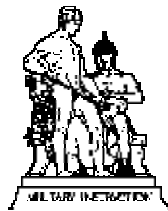


**United States Army in World War II
Mediterranean Theater of Operations**

Sicily and the Surrender of Italy

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Chapter XXII

The QUADRANT Conference and the Quebec Memorandum

Even as the military operations on Sicily neared an end, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, together with their chief military and political advisers, in August 1943 met in conference at Quebec. Code-named QUADRANT, this meeting was the focal point in the formulation of Allied strategy for the second half of 1943. Marking a new stage in the Anglo-American strategic argument toward delimiting Mediterranean operations and solidifying the cross-Channel plan, the conference incidentally and accidentally provided the final conditions for Italian surrender, determined the methods of applying the terms, and gave final approval to an invasion of the Italian mainland.

Strategic Issues at Quebec

Toward the end of July, the Joint War Plans Committee of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff had suggested that the decisive action against the Axis had already taken place in the successful Russian counteroffensive against the Germans, together with the Anglo-American superiority established in the air and on the sea. Since Germany, the committee said, was no longer capable of defeating the Soviet armies, the assumption that Anglo-American power had to be directed primarily to relieve the pressure on Russia was no longer valid. Hence, the argument ran, the cross-Channel attack could not inflict the decisive defeat on Germany; it could only, in conjunction with continued Russian advances, deliver the final blow. The members also suggested that an inflexible adherence to the cross-Channel concept was incorrect; that the decision to remove seven battle-tested divisions from the Mediterranean was unsound. Robbing the Mediterranean offensive of momentum might nullify the attempt to knock Italy out of the war or to exploit Italian collapse into an invasion of southern France. Furthermore, the committee believed that the Allies had not given due consideration to the possibility that Germany might defend Italy with strong forces.¹

The return of seven divisions from the Mediterranean to the United Kingdom by 1 November was the crucial agreement through which General Marshall had sought to make it possible to direct the weight of Anglo-American power into the cross-Channel blow, thereby limiting the Mediterranean offensive to a subordinate role. Although some men who served him had doubts, Marshall believed that the decisive defeat of Germany could be inflicted on the classic battlegrounds of northern France and nowhere else.

Among the British planners who served Churchill, some were quite sympathetic with Marshall's strategic view. Yet the British Chiefs of Staff had a genuine conviction that the elimination of Italy from the war was a prerequisite for a successful cross-Channel attack, and that everything possible should be done to make sure that the attack against Italy would knock it out of the war.

Despite the qualifications and shadings around the edges of agreement, an acute conflict of views prevailed between Churchill and Marshall. The latter held resolutely to the concept that the British Isles constituted the only base in which to gather sufficient power for a decisive blow against the heartland of Germany. He had no hope for decisive results by an offensive into the Balkans, with or without Turkish support. He considered attempts to reach the German heart by way of the Italian peninsula, the Postumia-Ljubljana gap, or the Danube valley to be logistically and strategically unsound. He did not believe it possible to inflict a decisive defeat on the German armies by landing in Italy and pursuing them up the ridges of the Italian peninsula and over the Alps, whether toward Austria or toward France. He wanted a main effort in the cross-Channel attack, a simultaneous diversionary amphibious landing in southern France, and the continued employment of limited holding forces in the Mediterranean. This Marshall believed to be the best way to achieve decisive defeat of Germany in the west.

Despite the TRIDENT agreements, there were indications that Mr. Churchill and his advisers shrank from the plan to strike the main blow across the Channel in 1944. At the Algiers conference in late May, immediately after TRIDENT, General Brooke had privately told General Eisenhower that he would be glad to reconsider the cross-Channel project, even to the extent of eliminating it from Allied strategy, for he feared that a ground conflict in a large theater would be disadvantageous for the Allies and might result in tremendous losses.² Churchill at a later date frankly told General Wedemeyer that if he had been able to persuade the Combined Chiefs of Staff the Allies would have gone through Turkey and the Balkans from the south and into Norway on the north, thus surrounding the enemy and further dispersing his forces.³

The British Chiefs of Staff immediately after TRIDENT fully recognized the priority of operations in the western Mediterranean directed by AFHQ over those projected by the British Middle East Command: ACCOLADE (seizure of the Dodecanese) and HARDIHOOD (aid to Turkey to induce it to enter the war). They instructed General Wilson, the Middle East commander, to make some of his resources available to General Eisenhower.⁴ Despite the American JCS veto against employing American ground forces east of Sicily, British strategists kept the Aegean-Balkan area in mind as a potential route toward the Danube once Italy was knocked out of the war.

During July the British representatives in Washington, on orders from London, kept pressing the CCS to allot resources to General Eisenhower beyond those allocated at TRIDENT. The JCS, however, continued to insist that Eisenhower's invasion of the Italian mainland could be made without additional resources.

When the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, visited England in July, he became alarmed by what he heard from Churchill and Eden. Mr. Stimson suggested that political reasons made it necessary to press for a cross-Channel attack. Though Mr. Churchill seemed to understand--"he confined his position to favoring a march on Rome with its prestige and the possibility of knocking Italy out of the war"--Eden contended for carrying the war into the Balkans and Greece. Both American and British officers working on plans for the cross-Channel attack gave Stimson an impression that the great threat to the plan came from the danger of becoming too deeply involved in the Mediterranean. When Marshall suggested on 16 July that AFHQ study the possibility of an amphibious attack in the Naples area, Churchill interpreted it as an indication that Marshall was shifting from his basic position.

A transatlantic phone call quickly reassured Stimson that he knew Marshall's mind better than Churchill did. Yet the check received by the British Eighth Army before Catania led Churchill to speak of a cross-channel attack as producing a Channel full of corpses.⁵

The vision of occupying the Italian capital captivated Churchill's mind, and Rome was the minimum territorial objective in Italy acceptable to him. Still, he told Stimson that if by good luck the Allies gained the complete capitulation of Italy, he would favor going as far as the northern boundary. Stimson received the impression that Churchill was looking "constantly and vigorously for an easy way of ending the war without a trans-Channel assault." At Algiers, however, Stimson was relieved to find Eisenhower in agreement with Marshall's basic idea--the attack on Italy was to be for a limited objective, one not impairing or substituting for the cross-Channel attack, but rather one that would aid and facilitate it. At AFHQ, Mr. Stimson gained the impression that the Foggia airfields were considered the main objective of the campaign.⁶

Upon returning to Washington Mr. Stimson on 4 August sent a recommendation to the President. "The main thing therefore to keep constantly in mind," he wrote, "is that the Italian effort must be strictly confined to the objective of securing bases for an air attack and there must be no further diversions of the forces or matériel which will interfere with the coincident mounting of the ROUNDHAMMER [cross-Channel] project."⁷

On 9 August, General Marshall called on the President in order to ascertain the President's views and the American position to be presented at the impending Quebec Conference. Roosevelt stated that in a choice between cross-Channel invasion and the invasion of the Italian mainland he would insist on the former. But he felt that more could be done for the latter than had been proposed. The seven battle-tested divisions should be moved to England, but perhaps an equal number of divisions could go from the United States directly to Italy. He stated that he would resist an operation into the Balkans or any expedition that might involve a heavy loss of ships and landing craft without the possibility of achieving decisive results. He thought that the Allies should secure a position in Italy just north of Rome and occupy Sardinia and Corsica, thus setting up a serious threat to southern France.⁸

The following day Secretary of War Stimson called on the President. He presented a memorandum making a plea for holding to the American strategic concept. As a result of talks, personal contacts, and conversations during his recent overseas trip, Stimson said, he had reached the conclusion that there was no rational hope for a successful cross-Channel attack under a British commander. He urged that the American Government take the leadership, insist on a cross-Channel attack, and guarantee its execution by securing the appointment of General Marshall as its commander. After reading the memorandum, Mr. Roosevelt stated that he himself had reached the same conclusions.⁹

During the few remaining days before the conference opened, American policy makers, after thorough discussion, formulated their views. The President told the Joint Chiefs that he favored setting up a great force in Britain as soon as possible. Having more American soldiers than British for the cross-Channel operation, he said, would make the appointment of an American commander easier to secure. As for the Mediterranean, the President stated that he wished to invade Italy for the purpose of establishing bases; he would go no farther north than Rome.¹⁰

The American position to be presented at Quebec, therefore, reaffirmed the strategy agreed upon in May--because "conditions have not changed as to justify on sound military grounds the renunciation of the TRIDENT concept." The Americans did not wish to jeopardize a sound over-all strategy "simply to exploit local successes in a generally accepted secondary theater, the Mediterranean, where logistical and terrain difficulties preclude decisive and final operations designed to reach the heart of Germany." The essence of American strategy was the cross-Channel attack, carefully synchronized with the combined bomber offensive. The Mediterranean, strictly delimited to a subordinate area, was to be exploited with only those resources already available. Three phases of operations in Italy were forecast: eliminating Italy as a belligerent and establishing air bases at least as far north as the Rome area; seizing Sardinia and Corsica; and maintaining pressure on German forces and creating conditions favorable for entry into southern France.¹¹

The American and British Chiefs of Staff opened the argument on 15 August, the second day of the conference--the day Seventh Army entered Messina. The British expressed complete agreement with the Americans in principle, but they challenged the phrases used by the Joint Chiefs to guarantee the principles. The British Chiefs, according to General Brooke, were in entire agreement that OVERLORD should constitute the major offensive for 1944 and that Italian operations should be planned against that background. But they saw operations in Italy as creating a situation favorable and even necessary for a successful cross-Channel attack--by holding down German reserves and by bombing German fighter plane factories from Italian airfields. Therefore, Brooke said, giving overriding priority to the cross-Channel attack over any Mediterranean operation was too binding, for sufficient forces had to be used in Italy to make the cross-Channel attack possible. Suggesting that the Allies could achieve far greater success in bombing the fighter plane factories in Germany from Po valley airfields than from those in central Italy, Brooke proposed that the Allies consider the line of the Apennines as merely the first phase line of their advance, a preliminary for seizing the north Italian plain.

At this point Admiral King bluntly remarked that, as he understood it, "The British Chiefs of Staff had serious doubts as to the possibility of OVERLORD." The British protested that they were thinking only of conditions required for a successful cross-Channel attack. General Marshall then put his finger on the central issue. "The essence of the problem," he said, "was whether or not the required conditions for a successful OVERLORD could only be made possible by an increase of strength in the Mediterranean." He agreed that the Allies should seize as much of Italy as possible if resistance was weak, for it would be better if the Allies rather than the Germans held the northern airfields. Yet he thought that almost as much could be achieved by securing the Florence area. On the other hand, unless the Allies decided to remove the seven divisions from the Mediterranean, and unless the Allies gave overriding priority to OVERLORD, the cross-Channel operation, he believed, would become only a subsidiary operation. The operation would then be "doomed and our whole strategic concept would have to be recast."¹²

So frank an exchange of views followed that the Combined Chiefs preferred not to keep a formal record of the discussion.¹³ Not until 17 August did the American Chiefs secure written agreement that largely fulfilled their demand for a guarantee of OVERLORD. They did not quite get "overriding priority" for the cross-Channel operation, but they obtained assurance that the Mediterranean theater would be subordinate and that the stage would be set for only limited operations. Ground operations in the Balkans were ruled out, and the

purpose of an attack against southern France was defined as: "to establish a lodgment in the Toulon-Marseilles area and exploit northward in order to create a diversion in connection with OVERLORD."¹⁴ The Allies thus stipulated OVERLORD as the main effort for 1944. But despite the cogency of his arguments, General Marshall did not obtain a formula for the Mediterranean which would serve to ward off his most acute fear: the drawing off of resources into a secondary theater. This was partly due to the general expectation that Italy would promptly surrender and that, in consequence, the Germans would withdraw to a line somewhere north of Rome. QUADRANT set the Rome area as the minimum Allied territorial objective in Italy and called for "unremitting pressure" against the German forces in "Northern Italy." But in case the Germans did not withdraw to the line of the northern Apennines, in case the Italian capital did not fall before the momentum of the Allied attack, what then? For the sake of conquering central Italy, how much in men and matériel would the Mediterranean theater be permitted to absorb at the expense of the cross-Channel build-up? In the over-all strategy of the war, how much was the occupation of the Italian capital and the use of its airfields worth to the Allies once Italy was eliminated from the war? QUADRANT did not answer these questions because the problem was not set in those terms. Churchill was fascinated by Rome and the prospect of its capture. Marshall was profoundly skeptical of the Italian theater and considered it the greatest threat to the build-up in England required for the main blow.

The QUADRANT Conference devoted but little attention to specific plans for invading the Italian mainland. The Combined Chiefs had delegated the formulation of precise operations to AFHQ, and at the meeting held on the last day of the conference, 24 August, Generals Whiteley and Rooks presented in outline the plans for BAYTOWN (a crossing of the Strait of Messina), and AVALANCHE (an assault in the Naples area). The CCS merely noted the exposition of General Eisenhower's plans and gave their approval.¹⁵

The Mission of General Castellano

In Rome, General Castellano, who hated the Germans for their ill-concealed contempt for Italian officers and soldiers, watched with growing alarm the increasing German occupation of northern Italy. One of the chief conspirators against Mussolini and predisposed to political activity, he saw a means for saving Italy and the House of Savoy only in shifting sides in the war, a feat which that House had often performed with dexterity in the 17th and 18th centuries when it ruled Piedmont only. Disappointed in the outcome of Mussolini's overthrow and regarding Badoglio as a fool for not recognizing Italy's obvious course, Castellano flung himself with ardor into the task of making contact with the Allies.¹⁶

Castellano was not alone in searching for a way to avert the intolerable situation into which Italy was drifting because of the lack of firm direction by the King and Badoglio. Many individuals on lower levels of authority were formulating and advocating courses of action for the government. Generale di Brigata Umberto Utili and Generale Addetto al Capo di Stato Maggiore Giacomo Zanussi of Roatta's headquarters, for example, urged an immediate break with the Germans independent of agreement with the Allies, for they believed that the resulting Italo-German conflict would draw the Allies into Italy on the Italian side. Though less attractive after 1 August, this course of action was suggested even after the Tarvis conference.¹⁷

In contrast to this point of view, Ambrosio, Francesco Rossi, his deputy chief of staff, and Castellano, felt that the Italians had to oppose the Germans, but only after reaching agreement for military cooperation with the Allies.¹⁸ Guariglia, the Foreign Minister, wished military and political agreements with the Allies, but he wanted the negotiations to be conducted by diplomatists. He preferred not to conclude an armistice with the Allies until they had landed on the mainland and could occupy and defend Rome.

Ambrosio pushed for action, but, having great respect for Badoglio, he would go no further than the marshal wished. Badoglio would take no step except on the explicit word of the King. The King, however, refused to take any step that would lead to a break with the Germans.¹⁹

In this situation Castellano acted. After conversations with Roatta, Uti, and Zanussi on 9 August, Castellano urged Ambrosio to see the King on the problem of reaching agreement with the Allies. Italy, Castellano felt, should not surrender, but go over to the Allied side. An Italian emissary, he thought, should be sent immediately to make contact with the Allies. The emissary should have documentary instructions and credentials authorizing him to make agreements for military collaboration. After reaching agreement, the Italians would turn against the Germans.

At an audience granted to Ambrosio on 10 August, the King assented to Ambrosio's proposal for sending a representative to the Allies, but the monarch declined to furnish any credentials or written instructions. Guariglia, when consulted by Ambrosio, was not enthusiastic over an additional emissary; he preferred to await the outcome of the missions of D'Ajeta and Berio, and he declined to send a member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to accompany another emissary. Thus far, the Italian military men did not know the full scope of the D'Ajeta and Berio missions. It was Badoglio who decided that a military man should be sent, and Castellano was chosen.

Ambrosio alone instructed Castellano. Castellano was to negotiate only with Allied military representatives. He was to furnish them military information. He was to agree with them on a common plan of action against the Germans. Though he received no written instructions, he secured from Acquarone a letter of introduction by Sir D'Arcy Osborne to Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Ambassador at Madrid. Guariglia at first declined to issue an individual passport for Castellano, arranging instead for Castellano to travel on a collective passport being provided several diplomatic officials bound for Portugal, but Castellano finally obtained a passport for himself made out with the fictitious name "Raimondi."

