley in the position. The prior holder of the post is now the Archbishop of New York, Francis Spellman.

The Delegate of the American Bishops is attached to the office of the Secretary of State at the Vatican. He serves as a specialist in American affairs and does not necessarily have any familiarity with general business of the Vatican Secretary of State. The Allied occupation naturally has greatly increased the work which has to be done by the American Delegate. This work is of a liaison nature and also has to do with distribution of relief. Formerly the Delegate introduced distinguished American visitors at private audiences with the Pope. But now that function is handled by Mr. Taylor, the President's personal representative at the Vatican.

The Acting Delegate of the American Bishops at the Vatican is Monsignor Joseph P. McGeough whose former and permanent post is with the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church. Since much of the money for the work in the Middle and Far East comes from the United States, the American bishops had a representative to see where the money went. Monsignor McGeough had a background of Wall Street experience before becoming a priest. It is not likely that he is very familiar with general activities of the Vatican Secretariate of State.

To help out the Delegate of the American Bishops at the Vatican several months ago a young priest was brought over from the United States, Rev. Martin T. Gilligan of Cincinnati who for a time served as secretary to Bishop Hurley in Florida whence he came abroad. Father Gilligan is in charge of the community center at Rome for American Catholics in the armed forces.

The only other American cleric with a position directly at the Vatican is Monsignor P. J. Brennan who is a judge on the Roman Rota, the general supreme court of the Catholic Church. He has the remoteness from general affairs common to most men on supreme courts.

Attitude of Schoolboys and Youngmen

The transition from the Fascist regime to the present one of confused liberty has so shocked the older schoolboys and young men that at present they have no real political attitudes of a positive character. The young men to the age of 25 or more have known nothing else but the Fascist training. In their schools Fascist thinking was impressed on them in every way and in every moment of the day. They do not understand what has happened and nothing yet has filled the place made vacant in their lives by the fall of Fascism. The internal confusion here and a feeling of uncertainty about the future of Italy are not ideal conditions for a birth of political thinking as we know it and wish it in America.

The attitude of the young men towards the war is of prime importance at the moment because the Italian government is trying to raise a large army. There is enthusiasm only among the older politicians for the draft here. The majority of the young men do not want to go to war, feeling that they do not know who or what they are fighting for. The fact that the Germans occupy a good part of their native land does not have on the Italian youth the effect it would have in other countries. Here they are not sure that the German domination of a part of the country is to be replaced by a British domination of the whole accompanied by the loss of Italy's colonies or by an eventual Russian domination or what. In the present state many feel it easier and better to do nothing.

The rally at the University in Rome to stir up enthusiasm for the draft and the war last week was reported to be a dismal failure. Placards invited all young men to be present. Only a small crowd was said to have turned out. That crowd it was reported was three to one against the draft.

Sources: Two non-Italian teachers who have taught in a large school in Rome for over twenty years.

English Film Activity

At the present time British film activity in Italy, as that of American companies, is supposed to be run entirely by the P.W.B. of the Army. Certain English interests have carried on negotiations and concluded a contract outside the P.W.B. (As previously reported the Russians take no part in the P.W.B. film activity and have organized a private, commercial firm for their motion picture business.)

A Mr. Maingot, an English citizen representing London Films (Sir Alexander Korda), has negotiated a deal for seven films with Italian interests. The first contract was worked out with Società Italiana Cinematografica, a company organized September, 1944 by Luigi Giannuzzi-Savelli and Carlo Almagia, two young men without previous film experience but members of wealthy families. The mother of Giannuzzi-Savelli is alleged to have important ties with very prominent persons in England. Almagia has worked with Sforza in political activity.

The original deal was reported to be for a total minimum guarantee of 15 million liras, a high price considering that the cost of prints, dubbing into Italian and advertising will amount to about one million liras for each of the seven films. Early in December, 1944 Leoni Films came into the deal, after payment of a reported one million liras to the Società Italiana Cinematografica. Leoni Films was to be distributor of the pictures. At this point London Films objected (probably action taken in London) on the grounds that Leoni had been tied too closely to Fascist interests, having been the distributor of Scalera films which were some of the better Fascist pictures. (There was said to be also a personal objection to Leoni Films because some members of the family took advantage of a provision in the anti-Jewish laws and had their mother swear they were not sons of their father. This made it possible for them to remain in business with the Fascists.)

This week Leoni assured a colleague in the film business that the deal had been finally signed.

Maingot has been in Italy, off and on, since the last war. Some years ago he was in the film business in Paris and finally

became manager for France of Fox Film Corp., an American company. There was some trouble and he left under circumstances which did not make it possible for him to get another position with a U.S. motion picture firm. He then took up producing in France and later went to England where he started a small business dealing in plays, stories and manuscripts. This work also brought him to Italy. He turned up early this Fall in Italy variously reported as having a special job with the British Army, working for the P.W.B., working on British Ministry of Information film production in Italy. The P.W.B. film authorities deny that Maingot has any connection with them. At any rate he has been representing London Films, i.e. Korda. Maingot formerly lived at the Ludovisi Hotel/ This week a member of the Italian film business said that he was unable to locate Maingot there or get any address for him.

Another man alleged by some in the Italian film industry to be conducting commercial negotiations is Steven Fallos, official in the P.W.B. film section representing British interests. For many years Fallos worked for Alexander Korda. Fallos is Hungarian by birth and a British subject. He has been carrying on the small amount of film production conducted here by the P.W.B.

Someone, most probably either Maingot or Fallos or someone acting for them, is reported to be negotiating for the purchase of a large piece of property for a cinema. The property is on Via Sistina and is owned by Ing. Castelli, a constructor who has done considerable work for the Vatican.

The British Film activities have interest in that they are midway between the russians which are openly commercial and the Americans which apparently are still prevented from resuming commercial activity by the military authorities and U.S. Treasury regulations.

Sources; A number of members of the film industry here.

Reaction to Film Entertainment and Propaganda

(The following notes are from a study made by a Swiss citizen who had an opportunity to travel extensively in Southern Italy and Sicily several months ago. The notes still have value because there has been no significant change in the film policy.)

Patrons dislike the under current of propaganda present in the majority of feature films shown to them. Years and years of propaganda have made the public extremely propaganda conscious and at present they do not even want to hear the word mentioned. It must be noted that the general tendency is to qualify as propaganda anything that is not understood.

The public is extremely interested in newsreels because these show facts and not theories. But great care must be taken in the editing of the newsreels to avoid repetition of the incident at places in which a newsreel showed as German destruction and demolition what were actually caused by Allied bombings.

The interest in documentary shorts is not so strong. This probably results from the instinctive reaction against the shorts issued under the Fascist regime. Although there is an immense difference between the shorts of those days and those of the present day, the public still reacts unfavorably. They do not want to be shown anything which bears on their minds. They want simple, plain facts.

Throughout Southern Italy and Sicily the exhibitor's attitude can be defined as plainly anti-F.W.B. The reasons for this are many. Perhaps the chief motive is to be found in an instinctive reaction to what are normally termed "F.W.B.'s dictatorial methods." Also the exhibitors are not making as much money on F.W.B. films as they hoped to make. In certain cases in the small towns, they actually lose money. This is due to the fact that these films are shown in original English versions with sub-titles. (Now more films are being dubbed into Italian.)

The distribution of films seems to meet with a very difficult transportation problem. F.W.B., tied down as it is to official transport, does not seem to penetrate as deeply as private film distributors who use commercial truck routes.

There is also a certain amount of unauthorized distribution and exhibition with prints of films "disappearing" for a week or ten days at a time.