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ZUCCA

REPORT OF L. CARO'S ARREST

On 24 August 1944 at 11:30 hours, Zucca went to keep an appointment with Lawyer De Caro. They were supposed to go to the office of Avv. Serafino De Marchis in via degli Arditi in Milano. About a day before, a certain unknown person went to De Marchis, saying that he had been sent by two other partisans, whom De Marchis knew well, in order to obtain his help to escape and avoid capture, from the Fascists, who were after him for having killed three Fascists. This man was a provocator, however, the lawyer fell for his story and for this reason called a meeting on the 24th with Zucca, Lawyer De Caro and Lt. Col. Burchielli of the G.C.M.

When altogether, Zucca, who had been presented as the man who could effect and arrange for the escape of this individual, kept almost limited the conversation to general terms because he did not ~~XXXX~~ like the setup. When he was asked, "When can I reach the partisans?" he gave a very vague answer. After twenty minutes, this man left and Zucca followed him to find out where he was going. Five minutes later, De Caro also left, but, as soon as he reached the entrance of the building, he was arrested, and saw Zucca with his shoulders against the wall with someone holding a pistol against his chest.

In the meantime, De Marchis, Burchielli were also arrested and altogether were taken to the S. Vittore prison. De Caro was released two days later. Zucca, arrested as under the name of Ettore Lado, a merchant from Rome, refugee in Milan, was ~~XXXXXXXX~~ held under general charges of being in contact with partisan formations, not knowing all this time who he actually was.

Fortunately, Zucca was able to maintain contact with us through a guard who daily carried notes back and forth. Ferro was charged for maintaining contact with Zucca through this guard.

From the beginning, Zucca's position was not serious, and from the outside we were doing all we could to obtain his release. Several means were used, but none of them were successful. Our best aid at the time was a certain Baron Ferrilli

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an important industrialist in Milan with knowledge of Zucca's true name, and a personal friend of the leader of the German SS in Milan, Capt. Saevcke, Farrilli, with whom I kept daily contact, immediately appeal to Saevcke, who advised him that Zucca's case was not serious and that there was no specific charge against him; however, they doubted his identity very strongly. Farrilli assured Saevcke that there could be no mistake about Zucca's identity because he had been introduced to him several years back in Rome by his Yrianna. In the meantime, through our means of communication, Farrilli made known to Zucca, the names of three individuals in Rome whom he had given to Saevcke as reference. Zucca, upon interrogation, confirmed the names given by Farrilli, and thus even the doubt over his identity was eradicated. Then, Saevcke told Farrilli that he had nothing against Zucca's release but since immediately after his arrest he had confessed to anti-Fascist activities in order to do away with eventual suspicion over his true identity he had to give him thirty days' punishment before releasing him. This being the 20th of September, we knew that he would be released on October 10. But, on 17 September other group members of our groups were arrested in Genoa, together with Felco and Maria Giovanna of the GBVU group.

The German SS, I don't know how, succeeded in connecting these arrests with that in Milan of the 24th of August, and to discover that Atto Dado was Prof. Piero Zucardi sought in Genoa for eight months, and having assumed the cattle name of Zucca. Members of the Genoa SS came to Milan towards the end of September, beat him until he bled, and broke seven of his ribs (a friend, Dr. Colonesi, medical officer of the S. Vittore prison, who saw Zucca after the torture, adjudged him as "an unrecognizable human being", as a result of all the he went through to obtain a confession from him. However, even in this extreme moment, Zucca succeeded in keeping the names of his companions to himself and whatever he said concerned only himself, and his own activities.

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