Before departing from Rome on 12 August, Castellano saw Guariglia, who urged the greatest caution, warning that discovery of Castellano's mission would mean death to the members of the government. Guariglia reminded Castellano that the government was practically a prisoner of the Germans and quite unable to separate from them unless the Allies made it possible. Because Rome was in great danger, Castellano should urge the Allies to land on the mainland north of the capital.²⁰

On that day, General Eisenhower's AFHQ diary noted that "what had appeared to be a quick collapse of Italy had disappeared into uncertainty . . ."²¹ And on the following day, Allied bombers operating from North Africa and England attacked Milan, Turin, Genoa,

and Rome as a reminder to Badoglio that the Allies were in earnest in demanding unconditional surrender.

The Italians scarcely knew where the greater threat lay. The Allied armies were making steady progress in Sicily, and Allied planes were bombing Italian cities at will. In northern Italy, the Germans were rapidly consolidating their control. The *2d Parachute Division* completed its move to areas just north and south of Rome; elements of the *26th Panzer Division* had reinforced the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* near Lake Bolsena; these plus the headquarters troops of *OB SUEDE* at Frascati constituted an immediate threat to Rome. The movement of the units under *Army Group B* into northern Italy was approximately half completed, and even though Rommel's headquarters was still at Munich, the *44th Infantry Division* controlled the Italian side of the Brenner Pass, the *Brigade Doehla* held the entrances to the auxiliary passes leading to Bolzano. Along the Brenner route, the *SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler* had moved to the Parma area, the *65th Infantry Division* had moved by the same route southwest of Parma, the *24th Panzer Division*, destined for Modena, was moving into Italy by way of the Tarvis Pass, and the *71st Infantry Division* was to follow and occupy the eastern passes into Italy over the Julian Alps. The *305th Infantry Division*, in the Nice area since 1 August, was ready to follow the *76th Infantry Division*, which had moved to the Genoese coast. The *94th Infantry Division*, not yet in Italy, was awaiting transportation at the entrance to the Mount Cenis pass and was poised to gain control of the Modane-Bardonecchia sector of the Turin-Lyons railway. Not a single German division had moved south of Rome in this period, and the German intention seemed clear--to seize the Italian capital; to grab the Italian Fleet; to pull German forces out of the south and defend a line in the northern Apennines.²²

In the meantime, the Allies were tackling the proposals of D'Ajeta and Berio. Right after his conversation with D'Ajeta on 4 August, Ambassador Campbell in Lisbon had telegraphed to London the substance of D'Ajeta's remarks. From Downing Street the report was forwarded to Churchill, who was on the point of sailing for Canada. Though Churchill had been anxious upon Mussolini's downfall to gain maximum advantage from the political change and to turn the "fury" of the Italian people against the German "invader," his reaction to the D'Ajeta mission was chilly. He relayed Campbell's report to President Roosevelt without recommendation, commenting only: "D'Ajeta never from start to finish made any mention of peace terms and his whole story, as you will have observed, was no more than a plea that we should save Italy from the Germans as well as from herself, and do it as quickly as possible."²³

Several days later, when the report of the Berio feeler reached London, Churchill was on the high seas and Eden was at the Foreign Office. After noting that Berio's proposal was an offer to negotiate on terms, Eden suggested that the Allies take the single course of action in consonance with the Anglo-American public declarations:

Should we not then reply that, as is well known, we insist on unconditional surrender, and the Badoglio Government must as a first step notify us that Italy surrenders unconditionally? Subsequently, at a later stage, if the Badoglio Government were to do this, we should then inform them of the terms on which we should be prepared to cease hostilities against Italy.²⁴

Though Churchill wrote a note to himself: "Don't miss the bus," he radioed the Foreign Secretary: "We agree with the course you have taken." When Churchill arrived in Canada on 9 August, he sketched out somewhat more fully an appropriate reply. "Badoglio must state," the Prime Minister wrote, "that he is prepared to place himself unreservedly in the hands of the Allied Governments who have already made it plain that they desire Italy to have a respectable place in the new Europe." Yet, as Churchill warned Eden, and himself as well, "Merely harping on 'unconditional surrender,' with no prospect of mercy held out even as an act of grace, may well lead to no surrender at all."²⁵

Eden then drafted the full text of a reply to be given to Berio in Tangier, a draft first forwarded on 12 August to President Roosevelt, who approved the concept and the precise language. On the following day, the day after Castellano departed Rome, Berio received word that the Allies were unwilling to negotiate:

Badoglio must understand that we cannot negotiate, but require unconditional surrender, which means that Italian Government should place themselves in hands of Allied Governments, who will then state their terms. These will provide for an honourable capitulation.²⁶

Several days earlier, on 8 August, Mr. Harold Tittmann, assistant to the President's Personal Representative to the Pope, sent a message through Lisbon that reached the Allied leaders in Quebec on 15 August. Tittmann reiterated the Badoglio government's desire to make immediate peace with the Allies, made plain its inability to do so because of the German threat to seize control of the Italian Government and to occupy the entire country. He stated that Badoglio was forced to play for time in the hope that the Allies would come to Italy's assistance by intensifying air warfare against the Germans and by landing in the northern part of the peninsula. Hitler, the Italians insisted, was seeking a suitable pretext to occupy Italy.²⁷

Tittmann sent another message by way of Berne on 12 August, a statement that reached the Allied leaders on 18 August. He repeated that the Badoglio government's chief concern remained the Nazi threat of occupation, that the Nazis were looking for an excuse to carry out their threat, and that if the Italians tried to surrender to the Allies, the Germans would undoubtedly take over the country within two hours after learning of the effort.²⁸

To Badoglio's earliest efforts to persuade the Allies that he was not free, that he could not unconditionally do anything because of the German noose around the Italian capital, the Anglo-American leaders gave little, if any, attention--no more, in fact, than to the question of exactly how Badoglio was to surrender unconditionally. The capabilities of the Allied navies and air forces notwithstanding, the Allies could not occupy Rome or any part of Italy until Allied ground troops were on the Italian mainland. No Allied force was in a position to accept a surrender and exploit its advantages.

General Eisenhower saw the close connection between strategy and policy, but Churchill and Roosevelt seemed to ignore it. The first Italian-Allied exchanges resembled two persons talking to each other in their sleep, each the victim of his own hallucination. In the nightmare of the German occupation, Italy gasped, "Help, I am not free." After a long pause, the Allies replied, "Say Uncle." Part of the Allied reaction came from Churchill's

suspicion--"Badoglio admits he is going to double-cross someone"--and Churchill was not at all willing to be the victim.²⁹

Yet there was something decidedly intelligible in what D'Ajeta had said at Lisbon on 4 August. He had faithfully regurgitated before Ambassador Campbell the German order of battle in Italy which he had spent hours memorizing. This information would have been helpful to the Allied military leaders, for AFHQ was then toying with plans based on the hope of an unopposed landing in the Naples area. Unfortunately, Allied diplomatic channels were distinctly different and quite separate from strategic and military channels. Although General Marshall had been careful to keep AFHQ fully informed of the negotiations to establish Rome as an open city, General Eisenhower learned nothing of the D'Ajeta and Berio missions.³⁰

Leaving Rome by train on 12 August, Castellano intended to present himself to the Allies as a representative not of a conquered country bowing to the inevitable and asking aid to surrender, but of a country that still had sufficient force to disown a detested ally and energy enough to fight for redemption. The essential point he wished to make was that Italy asked for help to enable it to join the battle on the side of the United Nations.³¹

Traveling as Signor Raimondi of the Italian Ministry of Exchange and Currency and in company with a party of officials, Castellano arrived in Madrid at noon, 15 August. While the party was visiting the Prado Museum, Castellano took Consul Franco Montanari aside and revealed his identity. Swearing Montanari to secrecy and asking him to serve as his interpreter, Castellano took him to the British Embassy. Montanari was not altogether surprised. Before his departure from Rome, Guariglia had briefed him on Castellano's mission.³²

Castellano presented his letter of introduction, and Sir Samuel Hoare received him. Explaining his position as chief of Ambrosio's military office, Castellano said that his mission was official and that he had complete backing from Marshal Badoglio. Italy, he declared, was exhausted, the ground forces were poorly armed, aviation was weak, and German troops were streaming into the country. Until the Allies landed on the Italian mainland, Castellano said, the government was powerless to act. But if and when the Allies invaded the mainland, Italy was prepared to join them in fighting the Germans. If the Allies were willing to accept Italian help, Castellano was prepared to give detailed information on German dispositions and strength. The Italians were ready to co-operate with Mihailovitch in the Balkans, to repudiate the independence of Croatia, and to reach agreement with Yugoslavia over Dalmatia. Attempts had been made to bring Italian troops home, all units had been withdrawn from the Russian front, and German units had taken over the duty of garrisoning Greece, particularly at Salonika. Because of the rapid build-up of German forces in Italy, Badoglio wished to take immediate action. Thirteen German divisions were already in Italy, and more were arriving. The Germans, Castellano said, planned to defend the Genoa-Ravenna line.

The greatest danger Italy faced, according to Castellano, was the prospect that the Germans would seize control of the country. The Germans had threatened to bomb Italian cities and use gas if the Badoglio government did not continue in the war. Hating the Germans, the Italian people would support a military alignment with the Allies. Mussolini and the Fascists were discredited. Though the Fascist militia had been disarmed, it was bitterly

hostile to the Italian Regular Army. If Badoglio could not reach agreement with the Allies, he feared that the Germans might re-establish Mussolini in power and bring back the militia. If the Germans caught Castellano, they would kill him. Hence the need for secrecy, and the necessity for Castellano to proceed under his false name to Lisbon on the ostensible mission of meeting the SS *Cabo de Buena Esperanza*, which was bringing home the Italian Ambassador to Chile. Castellano had to return to Rome with the Ambassador's party some time after the 20th of August.

Sir Samuel asked what the Italians would do with respect to the Allied demand for unconditional surrender. Castellano declared: "We are not in a position to make any terms. We will accept unconditional surrender provided we can join the Allies in fighting the Germans." Stating that his mission was--as he firmly believed it to be--to make the first official proposal by Italy to the Allies, Castellano again expressed his willingness to give information concerning both the Germans and Italians to the British military attaché if the British Ambassador gave an immediate reply to his proposal. If they could reach agreement, Castellano said, the Italian Army could do much to cut the German supply lines.

Ambassador Hoare expressed no opinion, for he was without instructions, but he promised to forward at once Castellano's offer to the British Government. In addition, he gave Castellano a letter of introduction to Sir Ronald Hugh Campbell, the British Ambassador at Lisbon.³³ After leaving the British Embassy, Castellano went to a hotel to make notes of his conversation. It occurred to him that perhaps he had not been sufficiently explicit in requesting to meet Allied military leaders. Nor had he definitely referred to the Americans, whom he wished to meet as well as the British. He returned to the Embassy and asked Hoare whether General Eisenhower might send a senior staff officer to Lisbon to take part in the discussions. That evening, Castellano departed from Madrid in company with Montanari and the others of the party.

Sir Samuel made haste to wire his government a full account of his meeting with Castellano. His opinion, based solely on the interview, was that the Italian Government was prepared to accept unconditional surrender if the Allies landed on the Italian mainland, and if the Italian Army could join in the fight against the Germans. "Without these two conditions," he telegraphed, "the Italian Government will not have sufficient courage or justification to make a complete volteface and will drift impotently into chaos." He recommended that serious attention be given to Castellano's proposal, if for no other reason than to obtain intelligence of German intentions and dispositions.³⁴

The Quebec Memorandum

When Foreign Secretary Eden forwarded Hoare's telegrams to Churchill at Quebec, he informed the Prime Minister that he had instructed Ambassador Campbell in Lisbon to hold Castellano there, to listen to what he had to say, but for Campbell to make no reply until he received instructions. Castellano's offer of Italian co-operation Eden found tempting, but he advised Churchill against accepting the proposal on the ground that it might cause the Allies political difficulties.³⁵

In Canada, Churchill, in a wire to President Roosevelt at Hyde Park on 16 August, outlined a reply to the Italian general. Churchill's draft made no mention of the short terms or of any other terms. Nor did it state a demand by the Allies for unconditional surrender. This was implied in the phraseology of Churchill's initial paragraph, which, at the same time, excluded any joint Italo-Allied planning of operations prior to Italy's breaking with Germany. Churchill said that the Allies could make no bargain on the prospect of Italy's changing sides in the war. Rather, "by taking action against the common enemy, the Italian Government, Army, and people could without any bargain facilitate a more friendly relationship with the United Nations." Recognizing Badoglio's predicament--Kesselring's forces surrounding Rome and Allied forces ready to invade Italy--Churchill proposed that Castellano be told: "The Italian Government should . . . resist the Germans to the best of their ability as soon as possible, pending arrival of Anglo-American armies." Until the Allies arrived, the Italian Government might cut German communications in southern Italy, safeguard Allied prisoners, sail the fleet to Allied ports, provide intelligence information, aid the invasion forces to disembark, and co-operate with guerrilla forces in the Balkans.³⁶

On the following day, 17 August, as President Roosevelt and Mr. Eden were arriving in Quebec, the CCS produced what became known as the Quebec Memorandum: "Suggested Action on Italian Peace Feelers." Shaping the memorandum were several factors: the unconditional surrender formula, Churchill's message to Roosevelt, the approved text of the short terms, the still unapproved text of the long terms, and an imperfect realization of the military difficulties in mounting and executing Operation AVALANCHE, the projected invasion of the Italian mainland near Naples.

The CCS in the Quebec Memorandum suggested that Eisenhower send two staff officers, one American, the other British, to Lisbon at once to meet Castellano. They were to tell Castellano that: the Allies would accept the unconditional surrender of Italy on the conditions of the short terms, which were to be handed to the Italian emissary; political, economic, and financial terms were to be communicated to the Italian Government later; though the Allies visualized no "active resistance" on the part of Italy in fighting the Germans, they expected Italy to hamper German operations, and in return the Allies promised to restrict bombing to targets affecting the German forces alone; hostilities were to cease at a time to be determined by General Eisenhower; the Italian Government was to proclaim the armistice at once and from that time "to collaborate with the Allies and to resist the Germans"; it was to send Navy, merchant shipping, and aircraft to Allied territory. Until the hour of the armistice, the Italians were to institute general passive resistance and minor sabotage against the Germans, safeguard Allied prisoners of war, prevent Italian ships and aircraft from falling into German hands, prevent the Germans from taking over Italian coast defenses, and arrange to march Italian units in the Balkans to coastal areas for evacuation by the Allies. If the Italians complied, Eisenhower was to have authority to soften the armistice terms proportionately with the scale of the assistance the Italians rendered to the Allies. Eisenhower was also to arrange for a secure channel of communication between him and the Italian Government.³⁷

This precise course of action laid down by the CCS gave General Eisenhower authority to bring about the surrender of Italy, but no power to negotiate. He was not to reveal his military plans to Badoglio's representative. He was to announce the armistice a few hours before the execution of AVALANCHE, the principal invasion of the Italian mainland, which he had decided on 16 August, two days before receiving the Quebec Memorandum, to

launch on the shores of the Gulf of Salerno. He could offer the Badoglio government but scant inducement to surrender: a general assurance that the Allies would modify the terms of surrender in the future if Italy surrendered completely on the eve of the Allied invasion, and if Italian forces gave positive aid to that invasion. But he could provide no answer to Badoglio's vital questions: were the Allies able, willing, and planning to occupy the seat of his government? Or would surrender to the Allies signal the German occupation of Rome and the immediate establishment of a neo-Fascist Quisling regime in Italy?

During the months following the TRIDENT Conference, the Italian surrender and the invasion of the Italian mainland had become curiously reversed. TRIDENT had directed Eisenhower "to knock Italy out of the war," and the assault of the mainland was conceived as the most appropriate means of doing so. With the collapse of fascism, the basic design of Allied plans for invading the Italian mainland--BUTTRESS, BARRACUDA, BAYTOWN, AVALANCHE--changed. The plans envisaged not knocking Italy out of the war but getting Allied troops onto the mainland to exert pressure on the Germans. What then dominated Allied thinking was the idea that Italy, as a consequence of Mussolini's downfall, would surrender. Capitulation was not expected to result from the assault on the mainland; rather, the surrender was to precede and facilitate the invasion.

Approval of the Long Terms

The QUADRANT Conference settled an additional problem, that of the long terms of armistice for Italy. The British members of the CCAC had continued to urge the necessity for political and economic terms in addition to the military clauses, and General Eisenhower on 6 August had been informed that if he used the short terms he was to make clear that other conditions were to be imposed later. But it was not clear to the CCAC members what the additional conditions would be. Would there be a list of purely economic and political terms to supplement the short terms? Or would there be a single comprehensive instrument to supersede the short terms? Hoping that the QUADRANT conferees would answer these questions, the committee on 12 August began to prepare for both courses. The members made some changes in the British draft and, at American insistence, the unconditional surrender formula reappeared.³⁸

When Mr. Eden raised the issue at Quebec with Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State consulted with the President and learned that Mr. Roosevelt had not changed his mind. Roosevelt was satisfied to have Eisenhower use the short terms to obtain Italian surrender, with the understanding that political conditions would be imposed later. Mr. Hull therefore told Eden that he had neither recommendations nor objections to make on the long terms. So far as nonmilitary matters were concerned, the Department of State concurred with the latest draft of the text.

Churchill and Eden then sought President Roosevelt's approval. Mr. Roosevelt must have given them some sort of assurance of concurrence, for on 23 August the British Foreign Office informed the Department of State that the Prime Minister and the President had reached agreement and that the British were instructing their Ambassador in Lisbon to use the long terms in place of the short terms in any future dealings with Italian emissaries. Because the Foreign Office was not fully certain of the President's concurrence, however,

the British asked the State Department to clear the matter with the President and have the combined Chiefs direct Eisenhower to use the long terms--the "Comprehensive Instrument," as it was called--in place of the short terms--the military terms. Declining to take initiative in a matter outside its province, the Department of State indicated that it would be more appropriate for the Foreign Office to take up the matter with the British Chiefs of Staff.

The President gave his final and formal concurrence on 26 August, when he directed the JCS to instruct Eisenhower to substitute the long terms for the short terms in any subsequent dealings with Badoglio's representatives. Eden on the same day instructed the Ambassador at Lisbon--Campbell--to use the long terms in any negotiations with Italian emissaries. On the following day the CCS wired the text of the long terms to Eisenhower and instructed him that this document, including the military terms, was to be used in any future negotiations.³⁹

General Eisenhower thus received several difficult assignments as a result of the QUADRANT Conference. With limited forces and resources (particularly in landing craft), he was to invade the Italian mainland in two places--across the Strait of Messina and on the shores of the Gulf of Salerno. From the latter landing, he was to sweep rapidly to Rome, 140 miles to the north. Without revealing his hand, he was to bluff Badoglio into surrender to make possible the Allied invasion. In accordance with instructions to use the long terms--an extraordinary complication because negotiations with Badoglio were already under way on the basis of the short terms and the Quebec Memorandum--Eisenhower was to insist on unconditional surrender. By this time, AFHQ intelligence, too, had obtained a clearer picture of German strength in Italy. The estimates of enemy capabilities on which the AVALANCHE plan for a landing at Salerno had been based were radically wrong. German strength had been grossly underestimated.

When the British Resident Minister at Algiers, Mr. Harold Macmillan, learned of the long terms, he protested against their immediate use. "I am told," he wired his superiors, "that military difficulties involved in operation of AVALANCHE are so great that we cannot exaggerate the value of an armistice concluded and announced in accordance with timing suggested by the President and the Prime Minister."⁴⁰

But the die had been cast. General Eisenhower had no alternative but to carry out his sometimes conflicting, always difficult, dual assignment--one a military mission, the other a diplomatic matter.

Footnotes

1. JPS 231, Operations in the European-Mediterranean Area, 1943-1944, Rpt by the Joint War Plans Committee, 26 Jul 43, CofS 381 File.

2. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, p. 167. Cf. Bryant, *Turn of the Tide*, pp. 520-21.

3. Ltr, Wedemeyer to Handy, 13 Apr 44, OPD Misc Exec File, case 611, book 18.

4. Br JP (43) 218 (Final), 21 Jun 43, Rpt by Br JPS, sub: Mediterranean Strategy, and CCS (43) 134th Mtg, 23 Jun 43, both in job 10A, reel 21C.

5. Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947, 1948), pp. 429-32; Butcher, *My Three Years With Eisenhower*, p. 373; Bryant, *Turn of the Tide*, pp. 551-53, 572-74.
6. Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, pp. 432-34; Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, p. 160.
7. Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, p. 434.
8. Memo, Marshall for Handy, 9 Aug 43, CofS 381 File.
9. Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, pp. 436-38.
10. *Ibid.*, 436-39; Matloff, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-1944*, [pp. 214-16](#).
11. CCS 303, 9 Aug 43, sub: Strategic Concept for the Defeat of the Axis in Europe: Memorandum by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, QUADRANT Conf Book, pp. 72-77; Telg 4751, Marshall to Eisenhower, 11 Aug 43, Smith Papers, box 4.
12. Min, 108th Mtg CCS, 15 Aug 43.
13. Bryant, *Turn of the Tide*, p. 579.
14. CCS 303/3, 17 Aug 43, sub: Strategic Concept for the Defeat of the Axis in Europe, QUADRANT Conf Book, pp. 87-88.
15. Min, 116th Mtg CCS, item 3; Telg, Roosevelt and Churchill to Stalin, 25 Aug 43, OPD 300.6 Security (OCS Papers).
16. To borrow a phrase from Churchill, Castellano's tragedy was in trying "to carry out a major and cardinal operation of war from a subordinate position," and, as Churchill warns, "Men are ill-advised to try such ventures." Winston S. Churchill, "The Second World War," vol. II, *Their Finest Hour* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1949), p. 15.
17. Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 78; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, vol. II, pp. 49-51.
18. Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 113-18; Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 78.
19. MS #P-058, Project 46, 1 Feb-8 Sep 43, Question 11.
20. Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 80-84; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, pp. 640-47.
21. Butcher, *My Three Years With Eisenhower*, p. 386.
22. Data on German divisions in Italy from *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 6-13 Aug 43.
23. Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 100; Telg 55, Churchill to Roosevelt, 5 Aug 43, OPD Exec 9, Book II.

24. Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 101.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*, pp, 102-03.

27. Telg 58, Handy to QUADRANT, KKAD, 15 Aug 43, OPD Exec 2 , item 5, tab 32.

28. Telg 5012, Minister Harrison at Berne to State Dept, forwarded to Gen Deane at Quebec as Telg 3465, OPD Exec 2, item 5, tab 36.

29. Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 102.

30. The Capitulation of Italy has no reference to these missions. General Smith told Howard Smyth on 13 May 1947 that he, Smith, had no knowledge of any Italian overtures prior to Castellano's mission.

31. Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 86-87.

32. Guariglia, *Ricordi*, p. 646; Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 88-90.

33. Telgs 1404 and 1406, Hoare to Foreign Office, 15 Aug 43, as repeated in Telg 4488, Devers to Eisenhower, 17 Aug 43, in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 76-77, 79-80; Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 91-95; Sir Samuel John Gurney Hoare, Viscount Templewood, *Ambassador on Special Mission* (London: Collins, 1946), pp. 212-16.

The Ambassador's memoirs must be used with caution. Though he denies his intent to do so, the Ambassador criticizes Allied leadership for "the slow motion with which the picture was unfolded which gave the Germans time for sending strong reinforcements to Italy." Nor is his account as closely based on letters and daily notes as stated in the preface (page 7). The text is colored by retrospection.

The content of Castellano's account agrees quite closely with the contemporary telegrams of Hoare, except for a slight discrepancy in chronology. Hoare states that the offer of an armistice was made to him on 13 August, a Sunday (pages 212, 216), but the telegrams indicate that he received the two Italians on the morning of 15 August; Castellano states they were not received until the afternoon of 15 August sometime after 1400.

34. Telg 1405, Hoare to Foreign Office, 15 Aug 43, as repeated in Telg 4488, Devers to Eisenhower, 17 Aug 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 79. Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 96-98.

35. Telg 4488, Devers to Eisenhower, 17 Aug 43, sub: Repeat of Telegrams Sent to QUADRANT (Nos. 231, 232, 233, 234), in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 76-81.

36. Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, pp. 103-04.

37. CCS 311, 17 Aug 43. sub: Italian Peace Feelers, QUADRANT Conf Book, pp. 141-44; See Telg, CCS to Eisenhower, FAN 196, 18 Aug 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 90-92. Churchill prints an incomplete text in *Closing the Ring*, pp. 105-06. Most of the

memorandum is printed in translation by Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 109-12. The full title of the Quebec Memorandum is: "Aide-Memoire to accompany conditions of Armistice, presented by General Eisenhower to the Italian C-in-C." See File 10,000/136/584; Bryant, *Turn of the Tide*, pp. 580-82.

[38](#). Min, 6th Mtg CCAC, 12 Aug 43, and Special Mtg, 21 Aug 43, ABC 381 Italy-Arm-Surr (5-9-43), sec. 1-A.

[39](#). Memo, Mr. James Clement Dunn for the U.S. Secy of State, 1 Sep 43, sub: Conditions for the Italian Surrender, OPD Exec 2, item 5: Extract from Min, 7th Mtg CCAC, 26 Aug 43, ABC 381 Italy-Arm-Surr (5-9-43), sec. 1-A; Telg 5718, 26 Aug 43, Foreign Office to Sir Ronald Campbell at Lisbon, OPD Exec 2, item 5, tab 50 (the context of which indicates the long terms had already been received at Lisbon); Memo, Deane for JCS, 27 Aug 43, ABC 381 Italy-Arm-Surr (5-9-43), sec. 1-A; Telg, CCS to Eisenhower, FAN 203, 27 Aug 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 137.

[40](#). Telg 1537, Resident Minister Algiers to Washington and Quebec, 26 Aug 43, as forwarded in Telg 5717 (MS), Campbell, Lisbon, to Foreign Office, OPD Exec 2, item 5, tab 50.

Chapter XXIII

The Surrender Preliminaries

The Zanussi Mission

After Castellano's departure for Madrid and Lisbon, Ambrosio continued to cooperate warily with the Germans; until Castellano brought back word that the Allies were willing to support open rupture with the Germans, the Italians could do little else.

Roatta, Army chief of staff who was responsible for defending Italy against Allied attack, still did not know of Castellano's mission. His recognition since May that Italian forces alone were not equal to the task of opposing an Allied invasion prompted him to keep calling for German reinforcements, ground as well as air. But the German troops in Italy were poorly distributed for defense against the Allies. Anxious to defend the entire peninsula and believing the most threatened area to be southern Italy, particularly the Naples-Salerno area, Roatta pointed out to the Germans that loss of southern Italy would open the Balkans to Allied operations. He proposed that the Germans group their divisions into mobile reserves deployed at several key points throughout Italy to meet various Allied capabilities. A heavy concentration of German units in northern Italy would then be unnecessary, Roatta urged, unless, of course, the Germans intended to abandon southern and central Italy at the very outset.¹

Because the Germans and Italians at the Tarvis conference had not agreed on a common plan for the defense of Italy, on the command problem posed by German forces in Italy, and on the return of the Italian *Fourth Army* from France, Roatta proposed a new conference for purely military matters. The German Government accepted on the condition that the meeting be held at Bologna, the area where the *II SS Panzer Corps* was stationed.²

Roatta's strategic views were not essentially different from those of Kesselring, who still believed that the Italians showed a genuine will to co-operate. Kesselring also discerned, by the middle of August, a slight but definite improvement in the morale of the Italian troops. Intent on defending the whole of Italy and believing the task feasible, he reported that it would be difficult for the Germans quickly to seize Rome and the Italian Government. The *26th Panzer Division's* vehicles, essential to render fully mobile the German forces around Rome (*3d Panzer Grenadier* and *26 Parachute Divisions*), had not yet arrived. More important, Italian forces were present around Rome in considerable strength. If Italo-German conflict started in the Rome area, the German forces in Sicily and southern Italy would be cut off. Kesselring therefore urged a postponement of the seizure operation (*Operation SCHWARZ*) until the Germans had incontrovertible proof of Italian negotiations with the Allies. Continued co-operation with the Italians, he felt, would gain the Germans enough time to move in sufficient reinforcements to hold the entire peninsula, thus preventing the Allies from seizing southern Italy, the springboard to the Balkans.

The weakness of Kesselring's position lay in his lack of troops in southern Italy. He had only a few battalions of the *1st Parachute Division* and certain security units in the Naples-Salerno area. The *16th Panzer Division* alone could not hold both Puglia (the heel) and Calabria (the toe). Pleading for reinforcements to enable him to station a full division in each of the most threatened areas in the south--the heel, the toe, and Naples-Salerno--he,

like Roatta, regarded the heavy concentration of German troops in northern Italy as wasteful.³

Jodl and Rommel, in contrast, saw the main danger not in Allied power but in Italian treason. Since southern Italy needed stronger forces, and since the movement of forces from the north would merely aggravate the supply problem, Jodl recommended an immediate withdrawal from Sicily (this was already under way). With the *XIV* and *LXXVI Panzer Corps* concentrated on the mainland, the time would be ripe for grabbing Rome. Then Kesselring's forces would fall back northward and be absorbed by Rommel's *Army Group B*.⁴

The decision was left for Hitler. Hitler continued to insist on the liberation of Mussolini, though General Student and Captain Skorzeny were still unable to locate him. Hitler refused to permit reinforcement of south Italy, and he instructed Kesselring to keep the *3d Panzer Grenadier* and *2d Parachute Divisions* near Rome, to move the *16th Panzer Division* from the Taranto area to the Gulf of Salerno area. This left the heel unguarded, and Hitler asked Kesselring to use his influence with the Italians to induce them to assume the defense of Puglia, even though the Italians since July had sent no forces to southern Italy. Hitler refused to evacuate Sicily at once because arrangements for defending the Balkans were not yet complete. He wanted the Allies tied down in Sicily (although by this date a large part of the *XIV Panzer Corps* had already been ferried over to the mainland) as long as traffic could cross the strait. Eventually, the movement of the *XIV Panzer Corps* from Sicily to the mainland could provide a force to help defend against an Allied invasion of southern Italy.⁵

The military conference at Bologna on 15 August was as inconclusive and unsatisfactory for both Italy and Germany as was the earlier conference at Tarvis. Diplomatic representatives, as well as Keitel and Ambrosio, were absent. Jodl represented OKW and attended in company with Rommel. The presence of Kesselring and Rintelen tended only slightly to soften the brusqueness of the German attitude. Roatta, Rossi (deputy chief of *Comando Supremo*), and Zanussi (of Roatta's office) represented Italy.

When Roatta stated the need to withdraw the *Fourth Army* from France to Italy to help defend the Italian homeland, Jodl asked the direction of an anticipated attack--the Brenner frontier or southern Italy? Roatta refused to answer the question on the ground that it was tendentious, but he agreed to leave two coastal divisions and a corps headquarters in southern France. Acrimonious discussion took place on the northward movement of Italian divisions into the Brenner area. When Rommel was presented as commander of all German forces north of the Apennines, Roatta said that he had not been informed that the German troops in northern Italy were to remain there. Who would be Rommel's superior? Roatta asked. The Germans then agreed to recognize Ambrosio's supreme command on condition that the Italians recognize the German command over the forces of both nations in the Balkans and Greece. Both parties then professed to agree, but in bad faith, to reduce their forces along the Brenner frontier. As for Roatta's proposal that an additional German division be sent to Sardinia, Jodl replied that none could be spared. Jodl made no objection to moving an Italian corps from Thessaly to Albania, and three divisions from the Balkans to southern Italy.⁶

When the Italian representatives returned to Rome on 16 August, the King summoned Badoglio, Ambrosio, and Roatta to a special council at the Quirinal Palace and asked about the outcome of the conference. Roatta described the cold, suspicious, almost hostile attitude of the Germans. He ascribed their use of a detachment of SS troops as a guard during the meeting to their fear of an Italian ambush. Badoglio stated that it would be necessary to act toward the Germans with the greatest prudence for a few days more, in view of the negotiations initiated with the Allies. Otherwise, the Germans would descend upon Rome in force and seize the Italian Government. Roatta thus learned of Castellano's mission. The King reaffirmed the fundamental lines of the Badoglio government, stipulated at the time of its formation: personnel limited to military men and technicians, excluding politicians; and the prevention by force if necessary of political agitation and organization to avoid "the absurdity of judging and condemning by implication the work of the King."⁷

A few days afterward, Ambrosio suggested to Badoglio the advisability, in view of Castellano's mission, of issuing written instructions to the top commanders to inform them of Castellano's mission and to outline the course the armed forces were to pursue in case of an armistice. Badoglio disapproved. He wished to keep the secret of negotiations with the Allies limited to the smallest possible circle. He told Ambrosio, "We must not give Germany the least possibility of discovering our intentions."⁸

Roatta, because he had not been informed of Castellano's mission before he met with the Germans at Bologna, had been something of a dupe--a mere tool for negotiating with the Germans while Ambrosio himself was making contact with the Allies. Roatta could not object to the new course of the government, but he questioned whether Castellano was the most appropriate choice as emissary. In any event, Roatta wished to learn more about what was going on.⁹

Roatta found an ally in General Carboni, commander of the *Motorized Corps* protecting Rome and known for his pro-Allied sympathies. Appointed by Ambrosio director of Military Intelligence Service on 18 August in the hope that Carboni would be able to disentangle the close connection between Italian and German intelligence offices, Carboni quickly picked up the news of Castellano's departure. Though Roatta may have had some doubts as to Castellano's suitability for the mission, Carboni had none. He hated Castellano, whom he blamed, along with the Duke of Acquarone, for Carboni's having been passed over for an appointment in Badoglio's cabinet. Believing that Castellano was inadequate for the task and untrustworthy besides, Carboni urged that a more reliable envoy be sent to control Castellano and to prevent that ambitious Sicilian from trying to grab all the glory in representing Italy "in dealings with" the Allied powers. Carboni appealed to Badoglio, Acquarone, Ambrosio, and Roatta. But all apparently wished to await Castellano's report. After more than a week passed without word, they began to fear that the Germans had discovered Castellano. Roatta then took the lead in urging that a second dove of peace be released from the ark, with the same mission as the first.¹⁰

A suitable man was at hand. With no clearly defined functions in Roatta's office, General Zanussi could be spared. His absence would be no more noticeable to the Germans than Castellano's. Like Castellano, Zanussi thoroughly believed in changing sides. He had written several memorandums for his colleagues and superiors, indicating that a switch to the Allied side was the only sensible course after the overthrow of Mussolini.

Ambrosio probably wanted to keep the dispatch of a second emissary secret from Badoglio, but in the end he decided to let the Marshal know. Badoglio approved, as he had earlier assented to Castellano's mission. But because Guariglia, Minister of Foreign Affairs, would probably object to what he might consider another military usurpation of a diplomatic function, the Foreign Office was not approached for a passport.¹¹ As credentials, Carboni suggested that Zanussi take with him a British prisoner of war. Lt. Gen. Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart was selected. He was a good choice, for he was well known and easily recognized--he had lost an eye and an arm in the service of his country. If the Germans discovered him in Zanussi's company, it would be obvious that the mission concerned merely the exchange of prisoners. Lt. Galvano Lanza di Trabia, Carboni's aide, was to go along as the interpreter.¹²

On 22 August, two days before Zanussi departed from Rome, Ambassador Prunas in Lisbon informed Guariglia that Castellano had made contact with the Allies and would soon report. Expecting Castellano's quick return, Guariglia saw no reason to inform Badoglio or Ambrosio. Because Ambrosio and Badoglio had kept the Zanussi mission secret from Guariglia, they did not know that Castellano had already carried out his mission by the time Zanussi had left.

Like Castellano, Zanussi carried no written orders. Ambrosio briefed him, but his instructions were broad and vague. If Castellano had disappeared, Zanussi was to take his place. If Castellano were still in Lisbon, Zanussi was to support him in his quest to concert plans with the Allies for a war against the Germans.

Zanussi informed Roatta of Ambrosio's instructions. Carboni passed along some advice--first, Ambassador Prunas could be trusted, and second, it was important to urge the Allies not to fight their way up the Italian peninsula but to land in force north of Rome.¹³

Castellano at Lisbon

General Castellano had arrived in Lisbon at 2200, 16 August. On the next day he called on Sir Ronald Hugh Campbell, the British Ambassador. Campbell told Castellano he would inform him of developments just as soon as he, Campbell, received instructions to negotiate. A day later Campbell learned that Osborne, British Minister to the Holy See, had verified to the Foreign Office the letter of introduction he had prepared for Castellano. Sir D'Arcy had also obtained a signed statement from Badoglio to the effect that Castellano was authorized to speak for the Marshal.¹⁴

On the same day, 18 August, Maj. Gen. Walter B. Smith, the AFHQ chief of staff, and Brigadier Kenneth W. D. Strong, the AFHQ G-2--appointed by General Eisenhower to meet with Castellano--were flying to Gibraltar in civilian clothes and without titles. From there they went to Lisbon, where they arrived on the morning of 19 August. That evening, at 2200, Smith and Strong, accompanied by Mr. George F. Kennan, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, met Castellano and Montanari at the British Embassy.¹⁵

After an introduction by the British Ambassador, General Smith opened the discussion by stating that on the assumption



SECRET EMISSARIES TO LISBON (left to right) *Brigadier Kenneth W. D. Strong, Generale di Brigata Giuseppe Castellano, General Smith, and Consul Franco Montanari, an official from the Italian Foreign Office.*

that the Italian armed forces were ready to surrender, he was authorized to communicate the terms on which General Eisenhower was prepared to agree to a cessation of hostilities. The terms, Smith said, constituted a military armistice only and had to be accepted unconditionally.

Somewhat surprised by this abrupt statement, Castellano said he had come to discuss how Italy could arrange to join the United Nations in expelling the Germans from Italy.

Smith replied that he was prepared only to discuss the terms of Italy's surrender. The status of the Italian Government and Army operations against the Germans were, he declared, matters of high governmental policy to be decided by the heads of the United States and British Governments. But the Allies were ready to assist and support any Italian who obstructed the German military effort. General Smith then read the armistice conditions point by point, the short terms that had been furnished General Eisenhower on 6 August.¹⁶

To permit careful translation of the documents and an opportunity for study, the British and Americans withdrew from the room, leaving Castellano and Montanari alone.

When the group reassembled, Castellano stated that he had no power to accept the armistice but that he wanted an explanation of certain terms for his government's information. With regard to prisoners and internees, practical limitations might hinder the extent to which the Italians could prevent the movement of such personnel to Germany, though the Italians would make every effort to comply with this condition. General Smith replied that the United Nations understood the problem, but expected the Italian authorities to do their best.

When Castellano requested clarification of the clause on Italian ships and aircraft, Smith explained that this meant surrender of the fleet and of the planes, their future disposition to be decided by General Eisenhower. Castellano mentioned the lack of fuel that might prevent some warships and planes from complying. The authorities, Smith said, had to make every effort to provide sufficient fuel.

As for Allied use of Italian airfields and ports, Castellano pointed out that most of the airfields were already in German hands; those remaining under Italian control were small and scattered.

As for withdrawing Italian armed forces to Italy and moving units stationed inland in the Balkans, this might prove an impossible task. Smith assured Castellano that the Allies did not expect the impossible; certain Italian divisions, however, were near enough to the coast to permit their removal to Italy by Allied ships.

Castellano inquired about the meaning of setting up an Allied military government and also about the decision to give General Eisenhower an overriding authority over the Italian Government--would the Italian Government retain sovereignty? Smith reiterated that his instructions referred only to the terms of a military armistice. He was not empowered to discuss questions relating to the future government of Italy. He said that the Allies would establish military government over parts of Italian territory, and he observed that this was being exercised in Sicily in a fair and humane manner.

Castellano cited the danger to the person of the King. Accepting the terms might prompt the Germans to hold the King as a hostage and even to threaten his life. It was suggested that the King might leave Italy on an Italian naval vessel. Castellano was assured that the King would be treated with all due personal consideration.

The discussion then returned to the essential point in Castellano's proposal: the manner and extent of Italian military collaboration with the Allies against Germany. The Allied representatives reiterated that the clauses of the armistice were a military capitulation, not an agreement for Italy's participation in the war on the Allied side. Immediately thereafter, however, Smith read to Castellano a paragraph based on the Quebec Memorandum:

The extent to which these terms of armistice would be modified in favor of Italy would depend on how far the Italian Government and people did in fact aid the United Nations against Germany during the remainder of the war, but that wherever Italian Forces or Italians fight the Germans, destroy German property or hamper German movements they will be given all possible support by the forces of the United Nations.

He then asked Castellano to weigh carefully the significance of the paragraph and explained that the Allied terms had been drawn up by General Eisenhower and approved by the Allied governments without considering the possibility of active Italian participation in the war against Germany. As President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had declared at Quebec, with Stalin's approval, the conditions enforced would be modified to Italy's advantage in proportion to the sum total of Italy's participation in the war. Without using the unconditional surrender phrase, without modifying the impression demanded by the predominant Allied powers, Smith skillfully used the Quebec telegram as an inducement to secure Italian capitulation.¹⁷

Castellano returned to the point he had emphasized to Hoare in Madrid: the Italian Government, without effective aid from the Anglo-Americans, was unable to turn against the Germans. If Italy accepted and put into effect the armistice terms, the Germans would counter with immediate reprisals. Italy was an occupied country, and Italians were alarmed by the degree of control already exercised by the Germans. Nor was Castellano exaggerating, he said, in order to try to convince the Allies to accept his proposal to coordinate military plans. Though the *Luftwaffe* was relatively weak, it could wreak great damage on Italy. The strength of the German Army was impressive. The war, Castellano believed, would continue for some time because the Germans had not used up their reserves

in their recent Russian operations. Castellano hated the Germans because of their abominable behavior toward Italian troops in Russia. Each time Kesselring visited Ambrosio, it was an occasion for a row. Despite the fact that the Italian secret services worked closely with German intelligence, and despite the fact that many pro-German officers were in the Italian Army, including Roatta, Castellano believed that Badoglio was quite capable of directing policy as the situation required.

When Castellano again cited the German threat to use gas, the Allied representatives pointed out the folly of such an act because the Allies would themselves counter with gas. In any event, the effect of a few days' vindictive action by the Germans would be far less serious for Italy than a long war of attrition.

Stating that he now fully understood both the terms of the armistice and the supplementary information derived from the Quebec telegram, Castellano added that he was not authorized to accept the terms but would submit them to his government. He said that it would be useful for the Italian Government to know when or where the Allies planned to invade the mainland because German countermeasures would probably make it necessary for at least part of the government to leave Rome simultaneously with the armistice announcement. It was in the Allied interest, he believed, to prevent capture of that government which, he again insisted, wanted to reach an understanding. General Smith replied that Castellano, as a soldier, would understand why it was impossible to reveal Allied plans in detail. Castellano therefore repeated that he would limit his function to that of acting as bearer of the Allied terms to his government.

They then discussed arrangements for a direct channel of communication, and it was proposed that if Badoglio should accept the terms, General Eisenhower would announce the armistice five or six hours before the main Allied landing on the Italian mainland. Castellano objected vigorously. Such short notice, he declared, would not allow his government enough time to prepare for the landing. He asked for longer notice, preferably two weeks. Smith thought a longer advance notice might be possible, and he assured Castellano that he would present the Italian views to General Eisenhower. But Smith maintained the point that public announcement of the armistice would have to precede the principal Allied landing by a few hours only.

All agreed that the Italian Government was to signify its acceptance of the armistice by a radio message. If it proved impossible for the Italians to do so directly, the government was to send a message to the British Minister at the Holy See as follows: *"Il Governo italiano protesta contro il ritardo nella comunicazione delle liste complete dei nomi dei prigionieri catturati in Sicilia."* (The Italian Government protests against the delay in the communication of the complete list of names of Italian prisoners captured in Sicily.)

The Italian Government was to communicate its acceptance by 28 August. If no reply came by 30 August, the Allies would assume that the terms had been refused. Acceptance of the armistice terms meant also acceptance of the method of announcement as then determined--a radio announcement by General Eisenhower with five or six hours preliminary warning to Italy. For a secret channel of communication with AFHQ, Castellano was to receive a portable radio, a code, and instructions on their use. All communications from the Italian Government to AFHQ were to be in the Italian language. In case of acceptance, Castellano was to meet again with General Eisenhower's representatives in Sicily, and the precise hour

of the meeting and the course of Castellano's flight to Sicily was stipulated: from Rome at 0700, 31 August, to reach Termini Imerese shortly before 0900.

After copies of the armistice terms and of the AFHQ memorandum based on the CCS directive were furnished to Castellano, Ambassador Campbell and Mr. Kennan withdrew and the discussion turned to purely military matters. Brigadier Strong began to question Castellano on German troop dispositions, first in general, then in detail. Castellano offered only general information until he observed Strong's map, which had accurate information on it. Castellano then gave detailed unit locations, hoping thus, as he stated later, to show his good faith. Strong asked no questions about Italian units, but Castellano noted that the AFHQ map showed them quite as correctly as the maps of the Operations Section of *Comando Supremo*.

Castellano estimated the total German military strength in Italy as 400,000 men. More troops could come from France. The Germans intended to defend on a line from Genoa to Ravenna and to fall back, if necessary, to the Po. They also planned to hold Sardinia and Corsica.

Castellano painted a pitiful picture of the Italian armed forces. The fleet had enough oil for only one action. The air force was very short of matériel, though the fighter elements were quite good. All airfields except a few small ones were under German control. The Italian Army was short of gasoline, entirely dependent on the Germans for fuel, very short of antitank guns, antitank ammunition, and even of such items as boots. If Italy detached itself from the German alliance, the nation would require supplies of wheat and coal from the Allies.

The Italian general urged the Leghorn area as the best place for an Allied landing. German lines of communication were extremely vulnerable, particularly along the Brenner route, and Castellano recommended attacking the Brenner Pass. The Italians planned to withdraw their troops from Corsica, he explained, but not from Sardinia. At the Bologna conference of 15 August, Roatta had discussed plans for defending Italy with Rommel and Jodl, but, of course, Castellano was ignorant of the results.

Though a number of German commanders wished to get rid of Hitler, loyalty to the Fuehrer was so widespread throughout the armed forces, Castellano believed, that overthrow appeared unlikely. The Gestapo was an important factor in preventing the collapse of German morale.

In conclusion, Castellano mentioned his part in Mussolini's downfall--how Grandi had been induced to take the lead in the Fascist Grand Council only to be double-crossed when Badoglio was named Mussolini's successor. On the whole, Castellano made a favorable impression. He seemed earnest and sincere, and he had an intense hatred of the Germans. Yet the Allied representatives wondered why he had neither credentials nor formal written instructions from Badoglio. Nor was Allied confidence in the new Italian regime enhanced by Castellano's disquisitions on honor, peculiar accompaniment to his description of the double-cross of Grandi and the idea of turning against Germany and jumping into the Allied camp.¹⁸

The conference lasted all night, breaking up at 0700, 20 August, nine hours after it had started. Smith shook hands with Castellano and expressed the hope that their meeting would prove to be the beginning of a new collaboration between their countries. Smith and Strong then flew back to Algiers and AFHQ. Castellano and Montanari remained in Lisbon to await the arrival of the Italian Ambassador to Chile, whose ship was several days late.

After reflecting on the conference, Castellano realized that the situation was far different from that imagined in Rome at the time of his departure. He and Ambrosio had believed that Italy was still in a position to bargain. Actually, it was too late. They had thought that the British and Americans would be receptive to the proposal that Italy switch sides. Allied suspicion and distrust came as a sobering shock. Castellano had, however, been able to avoid the humiliating phrase, "unconditional surrender." And the Quebec telegram offered assurance that the terms of capitulation would be modified in Italy's favor if the government and people rendered effective aid to the Allies. Castellano believed that the Allied invasion of the Italian mainland would be short and successful because of Allied air superiority.

He had great faith in Anglo-American generosity.

On the following morning, 21 August, Castellano presented himself at the Italian legation in Lisbon, where D'Ajeta was astonished to see him. D'Ajeta took him immediately to Prunas, the Italian Minister, who could not conceal his disappointment that such important negotiations had taken place without his knowledge and participation. Prunas on 22 August sent two cables to Guariglia and informed him that Castellano had made contact with the Allies and would soon report. The British Embassy delivered to Montanari the radio and code for future communications. On Ambassador Campbell's advice, Castellano, who had been thinking of returning to Rome by plane, took his place among the party of officials who left Lisbon by train on 23 August. The Italian Ambassador to Chile carried Castellano's papers across French territory, restored them at the Italian frontier. Reaching Rome on the morning of 27 August, Castellano made haste to report to his superior.¹⁹

Zanussi's Negotiations in Lisbon and Algiers

Three days earlier, the second Italian emissary, General Zanussi, together with General de Wiart, had arrived in Madrid. More fortunate than Castellano, Zanussi traveled by plane. The next morning, 25 August, he was in Lisbon. He promptly got in touch with Prunas, who was not overjoyed to see him. Prunas cautioned Zanussi to be on his guard, not only against German spies, but also against some members of the Italian legation. Though Zanussi learned that Castellano has been successful in meeting members of General Eisenhower's staff, and was even then on his way back to Rome, he asked to see the British Ambassador. Sir Ronald replied through an intermediary, since he saw no reason why he should meet another Italian general. The Allied terms were already in Castellano's hands. Still, he asked Zanussi to remain in Lisbon until he, the Ambassador, was certain that there was no message for him. General Carton de Wiart, the British "prisoner-of-war," offered to return to Rome with Zanussi since it began to appear that Zanussi had come on a futile mission.²⁰

At Quebec on 26 August, Churchill and Roosevelt had at last agreed on the long terms for Italy. The Foreign Office therefore instructed Campbell to present the comprehensive document to Zanussi and to explain that it embodied both the short terms, already in Castellano's possession, and the political and economic terms that Castellano had been told to expect. He was also to suggest that Zanussi fly back to Rome immediately with the text of the long terms.²¹

Accordingly, on the morning of 27 August, Campbell met Zanussi and gave him the long terms. Zanussi immediately noticed the absence of reference to Italian military co-operation with the Allies, and asked why no mention of this had been made. Campbell read the Quebec telegram to him; this at least left the door open for eventual Italo-Allied co-operation.

Zanussi and his interpreter retired to their hotel to study the comprehensive conditions of capitulation.²²

The British Government had acted with extraordinary speed in getting the text of the long terms into Zanussi's hands. So fast had the government acted that Ambassador Campbell at Lisbon had the comprehensive document before AFHQ received it. When Eisenhower's headquarters later that day received the document, Allied commanders became thoroughly alarmed. The main invasion of the Italian mainland, planned for the Salerno area, was less than two weeks away. It was a risky operation, particularly because the rate of German reinforcement was seriously changing the estimates on which the landing plan had been based. The success of the operation, it seemed, was becoming increasingly dependent on getting the Italian Government to surrender beforehand. Not only did Italian opposition have to be eliminated before the landing, but Italian assistance during the critical period of getting troops ashore now appeared necessary. Even Eisenhower had doubts that Castellano would be able to persuade the Italian monarch and high command to accept surrender on the conditions of the short terms; now the CCS had insisted on introducing the long terms with the harsh initial statement of unconditional surrender and had ordered their use in all additional negotiations with Badoglio.

General Eisenhower therefore appealed to the Joint Chiefs for some leeway. The President relented, and Eisenhower received authorization to proceed with the surrender negotiations on the basis of the short military terms. After getting the Italians to accept and sign this document, Eisenhower could submit the comprehensive paper to the Italian Government.²³

Anxiety still persisted at AFHQ, however. The Allied commanders hoped to receive some sort of message from Castellano re-establishing contact with the Italian Government. Presumably Zanussi was a representative of Roatta, who was believed to have strong pro-German tendencies. Castellano had told Smith and Strong at Lisbon that Roatta had not been taken into the confidence of the Badoglio government, though Castellano had added that he presumed Roatta, as a soldier, would loyally follow the government if it shifted to the Allied side. Zanussi had no credentials whatsoever, whereas Castellano at least had brought a letter of introduction from Osborne. Did the two emissaries represent two distinct factions within the Italian Government, one in close co-operation with the Germans? Or was the Zanussi mission bona fide, and were Roatta and Ambrosio working semi-independently toward the same end?²⁴

What General Smith feared most was that Zanussi would make immediate use of the diplomatic channels of the Lisbon Embassy to inform Roatta of the long terms and thereby nullify Castellano's negotiations. Smith therefore made arrangements to get Zanussi out of the hands of the diplomatists and into military hands before Zanussi could do any damage. While Carton de Wiart was kept out of sight and later returned to London, Zanussi was invited to visit the Allied camp. Zanussi accepted. Relieved of his copy of the long terms, and flown first to Gibraltar under the assumed name of Pierre Henri Lamartine, Zanussi, accompanied by his interpreter, departed Gibraltar in the early afternoon of 28 August; to his surprise he found himself that evening at Algiers.²⁵

Castellano later asserted that General Eisenhower at first planned to admit the Italian armed forces to full collaboration with the Allies and that Eisenhower was about to explain his plans in full when Zanussi's intervention rendered AFHQ suspicious, thereby inhibiting the Allies from divulging their plans to Castellano. Castellano also believed that AFHQ contemplated shooting Zanussi as a spy. But this was mere speculation; at no time did Eisenhower and Smith consider revealing Allied plans to Castellano, and they had no thought of shooting Zanussi. General Smith was prepared to hold Zanussi in case he turned out to be, under questioning, something other than a genuine emissary.²⁶

During several conferences with General Smith, Brigadier Strong, and Mr. Robert D. Murphy, General Eisenhower's U.S. political adviser, Zanussi gave considerable information about the German forces in Italy, information that checked quite well against that obtained from other sources. He did not, however, divulge the Italian order of battle, though he convinced the Allied officers that he was genuine and sincere in his efforts to arrange the armistice. As "Chief of Staff of Roatta," he was in a position to know the military situation, and he seemed as thoroughly persuaded as Castellano of the necessity for Italy to make an arrangement with the Allies. Like Castellano, Zanussi labored under the incubus of the German threat to overthrow the Badoglio government and occupy Italy.

Zanussi saw five possible developments, each of which made it essential to act in concert with the Allies: (1) if Germany took the initiative and attacked the Badoglio government, it would be in the interest of the Allies and the Italians to join forces and prevent the return of fascism or the advent of communism in Italy; (2) though the Italians did not favor an Allied attack on Germany through the Italian mainland, a campaign requiring an estimated fifteen to twenty divisions, the Italians wanted their armed forces to have a specific role in any such campaign; (3) if the Allies directed their attack into the Balkans, the Italians wished to co-operate; (4) if the Allies avoided the Italian mainland and occupied Sardinia and Corsica, they should make no request for direct Italian assistance, for in that case the Germans would immediately occupy Italy; (5) if the Allies bypassed Italy and attacked the Germans on the Continent beyond Italy's borders, the Germans might withdraw some divisions from Italy, which would make it possible for Italy to fight the Germans unaided.

Zanussi's exposition indicated careful consideration of Italy's plight and the conclusion that Italy had no way out except by joining forces with the Allies. He made no objection to the specific clauses of the terms--military, political, or economic--demanded by the Allies, but he was certain that Badoglio would object strenuously to the formula of unconditional surrender as stated in the preamble and in the initial article of the long terms. Could not the Allies secure everything they wished, he asked, without imposing this unnecessary

indignity, which might even result in a refusal of the armistice by the Badoglio government?²⁷

Zanussi painted a gloomy picture of the Italian political situation--the government was dominated by old men who were tainted by long association with the Fascist regime and who were incapable of vigorous action. He compared Badoglio to Marshal Henri Pétain, and asked how long the Germans would allow Italy any freedom whatsoever. Badoglio's slowness, he said, had given the Germans time to occupy the country. At any moment the Germans might decide to oust Badoglio and set up a Quisling government under Farinacci. The only hope, according to Zanussi, was in the younger Army officers, all of whom, he declared, were fed up with the Germans and would welcome collaboration with the Allies. He insisted that the Italians would defend Rome at all costs if the Germans tried to seize control, and he cited the movement of five or six Italian divisions into positions from which they could protect the capital. Although these troops had no written orders, Mussolini's overthrow told them what was expected of them.

Assertions that Rome would be defended were not altogether consistent with Zanussi's expressions of fear for the safety of the members of the government. He and his friends, he said, "for months have given much study and thought to these eventualities [and] have considered the means necessary to effect the escape from German control of the Government and King." These old men, he said, were rather helpless in their expectation of being rescued by the Allies, and Zanussi felt that some scheme to rescue them ought to be planned. If the Allied landing on the mainland would not be able, in conjunction with the Italian Army, to protect Rome, the King and government leaders might escape on a naval vessel from La Spezia to Sardinia. There, he said, "the four Italian divisions could easily overcome the German division present, especially if the Allies could provide a little support." Zanussi regarded Ambrosio as the only man who could possibly replace Badoglio, though he admitted that the chief of *Comando Supremo* lacked the marshal's prestige.

The Italian Government, Zanussi explained, was not only obsessed by fears for its own immediate safety but greatly alarmed that the German High Command, realizing that the war had been lost, might throw Germany into the arms of the Soviet Union. In this case, Italy, in the Anglo-American camp, would face a Russo-German combination at its front door with Britain and America far away. Zanussi stated his opinion that the House of Savoy had to be preserved to avert chaos in Italy; the dynasty, he said, had been a stabilizing influence for six centuries.²⁸

As a result of these conversations with Zanussi, General Eisenhower decided to permit Zanussi's interpreter, Lt. Galvano Lanza, to return to Italy with a message from Zanussi to Ambrosio--a letter urging the Italian Government to accept immediately the military terms of the armistice; indicating that the clauses of the long terms were relatively unimportant as compared to the main issue of how much practical assistance Italy would give the Allies against Germany; and recommending that the Italian Government trust the good faith of the Allies and send Castellano to Sicily in accordance with the agreement reached in Lisbon.

On 29 August Lanza was to take the letter to Sicily, and there he was to be transferred to an Italian plane for the remainder of the journey to Rome. The text of the long terms, which Zanussi had received in Lisbon, was not entrusted to Lanza, for AFHQ, besides having no

official confirmation of Zanussi's mission, did not wish to run the risk of having the document fall into German hands. Zanussi, therefore, retained his copy of the long terms, which had been returned to him.

In reporting his action, General Eisenhower urged the American and British Governments to delay communicating the text of the long terms to the other United Nations governments. He expressed astonishment at the thought of a public armistice ceremony in the Compiègne tradition when negotiations were still not only tenuous and delicate but also being conducted with emissaries who had come at great risk to themselves and to the members of the Italian Government.²⁹

As increasing information on the buildup of German forces in Italy came to AFHQ's attention, it became increasingly necessary, it seemed to Eisenhower, to have the Italian surrender as a condition essential for the success of AVALANCHE, the projected invasion of Italy at Salerno. The co-operation of Italian forces, even though those forces had little fighting power, could well prove the difference between defeat and success and could possibly assure a rapid advance up the Italian mainland.

Thoughts in Rome

In Rome, meanwhile, Castellano had returned on the morning of 27 August, just three days after Zanussi's departure. Finding Ambrosio temporarily gone from the capital, Castellano spoke briefly with Ambrosio's deputy, General Rossi, and arranged to see Marshal Badoglio. Guariglia and Rossi were also present to hear Castellano report on the Lisbon meeting.

When Castellano explained that the Allies insisted on announcing the armistice at their own discretion in order to have it coincide with their main landing on Italy, Guariglia was much upset. Declaring that Castellano had not been authorized to state Italy's intention to attack the German forces--a statement Castellano countered by saying that he had received no precise instructions--Guariglia advocated a different approach. Since it appeared that the Allies intended to invade the Italian mainland, the government should wait until after the landing had been made and the Allies were within striking distance of Rome. At that time, when the Allies were in position to rescue the Italian Government, and only then should the Italian Government request an armistice. Badoglio listened to all that was said, but said nothing himself. At the end of the meeting, Badoglio took Castellano's documents of the Lisbon conference and consigned them to Guariglia.³⁰

Later that day Castellano managed to get in touch with Ambrosio by telephone. Ambrosio promised to return to Rome on the next day. At *Comando Supremo*, Castellano learned that Zanussi had been sent to Portugal to make contact with the Allies. This development disturbed him because he feared it would complicate the negotiations. Furthermore, he was not reassured by the lack of frankness on the part of those who had sent Zanussi--Roatta denied his knowledge of the affair, as did Carboni.

Ambrosio, on the morning of 28 August, was in Rome as promised, and he listened to Castellano's account. Ambrosio then took Castellano and Carboni to Badoglio's office,

where he found Guariglia. The Minister of Foreign Affairs again declared that Castellano had had no authorization to offer Italian military collaboration, and he protested once more against agreeing to announce the armistice at the time of the Allied invasion. In any case, Guariglia considered the negotiations to be essentially political. On that basis, he argued, his ministry alone should conduct diplomatic negotiations. Ambrosio and Carboni advocated continuing the negotiations through Castellano. No decision was reached.

A few hours later Guariglia prepared a memorandum as a counterproposal to the Allies. While not objecting to any of the Allied terms, Guariglia's memorandum stressed the fact that Italy was unable alone to separate from the Germans. Consequently, it was essential that the Allies land before the armistice and in sufficient force to guarantee the safety of the Italian Government against German reaction.

When Ambrosio and Castellano studied Guariglia's proposal, Castellano, though agreeing with Guariglia's analysis, said that he had already explained the situation and the Italian position to the Allied generals at Lisbon. The decision, therefore, rested with the Italian Government.

Ambrosio and Castellano saw Badoglio again on 29 August. Badoglio said that he would have to consult with the King before reaching a decision. Badoglio, Ambrosio, and Guariglia then arranged for an audience. When they arrived at the Quirinal Palace, they met Acquarone, who asked Ambrosio for a detailed account of Castellano's mission and for a copy of the Allied terms. Acquarone took these to the King.

Acquarone returned to tell the three who waited that before the King gave the final word, Badoglio, as Head of Government, should reach a decision and suggest a definite course of action. The three men discussed the matter but had reached no decision when the King received them for a brief audience.

Immediately after seeing the King, Ambrosio called Castellano and asked how a reply could be sent to the Allies, a reply which would not refuse the armistice and at the same time not accept the conditions stipulated at Lisbon. The King and his advisers did not, apparently, object to the terms of the armistice, but they feared that if they surrendered without knowing where, when, and in what strength the Allies would land, they would expose themselves to capture by the Germans--particularly if the Allies were not planning to land in strength near Rome.

Castellano replied that the Allies demanded a yes or no answer. The message could be sent through Osborne (in the Vatican) or by means of the radio he had brought from Lisbon.

After speaking briefly with Guariglia and Ambrosio once more, Badoglio departed, leaving to the others the decision on how to arrange the details of the message.

After further discussion with Guariglia, Ambrosio called Castellano again. Admitting that the Allies in Lisbon had clarified all points, Ambrosio nevertheless felt it essential to secure an agreement that the proclamation of the armistice would be made only after the Allies had landed in force. He directed Castellano to encode and transmit a message to the Allies to embody this request.

Castellano did not dispatch the message. For at that moment Carboni came in with news that he had word from Zanussi, believed to be in Lisbon (though in actuality Zanussi was in Algiers). Zanussi said he had documents of the greatest importance and requested that a plane be sent to the Boccadifalco airfield near Palermo, Sicily, in order to bring those documents to Rome. Though it was not clear how Zanussi in Lisbon could have gotten papers to Sicily, Castellano dispatched a plane as requested, then informed the King and Badoglio of his action.³¹

The plane dispatched by Castellano reached Palermo safely, picked up Lanza, and returned to Rome the same day, 29 August. But Lanza carried only two letters, one to Ambrosio recommending acceptance of the armistice conditions as explained to Castellano, the other to Carboni urging him to support those who were trying to arrange an armistice. Since Zanussi had not wired the text of the long terms from Lisbon, Badoglio and his advisers remained in ignorance of it.³²

Summoning Ambrosio, Guariglia, and Castellano to him on the morning of 30 August, Badoglio gave Castellano a revised version of the Guariglia memorandum as his written instructions. Castellano was to make contact with the Allies again and present the following points. If Italy had still enjoyed liberty of political and military action, the government would have requested an armistice immediately and accepted the conditions offered. But Italy was not able to do this at once because the Italian military forces in contact with the German forces inside and outside Italy were inferior to these forces. Unable to withstand a collision with the Germans, the Italian forces would be crushed in a very brief time. The whole country, but Rome above all, would be exposed to German reprisal. Since the Germans intended, at whatever cost, to fight in Italy, Italy was bound to become a second Poland. Consequently, Italy was able to request an armistice only when, because of landings by the Allies with sufficient forces and at appropriate places, the conditions were changed, or when the Allies were in a position to change the military situation in Europe.

Marshall Badoglio canceled the penultimate paragraph of the memorandum. In its stead he wrote out with pencil on a piece of paper which he gave to Castellano the following points as guidelines for his discussion with the Allied generals:

1. Report the memorandum.
2. In order not to be overwhelmed before the English [*sic*] are able to make their action felt, we cannot declare our acceptance of the armistice except after landings have taken place of at least 15 divisions, with the greater part of them between Civitavecchia and La Spezia.
3. We will be able to place at their disposition the following airfields . . .
4. The fleet goes to Maddalena; learn the approximate period in order that preparations may be made.
5. Protection of the Vatican.
6. The king, the heir apparent, the queen, the government and the diplomatic corps remain at Rome.
7. The question of prisoners.

Badoglio instructed Castellano to indicate the airfields still in Italian hands and on which Allied planes might land. Castellano was to explain that the German authorities had asked repeatedly about the status of Allied prisoners, and that the Italian Government had put off

the Germans with various excuses. But German insistence made further delay difficult, if not impossible.

Happy at last to have a piece of paper and precise instructions, Castellano made haste to confirm, by means of his secret radio, his appointment with the Allied generals.³³

Footnotes

- [1](#). Situation appreciation by Roatta of 11 Aug 43, as forwarded by Rintelen, *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 13 Aug 43. Cf. Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 261.
- [2](#). *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 12 Aug 43; Simoni, *Berlino, Ambasciata*, pp. 399-400.
- [3](#). Kesselring's estimate of the situation, 12 Aug 43, in *OKH/Op. Abt., Westl. Mittelmeer, Chefs., 19.V.43-II.VII.44* (H 22/290).
- [4](#). Addendum by Jodl to Kesselring's situation estimate; see also, *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 13 Aug 43.
- [5](#). *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 13 and 14 Aug 43.
- [6](#). *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 15 Aug 43; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 385-401; Rintelen, *Mussolini als Bundesgenosse*, pp. 242-45; Rommel, *Private KTB*, 9 May-Sep 43, entry for 15 Aug and appended rpt.
- [7](#). Mussolini, *Storia di un anno*, p. 25; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 77; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 294; Monelli, *Roma 1943*, pp. 298-99.
- [8](#). Monelli, *Roma 1943*, p. 299; MS #P-058, Project 46, 1 Feb-8 Sep 43, Question 11.
- [9](#). Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 75.
- [10](#). Giacomo Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma: Verità e menzogne* (Rome: Donatello de Luigi, 1945), pp. 18, 23-24; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 82; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 294-95.
- [11](#). Guariglia, *Ricordi*, p. 671.
- [12](#). *Happy Odyssey: The Memoirs of Lieutenant General Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart* (London: Cape Publishers, 1950), pp. 225-29; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 83-85; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 295-96.
- [13](#). Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 87.
- [14](#). Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 98; copy of Telg, Foreign Office to Lisbon, 18 Aug 43, *Capitulation of Italy*, p. 89.
- [15](#). The conference is described in: Minutes of a conference held at the residence of the British Ambassador at Lisbon on August 18, 1943 at 10 P.M., *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 85-88. These are condensed minutes, not a verbatim record. They were telegraphed to Washington and London in Telg, NAF 334, 21 Aug 43, *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 112-17. The second part of the conference, which concerned purely military matters, is summarized in Telg, Eisenhower to Marshall, NAF 335, 21 Aug 43, *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 126-27.

At the end of the conference, Castellano was handed a copy of the minutes and asked to check them for accuracy; it appears in translation in his *Come firmai* as Appendix I, pages 211-15 (his résumé of the military discussions is in pages 215-18); in addition, he gives his account of the conference which in some points supplements the minutes (pages 102-09).

The copy of the minutes in Capitulation of Italy (pages 85-88) and NAF 334 dates the conference 18 August, which is incorrect. Smith and Strong arrived in Lisbon only on the morning of 19 August. The correct date is the 19th as given by Castellano, and by Churchill in a speech to the House of Commons on 21 September 1943.

[16.](#) See [Appendix C](#) for the text of the short terms. Clause 3 now read: "All prisoners or internees of the United Nations to be immediately turned over to the Allied Commander-in-Chief, and none of these may *now or at any time be evacuated to Germany.*" On instruction from President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill the words indicated by italics were substituted for the original phrase, "from the beginning of the negotiations," in order to avoid any possible inference that they were "negotiating" with the Badoglio government. (Telg, USFOR to AFHQ, repeated to Lisbon, No. 4522, 19 Aug 42.)

[17.](#) Ambassador Campbell, a professional diplomatist, was much impressed with the skill displayed by General Smith as a negotiator. See Interv, Smyth with Mr. George F. Kennan, 2 Jan 47.

[18.](#) See Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 336, 22 Aug 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 126-27; Interv, Smyth with Ambassador Walter B. Smith, 13 May 47, and with Brigadier Kenneth D. Strong, 29 Oct 47.

[19.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 116-25.

[20.](#) Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 91-94; Telg 1721, 26 Aug 43, Campbell to Foreign Office, and Telg 1723, Campbell to Foreign Office, 26 Aug 43, both in OPD Exec 2, item 5, tab 50; Carton de Wiart, *Happy Odyssey*, p. 230.

[21.](#) Telg 1352, Deputy Prime Minister to Campbell, 26 Aug 43. OPD Exec 2, item 5, tab 50. See also, [pp. 448-50.](#)

[22.](#) Telg, 27 Aug 43, British Embassy at Lisbon to Foreign Office, OPD Exec 2, item 5, tab 53; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 91-94.

[23.](#) Telg, CCS to Eisenhower, FAN 203, 27 Aug 43, with text of long terms; Telg, Eisenhower to CCS, NAF 342, 28 Aug 43; and Telg 6398, AGWAR to Eisenhower, 29 Aug 43, all in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 137, 160-64.

[24.](#) Telg, Eisenhower to CCS, NAF 342, 28 Aug 43, and Telg, Eisenhower to Lt Gen Sir Noel Mason-MacFarlane, 28 Aug 43, both in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 160-64.

[25.](#) Carton de Wiart, *Happy Odyssey*, p. 231; Interv with Smith, 13 May 47; Telg 6990, AFHQ to Gibraltar, 28 Aug 43, and Telg 25227, Gibraltar to Lisbon, repeated to AFHQ, 28 Aug 43, both in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 156-57. Cf. Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 90-99.

[26.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 174-75; Interv with Smith, 13 May 47.

[27.](#) Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 344, 30 Aug 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 166-71; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 101-08.

[28.](#) Telgs W-8750 and W-8751, FREEDOM to AGWAR, 30 Aug 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 179-84.

[29.](#) Telg W-8726, AFHQ to AGWAR, 30 Aug 43. Capitulation of Italy, pp. 175-76.

[30.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 125-26; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, p. 101; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, pp. 663-65.

[31.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 126-30; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, pp. 672-74. Castellano's is the only account in detail. There is no mention of particulars by Badoglio (*Memorie e documenti*, page 101), and by Rossi (*Come arrivammo*, pages 126-27). Carboni's account (*L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pages 24-25) is quite fantastic

and in glaring contradiction to all the other evidence. It is testimony only of Carboni's violent hatred of Castellano.

[32](#). Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 130; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 110.

[33](#). Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 130-32. Cf. Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, p. 101; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, p. 675.

Chapter XXIV

The Italian Decision

ACHSE

What of Italian-German relations? After the Bologna conference of 15 August, the relations between the Axis partners continued to be as unsatisfactory as before. The only agreements reached had been to build German units in southern Italy up to strength and to reduce the forces of both nations in the Brenner area. From the German point of view, no satisfactory solution to the problem of command had been made, and no suitable agreement reached on the distribution of forces to defend against Allied invasion. The Germans remained suspicious of Italy's intentions.¹

The Italian declaration of Rome as an open city the day before seemed to be related in some fashion to peace moves, and of course boded no good for the Germans. OKW realized that the Allies would recognize the status of Rome as an open city only if all movements of troops and war materials through the city ceased. Because traffic to southern Italy could not bypass the capital, however, the Germans had no way of supplying their forces in southern Italy except through Rome.²

German anxiety lessened somewhat two days after the Bologna conference because on 17 August the evacuation of Sicily was completed. With some 40,000 German troops, plus their weapons and vehicles, withdrawn from Sicily to southern Italy, the Germans no longer had to suffer the fear that had beset them ever since the overthrow of Mussolini--that an Allied landing in Calabria would cut off the *XIV Panzer Corps* in Sicily. After the units that had fought on the island had had some rest and enough time to make up deficiencies in matériel, the six divisions south of Rome would be a strong bulwark against an Allied invasion in the south. On that same day, 17 August, Rommel and his *Army Group B* took command of all the German formations in northern Italy; Rommel moved his headquarters from Munich to Garda, not far from the Brenner-Verona railway.³

Hitler and OKW, for their part, had no plans to defend Italy south of Rome. They did not consider the task feasible without Italian aid, and Hitler still felt intuitively certain of the eventual capitulation of the Badoglio government to the Allies. Accordingly, all *Army Group B* unit commanders were warned to be ready to act against the Italians should the political situation change. The *71st Infantry Division* was to occupy the city of Ljubljana and the Ljubljana-Tarvis pass.

German forces were to defend permanently the Pisa-Arezzo-Ancona line along the southern slopes of the northern Apennines.⁴

A new headquarters, the *Tenth Army*, would be activated in southern Italy to control the *XIV* and *LXXVI Panzer Corps*, and General der Panzertruppen Heinrich von Vietinghoff genannt Scheel was nominated commanding general on 8 August. As Hitler explained to Vietinghoff on 17 August, when the latter had been summoned to the Fuehrer's headquarters, "I have clear proof that Badoglio is already negotiating an armistice with the Allies." It was possible, Hitler said, that Italian officers were not informed. Hitler believed that the Allies would soon invade the Italian mainland with large forces. The first mission

of the *Tenth Army* after activation, therefore, would be to withdraw the German divisions in southern Italy as rapidly as possible to the area southeast of Rome. Vietinghoff was to be careful not to give the Italians any excuse for getting out of the war, and he was therefore not to withdraw prematurely. During the withdrawal toward Rome, Vietinghoff was to operate under Kesselring's *OB SUEDE*. After the withdrawal to central Italy and the elimination of Kesselring's command, *Tenth Army* was to come under Rommel's *Army Group B*.⁵

As for Kesselring, the signal for the start of a German withdrawal from south Italy would be the seizure of Rome. This Kesselring was to achieve with the *3d Panzer Grenadier* and *2d Parachute Divisions*. But if Skorzeny located and liberated Mussolini, Kesselring was to act independently of Allied action: he would seize Rome, restore Mussolini to power, re-establish fascism, and induce loyal Fascist elements to co-operate with the Germans in defending northern Italy.⁶

About this same time, 17 August, Skorzeny learned that Mussolini, guarded by about 150 *carabinieri*, was being held on the Sardinian island of Maddalena. While he was preparing to raid Maddalena and liberate Mussolini, Skorzeny suddenly received orders from OKW to execute a parachute drop on a small island near Elba. There, OKW had been informed, Mussolini was being held. But the Italian secret service had planted this information, and Mussolini was, in reality, at Maddalena. Only after a personal appeal to the Fuehrer did Skorzeny get OKW's order revoked. This, however, delayed Skorzeny's preparations, and when his plans for the Maddalena raid were completed ten days later, on 27 August, he learned that Mussolini had again been moved.⁷

Kesselring, inclined to believe the repeated declarations of loyalty to the alliance made by Badoglio, Ambrosio, and others, continued to view the problem of defending Italy differently from either Hitler, Rommel, or Jodl. Though he recognized the low combat effectiveness of the Italian units, he wished to gain as much as possible from Italian co-operation.

Along with Rintelen, he feared that Hitler's and Rommel's tactless and suspicious attitude might drive the Italians into needless overt hostility.⁸

Despite Kesselring's Italophile views, OKW activated Vietinghoff's *Tenth Army* headquarters on 22 August. Viewing the Naples-Salerno area as the one most immediately threatened, OKW gave Vietinghoff three missions: to concentrate as quickly as possible in the Naples-Salerno area a strong group of three mobile divisions, plus all units lacking organic transportation; to protect the Foggia airfields with part of the *1st Parachute Division*; and to oppose strongly any Allied landing in the Naples-Salerno area, but to institute only a delaying action against an invasion of Calabria south of the Castrovillari neck.⁹

The day after *Tenth Army* activation, Vietinghoff made a formal call on General Arisio, commander of the Italian *Seventh Army* stationed in southern Italy. The two agreed that the six German divisions in southern Italy were to be under Vietinghoff's command and not under Arisio's, as before. Arisio also agreed that his Italian units would form the first line of defense along the coast, leaving the more mobile German divisions to constitute a reserve for counterattack purposes. In the event of an Allied landing, and in conformity with

German principles, the stronger force would assume command of all the troops within the sector where the reserve force was committed. The two generals also agreed on maintaining close liaison and co-operation.¹⁰

To OKW Sardinia also seemed endangered, but the threat of an Italian capitulation to the Allies inhibited the Germans from sending additional troops to reinforce the *90th Panzer Grenadier Division* and the six fortress battalions on the island. Considering a protracted defense impossible, the Germans prepared to evacuate Sardinia by way of Corsica and Elba. But the troops were not to be evacuated unless the Italians failed to co-operate or unless developments on the Italian mainland, for example an Allied invasion of the coast near Rome, threatened to cut off the Germans.¹¹

Kesselring, by contrast, believed Sardinia in greater danger than the Naples-Salerno area. Flying to Hitler's headquarters on 22 August, he urged that additional forces be moved to Sardinia, for the troops withdrawn from Sicily, he reasoned, gave the Naples-Salerno area sufficient protection. In effect, Kesselring was supporting a request by *Comando Supremo* for an additional German division for Sardinia. OKW refused. Instead, OKW instructed Kesselring to propose to Ambrosio that Sardinia be guarded exclusively by Italian troops so that German troops could take full responsibility for Corsica. The *Tenth Army*, OKW emphasized, was to make its main stand in the Naples-Salerno area, even if this meant giving up Puglia, the Italian heel.¹²

A day after Kesselring's visit to Hitler, the Badoglio government sent a strong note of protest to Germany. Reports from the Italian Embassy in Berlin and from other sources indicated that certain Nazis were working closely with Fascists to overthrow Badoglio and re-establish a Fascist government in Rome. On the following day, 24 August, the Italian Government arrested several former Fascist leaders, including General Ugo Cavallero, who had been Ambrosio's predecessor at *Comando Supremo*. Perhaps this action averted an incipient Fascist revolt. Whether it did or not, it had the effect of causing Hitler to postpone his projected stroke against Rome.¹³

By this time, though, another Italo-German crisis was in the making. The forces of Rommel's *Army Group B* were carrying out their movement into northern Italy, a movement that Rommel planned to complete by the end of the month. But despite the peaceful German occupation of northern Italy, relations between the two governments and the two armed services worsened when friction developed during the relief of the Italian *Fourth Army* in France, a relief that began on 23 August: the Germans objected to the movement of the *7th (Lupi di Toscana) Infantry Division* to Nice, and they insisted that Italian naval vessels evacuate Toulon.¹⁴

Then on 24 August, after guerrilla bands attacked a *24th Panzer Division* supply train near Lubiana, OKW instructed Rintelen to protest to *Comando Supremo* and to indicate to the Italians that the Germans would have to reinforce the troops protecting the Tarvis-Feistritz-Ljubljana passes. Before *Comando Supremo* could reply, the German *71st Infantry Division* on 26 August began to move to Tarvis and toward the passes of the Julian Alps, the only ones still held and controlled exclusively by the Italians. At first threatening to use force to resist German violation of the Tarvis agreement, *Comando Supremo* in the end consented to the German move, just as Ambrosio had earlier acquiesced in the German occupation of the Brenner Pass, the Riviera, and the Mount Cenis pass.¹⁵

Meanwhile, the question of who was to exercise command over Italian and German forces had again arisen to trouble both nations. On 20 August, OKW had made an elaborate proposal for all theaters fronting on the Mediterranean: southern France, Italy, and the Balkans. OKW proposed Italian supreme command in Italy, German supreme command in southern France and in the Balkans, with each having the power to direct the organization of defense and the conduct of battle in case of Allied invasion. The distribution of the forces of both nations in all three areas was to be regulated from time to time by OKW and *Comando Supremo*. In Italy, *Army Group B* and *OB SUEDE* were to be under the immediate command of the King, who would issue his directives through *Comando Supremo*. The Italian *Fourth* and *Eighth Armies* in northern Italy were to be attached to *Army Group B*. Four days later, on 24 August, Ambrosio accepted the proposal as it related to France--Italian units remaining in southern France were to be under the command of Generalfeldmarschall Gerd von Rundstedt as Commander in Chief West. Ambrosio made considerable concessions in the Balkans. But in Italy, Ambrosio rejected the German proposal and suggested, rather, as he had before, a radical regrouping of German forces. For the time being there would be no change in the command structure of the two military forces in Italy.¹⁶

By the end of the month, the Germans had received increasing indications both of an impending Allied invasion and of the imminent Italian desertion. Which threat was the greater was difficult for the Germans to determine.

As aerial reconnaissance reports revealed extensive Allied troop loadings in North African ports, Kesselring's original estimate that Sardinia was the area most immediately threatened by invasion changed; these preparations were much larger than an attack on Sardinia alone required. But the distribution of Allied shipping in North Africa and Sicily, plus the pattern of Allied bombing, still seemed to indicate several possibilities--Sardinia and Corsica; an attack on the southwest coast of Italy followed by a drive to cut off Calabria and to reach Naples; or an invasion of Puglia. Should the Italians abandon the alliance, the coastal region near Rome was not out of the realm of possibility, and this prospect was not pleasing. The German force near the Italian capital--two reinforced divisions--was considered sufficient to eliminate the Italian forces guarding Rome but hardly adequate to resist an Allied invasion aided by Italian co-operation.¹⁷

Though an Allied invasion was an ever-present danger, the Germans began to regard the prospect of Italian treachery as the graver threat. Kesselring, while not unmindful of the possibility that he could be wrong, continued to accept in good faith repeated Italian assurances.¹⁸ But Hitler had no such illusions. When he received from Kesselring and Rintelen favorable reports on Italian co-operation, he conjectured that Badoglio had approached the Allies, found their terms too severe, and swung back momentarily to the Axis. Convinced that the reporting of his "Italophiles" at Rome was not accurate, he sent General der Infanterie Rudolf Toussaint on 1 September to relieve Rintelen as military attaché and Rudolf Rahn to replace Ambassador von Mackensen.¹⁹

Two days before, on 30 August, OKW made what turned out to be its final revision of Operation *ACHSE*, the plan to seize control of Italy. German units were to disarm Italian soldiers, except those who remained loyal. Italian troops who wished to fight on the German side were to be permitted to come over to the Wehrmacht; those who wished to go home were to be allowed to do so. *OB SUEDE* was to withdraw German units from southern

Italy to the Rome area, then conduct further operations in accordance with instructions from *Army Group B*. The latter headquarters was to reinforce the troops at all the passes leading into Italy, occupy Genoa, La Spezia, Leghorn, Trieste, Fiume, and Pola, and pacify northern Italy through the instrumentality of a revived Fascist organization. The German Navy was to take over the tasks formerly performed by the Italian Fleet, and the German *Luftwaffe* was to do the same for the Italian Air Force; both were to cooperate to prevent Italian warships from going over to the Allies.²⁰ By the beginning of September 1943, the Germans were ready to meet the twin perils of Italian capitulation and Allied invasion.

The Parleys at Cassibile

Even as the Germans were taking steps to counteract a possible Italian defection from the Pact of Steel, General Castellano and his interpreter, Montanari, reached the Termini Imerese airfield near Palermo a little before 0900, 31 August. Brigadier Strong met them, and an American plane took the party to the 15th Army Group headquarters at Cassibile.

Earlier that morning, General Smith, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Macmillan had flown from Algiers to Cassibile with General Zanussi, who again had the text of the long terms of armistice which he had originally received from the British Ambassador at Lisbon.

The Italian generals met at Cassibile, and their meeting was not altogether cordial. Resenting what he considered Zanussi's intrusion into the negotiations, Castellano asked why Zanussi had gone to Lisbon. The reason, Zanussi replied, was the lack of a report from Castellano. Castellano then asked why Zanussi had requested a special plane for Lieutenant Lanza, who had not brought any important documents to Rome. The Allies, Zanussi explained, had taken the text of the long terms from him at Algiers, and had just now returned it. Zanussi seems to have briefly mentioned these additional conditions of armistice, but Castellano did not ask to see the document and Zanussi did not offer it. Castellano remained ignorant of the long terms.²¹

At Cassibile, Castellano, Zanussi, and Montanari conferred with Generals Alexander and Smith, Brigadier Strong, Commodore Royer Dick (Admiral Cunningham's chief of staff), Maj. Gen. John K. Cannon (NATAF's deputy commander), and a British army captain named Deann who served as interpreter. General Smith presided and opened the discussion by asking Castellano whether he had full power to sign the military terms of the armistice. Castellano replied in the negative, added that he had precise instructions, and read the memorandum furnished by his government: If the Italian Government were free, it would accept and announce the armistice as demanded by the Allies. Because the Italian Government was not free but under German control (as the result of the considerable increase of German forces in Italy since the Lisbon meeting), Italy could not accept the condition that the armistice be announced before the main Allied landings. The Italian Government had to be certain that Allied landings were in sufficient strength to guarantee the security of Rome, where the King and the government intended to remain, before it would hazard the announcement of an armistice. Because of the inferiority of their equipment, the Italians could not face the Germans alone. If they did, they would be quickly eliminated. Having eliminated the Italian military forces, the Germans could turn their undivided attention to the Allied invaders. Therefore, the Italian Government insisted

that the Allies make their main landings north of Rome and in the force of at least fifteen divisions.

General Smith bluntly declared the Italian proposal unacceptable. The Italian Government had two alternatives: it could accept the conditions or refuse the armistice. He explained that General Eisenhower had had great difficulty securing authorization from the Allied governments to undertake any discussions with the Italians, and these were restricted to military matters only. The Quebec Memorandum offered Italy an opening, Smith said, and General Eisenhower had full power to modify the conditions in accordance with the degree of support rendered by Italy in the war. If the Italian Government refused the offer of an armistice, with its proclamation on the day of the Allied landing--as had been planned by General Eisenhower with the approval of the British and American Governments--then General Eisenhower would have no power to treat with Italian military leaders or to conclude an armistice in the future. In this case, negotiations would have to be turned over to the Allied diplomats, who would necessarily impose much harsher conditions.

Smith was striking at Castellano's essential program of military collaboration with the Allies by which the dynasty and the government might maintain themselves and save something from the disastrous wreck into which the Fascist regime had plunged Italy. Ruling out military discussions in the future meant the inability of Italy to participate in the war, the exclusion of any mitigation of terms in proportion to Italian aid. General Smith clearly implied that unless the Italian Government at once accepted all of General Eisenhower's conditions, Italy's role during the rest of the war would be passive, and her ultimate fate at the peace table would be determined purely on the basis of Allied wishes. As for the fifteen divisions that Badoglio regarded as essential, Smith said that if the Allies were in a position to land such a force, they would not be offering an armistice. The Allies intended to invade the Italian peninsula with or without Italian aid, and the Italians themselves would have to decide whether the struggle would be long and devastating or relatively brief.

Perceiving that the Allies planned to commit a total of fifteen divisions in Italy rather than to invade with that many, Castellano tried to secure a modification of the Allied plan to announce the armistice at the time of the main Allied landing. Castellano and Zanussi both tried repeatedly to gain some indication of the place and approximate time of the principal Allied debarkation, but General Smith refused to divulge any information.

Castellano then declared that he could say nothing further. He would have to refer the decision to his government, because he was obliged to follow his instructions strictly. He raised the question of whether the Italian Fleet might go to Maddalena, off Sardinia, rather than to an Allied port in order to soften the blow of its loss to the Italian people. Again Smith refused to modify the terms.

Still trying to learn when and where the Allies would invade the Italian mainland, Castellano asked how the Allies planned to protect the Vatican City, and when they hoped to reach Rome. To no avail. And when he made the threat that the Italian Fleet would not remain idle as it had during the Sicilian Campaign, but would attack Allied convoys, Smith replied with stronger threats: whatever the German strength or the Italian attitude, the Allies would drive the Germans out of Italy regardless of any suffering on the part of the Italian people. Nothing could prevent Italy from becoming a battlefield, but the Italian

Government might shorten the duration of the battle by accepting completely the Allied conditions.

The Italian generals faced a cruel dilemma. Italy's refusal to accept the military armistice terms, with the possibility that later military collaboration might favorably modify the terms, opened the way to an overthrow of the dynasty and the disappearance of the regime. And yet, even more immediate was the threat that the Germans would occupy Rome and seize the government unless the Allies landed close to the capital. The course of the discussion revealed to General Smith and the others that Badoglio and his emissaries feared the Germans more than the Allies. At Lisbon, Castellano had given full information on German troop dispositions in Italy; at Cassibile, he refused to do so.

The conference terminated on an inconclusive note, though Smith had the impression that the Italian Government would not pluck up its courage to sign and announce the armistice unless the Allies gave assurances of strong landings in the Rome area as a means of protecting the government against the Germans.

While adamant during the conference, General Smith was nevertheless courteous. He invited the Italian representatives to lunch, where, after an initial embarrassing silence, discussion was resumed. Smith repeated that if Italy lost this opportunity, its situation in the future would be much more difficult. Castellano reiterated his government's contention that it would accept the armistice, no matter how harsh the terms, if the proclamation were postponed. The Italian Government, he said, would gladly provide military cooperation, but Italy could not do this unless the Allies offered guarantees to make it possible. Now almost certain that the Allies intended to land south of Rome, Castellano remarked that Italian forces alone could not save the capital, the nerve center of the country. He urged the Allies, in their own interest, to furnish help: if Rome fell to the Germans, he warned, a costly battle would be necessary to regain the city.

When Smith mentioned the Italian divisions disposed around Rome as being able to resist a German attack, Castellano countered that their weapons were so inferior to those of the Germans that only an Allied landing near Rome in addition to the main landing could save the capital. Smith then asked Castellano to make a specific request, bearing in mind that the Allies could not change their general plan of operations because of the long and minute preparations required for an amphibious landing. In response, Castellano requested one armored division to debark at Ostia, the old port of Rome at the mouth of the Tiber River, and one airborne division to drop nearby.

After lunch, General Smith conferred with Generals Eisenhower (in Africa) and Alexander and with AFHQ staff officers, while Messrs. Murphy and Macmillan conversed with Castellano and Zanussi. The Allied political advisers urged the Italians to act immediately on what was the last chance of the Badoglio government to salvage something from the war. Otherwise, they said, the Allies would refuse to deal with the King and the Badoglio government and would bomb relentlessly the major cities, including Rome. It was like preaching to the converted. The government of Rome remained more afraid of the immediate German threat than of the danger posed by the Allies. According to Castellano and Zanussi, the problem was to induce the cautious, fearful men in Rome to take the initiative against the Germans. Much as they yearned to be rid of the Germans, they feared

that the Allies were not strong enough, even with Italian help, to take over and protect a large part of the country against the considerable German forces stationed there.

The German strength in Italy, which made the Badoglio government hesitate to accept an armistice, was precisely the factor that made the surrender of Italy essential to the Allies. General Eisenhower felt that the German forces in Italy had become so powerful as to change materially the estimates on which AVALANCHE had originally been based. The reserves concentrated in north Italy constituted a mobile threat, and though Allied air could delay their movement, it could not impose a paralysis on enemy traffic. The success of AVALANCHE, Eisenhower believed, might very likely turn upon gaining such a degree of Italian aid as would materially retard the movement of German reserves toward the battlefield. Eisenhower had no thought of abandoning AVALANCHE, but he needed every possible ounce of support from the Italians.

General Alexander, on whom would fall the immediate responsibility for the first large-scale invasion of the European mainland, was even more concerned than General Eisenhower. The Germans had nineteen divisions, he estimated, the Italians sixteen. AVALANCHE projected an initial Allied landing of three to five divisions, and a build-up over two weeks to a maximum of eight divisions. If the Italian units, fighting on their home soil, supported the Germans, the Allies might face a disaster of the first magnitude, a failure that would have catastrophic repercussions in England and in the United States. Literally everything had to be done, he told Mr. Murphy, to persuade the Italians to help the Allied forces during the landing and immediately afterwards.

In their anxiety to induce the Italian Government to surrender and provide military assistance, the Allies agreed to Castellano's request for protective forces at Rome. They decided to send the U.S. 82d Airborne Division to Rome at the time of the main invasion. Two plans for using the 82d in AVALANCHE had not been approved--one, a plan to seize the inland communication centers of Nocera and Sarno to block the movement of German reserves (neither place was suitable for drop zones); the other, named GIANT I, to air-land and drop the division along the Volturno River to secure the north flank of the Allied beachhead (canceled because of the difficulty of supplying the airborne troops so far from the ground forces). The division was therefore available, and a new plan, GIANT II, was drawn up for a drop near Rome.

Designed to induce the Italians to surrender, a prerequisite on which the entire invasion of the Italian mainland seemed to depend, the projected airborne operation offered certain military advantages. In conjunction with the Italian divisions assembled around Rome, the Allies would thereby gain control of the Italian capital and cut off reinforcements and supplies from the German units south of Rome. The psychological effect of a quick stroke against the city might be so stimulating as to cause the Italians to turn against the Germans. Caught by surprise, the Germans might pull out of south and central Italy at once. This was the basis of the decision made by General Eisenhower, in discussion with Generals Alexander and Smith on 31 August, to accede to Castellano's request for protecting the government at Rome.

When Smith returned to the tent occupied by the Italian emissaries, Murphy and Macmillan departed, and the discussions continued on a military basis. Smith told the Italian generals that it would be very difficult to get an armored division to Rome but quite possible to

obtain an airborne division--if the Italians could provide certain airfields. Castellano saw no difficulty in making airfields available, but he thought armored units necessary to give the whole operation what he termed consistency. If an entire armored division could not be committed near Rome at once, at least some antitank guns at the mouth of the Tiber were indispensable. Smith assured Castellano that he would study the feasibility of the project; perhaps an entire armored division could be landed at a somewhat later date.

The conference then came to an end, and both parties summarized the results: (1) The Italian Government might accept or refuse the conditions of armistice, but if it accepted it must accede to the method indicated by the Allies for the official declaration. (2) The Allies were to make a subsidiary landing on the mainland, and against this operation the Italian troops could not avoid offering resistance. (3) Soon afterwards, the Allies would make their main landings south of Rome, bringing the total forces employed in both landings to at least the fifteen divisions regarded as essential by Badoglio; at the same time, the Allies would land an airborne division near Rome and one hundred antitank guns at the mouth of the Tiber. (4) The Italian Government was to make known its acceptance of the armistice by radio within twenty-four hours of 2 September; if it refused, no communication was to be made.²²

After leaving Cassibile at 1600 in an American plane, Castellano, Zanussi, and Montanari transferred to the Italian plane at Termini Imerese and arrived in Rome around 1900. During their flight, the two generals talked over the problem. Sharing Castellano's conviction that the Italian Government could follow but one course--accept the armistice on the military conditions--Zanussi had supported Castellano at Cassibile. There was, however, little cordiality between the two men, because Castellano saw Zanussi as a rival. When Zanussi tried to explain the long terms, Castellano, believing them to be no different from those contained in the papers he had received at Lisbon, refused to listen. Zanussi did not insist and Castellano still remained ignorant of the long terms. When Zanussi expressed his fear that Castellano might not be able to persuade Badoglio to accept the armistice, he offered to support Castellano's arguments.

Castellano was not particularly receptive. And when Zanussi offered to try to get Carboni to feel more favorably disposed toward Castellano, the latter was surprised. He had had no previous intimation that Carboni bore him any hostility.²³

Both generals realized that the Allies had made but slight concessions regarding Badoglio's requests for a landing of fifteen divisions north of Rome and for an announcement of the armistice after the landing. It was quite apparent that the Allies had completed their plans, that they would not land north of Rome or even in that latitude. Where and when the Allies would invade the Italian mainland were questions which had not been answered. Zanussi thought the Allies might come ashore in the Formia-Gaeta sector some forty-five miles northwest of Naples, and Castellano appeared to share his opinion. The memorandum the Allies had given to Castellano indicated only the possibility that the main attack would come within two weeks.²⁴

Castellano had not quite carried out his instructions to get the Allies to land in strength north of Rome. The Allies, it was clear, planned a subsidiary landing far to the south and a main landing closer to the capital, but still not within immediate striking distance. The Allies, General Smith had said, would land "as far north as possible, within the possibility

of protection by fighter planes."²⁵ The total of all the forces employed by the Allies would approximate fifteen divisions. The decision the Badoglio government had to make could be only in these terms. The Allies indicated not the slightest willingness to modify the plans they had formulated before Castellano had first contacted them, and they declined to make their invasion of Italy primarily an attempt to rescue the Italian Government.

As for the long terms, the Allies expected the Italian Government to be fully informed of them, for Zanussi had received them in Lisbon and carried a copy with him back to Rome. But Zanussi, who was Roatta's subordinate, was to give his copy of the terms to Roatta on 1 September with the suggestion that the paper be passed to Ambrosio. Whether Roatta did so or not, Castellano continued uninformed of the comprehensive surrender conditions, and for the moment Badoglio too was to remain in ignorance of them.²⁶

The Decision at Rome

Back in Rome on the evening of 31 August, Castellano hastened to *Comando Supremo* where he found Ambrosio and reported the results of the Cassibile discussions. Since Badoglio had retired for the night, Ambrosio made an appointment to see him the next morning.

Accompanied by Ambrosio, Guariglia, Acquarone, and Carboni, Castellano on 1 September presented his copy of the minutes of the Cassibile conference to Badoglio and gave a detailed account of what had been said. He admitted frankly that he had been unable to obtain what the Italian Government desired--postponement of the armistice until after the main Allied landings. The Allies, he stated, would not modify their plan to invade southern Italy. The Allied leaders, he explained, considered the Italian units around Rome strong enough to defend the city. Only after he had made clear the absolute inferiority of the Italian troops in comparison with the nearby German troops had he obtained the promise of an American airborne division, one hundred pieces of artillery, and the subsequent commitment of an armored division. Sending these troops, Castellano said, would automatically entail the support of Allied aviation. Badoglio listened in silence until Castellano finished. Then he asked Ambrosio's opinion. Ambrosio said he saw no course open other than to accept the proffered conditions.

At this point, Carboni spoke out in decided opposition. It was he, Carboni, who commanded the *Motorized Corps* of four divisions. It was he who would have to defend Rome against the Germans. He believed that the Anglo-American assurances were not to be trusted. They were oral promises rather than a written agreement. Furthermore, he said, his troops could not withstand a German attack because they lacked gasoline and ammunition.

Carboni's remarks came as a disagreeable surprise to Castellano, for Carboni had favored Castellano's mission to Cassibile, and he had not earlier mentioned his lack of ammunition and gasoline. But Zanussi had spoken to Carboni on the preceding evening and apparently had told him something of the discussions at Cassibile. Learning that he would have the unenviable task of defending Rome against the Germans with very little Allied assistance, Carboni had become depressed.

Guariglia, for his part, said there was nothing to do but accept the armistice. The Italian Government was committed, he believed, because so much of Castellano's negotiations had been placed on paper, a fact which the Allies might use to precipitate an Italo-German conflict. Apparently uncertain, Acquarone said nothing. Badoglio expressed no opinion. He would, he said, refer the problem to the King.²⁷

That afternoon Badoglio saw the King. The Italian monarch consented to the armistice. Badoglio informed Ambrosio, who notified AFHQ by a telegram: "The reply is affirmative repeat affirmative. In consequence, known person will arrive tomorrow two September hour and place established. Please confirm." AFHQ received this message shortly before 2300, 1 September.²⁸

Though this act had the appearance of a decision, Badoglio in reality had not made up his mind. He still hesitated, still hoped that the Allies would rescue him. Unwilling to make any move against the Germans, he made no suggestion to any subordinate to start planning for eventual co-operation with the Allies. Perhaps he was upset by the replacement that very day of the German Ambassador and of the military attaché, whom Badoglio could hardly expect to be so Italophile as the men, Badoglio's good friends, they replaced.

Ambrosio also remained passive. He issued no orders, gave no word to his subordinates of the newly projected orientation of the government.

For both Badoglio and Ambrosio, it was one thing to tell the Allies that the armistice was accepted; it was quite another to take steps to meet the consequences of the decision. Perhaps more could not have been expected. To decide to capitulate, even half-heartedly and after much soul-searching, was in itself a traumatic experience that robbed them, at least temporarily, of further initiative.

It remained for Roatta to act. Without instructions from higher authority, he issued *Memoria 44*, an outline order prepared ten days earlier in anticipation of a German seizure of Rome and an attempted restoration of Fascist control. Italian troops, in the event of open German hostility, were to protect railways, command posts, and centers of communication, be ready to interrupt German traffic, seize German headquarters and depots, and sabotage German communications. Upon Roatta's order or in case the Germans initiated hostile actions, the Italian forces on Sardinia and Corsica were to expel the Germans; the *Seventh Army* in southern Italy was to hold Taranto and Brindisi; the *Fifth Army* was to protect the fleet at La Spezia and at the same time attack the German *3d Panzer Grenadier Division*; the *Eighth Army* in the South Tyrol and Venezia Giulia was to attack the German *44th Infantry Division*; the *Fourth Army* in Piedmont and Liguria was to cut the passes leading from France; and the *Second Army* in the northeast was to attack the German *71st Infantry Division*.

Between 2 and 5 September, officer couriers carried the order to the generals who commanded the forces under Roatta. Each recipient, after reading the warning order, was to burn it in the presence of the courier except for the last page, which was to be signed as a receipt.²⁹

Roatta's was the only action taken by the Italian Government--and this at the third level of command--as a consequence of the decision to accept the armistice. Ironically, Roatta had been considered somewhat pro-German in sentiment.

The King, intent on playing the role of a constitutional monarch, took no further action once he had sanctioned Badoglio's proposed course. Those immediately below him, Badoglio and Ambrosio, were timid, cautious, and undecided. Only at the third level and below were men to be found with a real appreciation of Italy's predicament and some determination to seek a solution. It was the paralysis of will at the top which doomed Italy.

Footnotes

- [1.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 15 Aug 43; MS #C-093 (Warlimont), p. 128.
- [2.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 15 and 21 Aug 43.
- [3.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 16 and 18 Aug 43; Vietinghoff in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. VI, pp. 11-12.
- [4.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 16 Aug 43.
- [5.](#) Vietinghoff in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. VI, pp. 6-7; MS #D-117, *Beurteilung der Lage durch die hoechsten Dienststellen im August 1943. Einsatz des AOK 10.* (Vietinghoff), p. 4.
- [6.](#) Lutz Koch, *Erwin Rommel: Die Wandlung eines grossen Soldaten* (Stuttgart: Walter Gehauer, 1950), pp. 152-53. Some rumors of this German plan reached the Italian Embassy in Berlin. See Simoni, *Berlino, Ambasciata*, p. 403, entry for 22 Aug 43.
- [7.](#) MS #D-318, The Rescue of Mussolini (SS Oberstleutnant Otto Skorzeny and SS Major Karl Radl), pp. 48-134. Cf. Mussolini, *Storia di un anno*, pp. 22-23.
- [8.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 19 and 21 Aug 43; Rintelen, *Mussolini als Bundesgenosse*, pp. 246-47; MS #C-013 (Kesselring), p. 20.
- [9.](#) Telg, *OKW/WFSt/Op. No. 661966/43 G. K. Chefs to OB SUED and others*, 18 Aug 43, *Westl. Mittelmeer Chefs.* (H 22/290).
- [10.](#) MS #D-117 (Vietinghoff), pp. 9-10.
- [11.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 18 Aug 43.
- [12.](#) Estimate of the Situation by *OB SUED*, 18 Aug 43, *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 19 Aug 43; *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 22 and 23 Aug 43.
- [13.](#) Simoni, *Berlino, Ambasciata*, p. 403; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, p. 651; Bonomi, *Diario*, pp. 80-82.
- [14.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 22-24 Aug 43.
- [15.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 24-26 Aug 43; Simoni, *Berlino, Ambasciata*, p. 405.
- [16.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 20 and 25 Aug 43.

[17.](#) Situation appreciation by *OB SUED*, 28 Aug 43, *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 29 Aug 43; See also *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31. VIII.43*, 26 Aug 43.

[18.](#) See the account of Badoglio's discussion with Rintelen on 29 Aug 43, *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 29 Aug 43; MS #C-013 (Kesselring), pp. 26-27.

[19.](#) Rintelen, *Mussolini als Bundesgenosse*, pp. 249-55; *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 4 Sep 43.

[20.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.VIII.43*, 29 Aug 43.

[21.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 133-34; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 116-17.

[22.](#) Telg, Eisenhower to CCS, NAF 346, 1 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 198-202; Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 135-44, and the minutes of the conference which he prints as Appendix 2, pp. 219-22; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 117-20; Ltr, Murphy to President Roosevelt, 8 Sep 43, OPD Files, Italy; Interv with Ambassador Smith, 13 May 47; Interv with Strong, 29 Oct 47; Interv, Smyth with Maj Gen Lowell W. Rooks, 28 Sep 48; Gavin, *Airborne Warfare*, pp. 19-24; 82d AB Div in Sicily and Italy, pp. 41-45; Warren, USAF Historical Study 74, pp. 56-57. The minutes printed in Castellano are authentic (see interview with Strong).

[23.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 145-46; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 123-24.

[24.](#) Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 119, 124.

[25.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 222.

[26.](#) Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 124; Castellano, *Come firmai*, 160; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 102, 132.

[27.](#) The records of this meeting consist merely of the autobiographical accounts composed much later by some of the participants: Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, p. 102 (brief and inexact); Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 26 (brief and suspect); Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 146-49 (a full account but prejudiced in his own behalf); Guariglia, *Ricordi*, pp. 677-78. See also Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 133-34, and *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 25.

[28.](#) Telg, Eisenhower to CCS, NAF 348, 1 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 205; Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 149; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, p. 102.

[29.](#) Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 142-44; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 207-10; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 287-88; Antonio Basso, *L'Armistizio del settembre 1943 in Sardegna* (Naples: Rispoli, 1947), p. 33.

Chapter XXV The Armistice

The Signature

When General Castellano, accompanied by Montanari as his interpreter, by Maj. Luigi Marchesi, an aide, and by Major Vassallo, the pilot of his plane, returned to Cassibile on the morning of 2 September, he found himself in a fog of misunderstanding. The Allies had wanted him to return to Sicily for a formal signing of the armistice terms. Castellano understood that the Italian Government had already formally accepted the armistice by means of the radio message Ambrosio had sent on the previous day. Castellano thought he had returned to Cassibile to arrange for Italo-Allied co-operation, specifically for the airdrop near Rome.¹

General Smith disabused Castellano of this idea when the two met. Smith asked him at once whether he had full power to sign the surrender document. The reason for the blunt request was the growing Allied concern over the risks of invading the Italian peninsula. Montgomery's Eighth Army was scheduled to execute Operation BAYTOWN on the following day--to cross the Strait of Messina from Sicily to Calabria in a subsidiary Allied landing. Though reasonably confident of success in this operation, the Allies had become increasingly concerned over the inherent hazards of Operation AVALANCHE, the main invasion that Clark's Fifth Army was scheduled to make on 9 September on the beaches of Salerno. This amphibious assault posed many difficulties: the convoys transporting the ground troops from North Africa to the landing beaches would be vulnerable to German air and Italian sea power; the landing beaches were at the extreme range of Allied fighter aircraft; and the three initial assault divisions could not be reinforced quickly enough and in sufficient strength to meet the German and Italian troops on even equal terms. For these reasons, the Allies needed the help that the Italian surrender promised--neutralization of the Italian Fleet and the aid of Italian ground troops in diverting or at least interfering with the movements of German units to the landing sites. Because of the obvious indecision and fright among the members of the Italian Government, the Allies wished to make certain that the Italians would stick to their agreement to capitulate. The Allies wanted no misstep, no faltering at the last minute to jeopardize the already risky plans of their first re-entry into the European mainland.

To Smith's question, Castellano answered that he did not have full power to sign the armistice terms.

Despite the summer heat in Sicily, the temperature dropped suddenly. The Allied officers departed. For several hours, the Italians were completely ignored.

They found that spending the day alone in their tent in the midst of an Allied headquarters was not without its embarrassing aspect.

Late that afternoon, General Smith returned to ask Castellano whether he wished to radio Rome for permission to sign the surrender document. Castellano agreed to do so. Smith also suggested that the Italian Government authenticate Castellano's authority to sign by means of a message to Osborne, the British Ambassador at the Vatican.

That evening General Smith received a message from *Comando Supremo* indicating Italian acceptance of an airborne operation near Rome and suggesting the use of three specific airfields. But no word came in answer to Castellano's request.

Again at 0400, 3 September, when the Eighth Army was crossing the Strait of Messina to invade Calabria, Castellano repeated his request. Would the government authorize him to sign the armistice?

In Rome that same morning, Badoglio summoned the chiefs of staff of the three military services. "His Majesty," Badoglio announced, "has decided to negotiate for an armistice." He then ordered each service chief to make appropriate dispositions of his forces, but he declined to put the order in writing because he feared that too many persons would learn of the decision.²

Sometime later Badoglio decided to authorize Castellano to sign the armistice terms. As a result, the Allies at Cassibile received a radiogram about 1400, 3 September. "Present telegram is sent from Head Italian Government to Supreme Commander Allied Force." The affirmative reply dispatched two days earlier, Badoglio wired, had contained "implicit acceptance [of the] armistice conditions."³

Implicit acceptance was not enough. The Allies wanted to be absolutely sure. And around 1700 Castellano finally received explicit authority to sign. "General Castellano," Badoglio wired, "is authorized by the Italian Government to sign the acceptance of the conditions of armistice."⁴

By then it was clear that Operation BAYTOWN was a success. The British Eighth Army had landed on the toe of Italy with the 13 Corps on a 3-brigade front, and had seized Reggio di Calabria and a nearby airfield. Virtually no resistance, Italian or German, had materialized.⁵

On that day, too, 3 September, the new German Ambassador to Italy, Rudolf Rahn, presented his credentials to Badoglio. Rahn took the occasion to bring up the matter of reorganizing the chain of command in the Italian theater so that the Germans would be in control of active operations. Declaring that he welcomed Rahn's proposal, Badoglio said that he could not intervene directly in military matters. He promised, however, to arrange an audience with the King and a meeting with Ambrosio for the following day.⁶

At Cassibile, at 1715, 3 September, General Castellano signed the text of the short terms on behalf of Badoglio, Head of the Italian Government. General Smith signed for General Eisenhower, who had flown over from North Africa to witness the ceremony.⁷

As General Eisenhower explained to the CCS, the signing of the short terms was absolutely necessary before specific plans could be made with Italian representatives to secure the maximum possible aid from the Italians, and to obtain the co-operation of the *Motorized Corps* for the 82d Airborne Division's projected operation near Rome. Formal signature of the long terms, he added, would take place later and be timed to fit Allied operational plans.⁸

After the signature of the armistice agreement, the Italians withdrew to their tent. Castellano sent a message to Rome to report his action, whereupon General Alexander appeared and invited him to dinner.⁹

Somewhat later, General Smith handed Castellano a copy of the long terms entitled "Instrument of Surrender of Italy." He attached a brief note to explain that the document

Contains the political, financial, and economic conditions which will be imposed by the United Nations in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Armistice terms. The military conditions of the Armistice are contained in the document which we have just signed. The attached paper is identical with the one handed to General Zanussi by H. M. Ambassador in Lisbon.¹⁰

Having managed to avoid use of the humiliating unconditional surrender phrase in all his negotiations, and having been responsible for initiating a joint Italo-Allied operation to defend Rome, Castellano was painfully surprised to read the initial clause of the comprehensive terms: "The Italian Land, Sea and Air Forces wherever located, hereby surrender unconditionally."

When Castellano protested, Smith said that Zanussi had received the document in Lisbon; the Italian Government certainly knew the conditions of the long terms. Castellano was not so sure. He doubted that his government would accept the additional clauses. When Smith reminded him of the modifying force of the Quebec Memorandum, Castellano said that it contained only general promises, that his government had no recourse if the Allies did not convey their promises in writing. Thereupon General Smith sat down and made the promise in writing. "The additional clauses," he wrote for Badoglio's benefit, "have only a relative value insofar as Italy collaborates in the war against the Germans."¹¹

At 2030 that evening, Castellano met again with Allied officers to discuss what the Italian Government should do now that it had concluded the armistice agreement. General Alexander presided, Generals Smith, Rooks, and Cannon, Brig. Gen. Patrick W. Timberlake (A-3, Mediterranean Air Command), Brigadier Strong, and General Lemnitzer (Deputy Chief of Staff, 15th Army Group) took part. After the meeting, Castellano received an *aide-mémoire* enumerating the general actions the Italian Government would take before the announcement of the armistice. Commodore Dick handed Castellano a memorandum containing instructions for the movement of Italian warships and merchant shipping to ports under Allied control.¹²

Planning GIANT II

The Allies also consulted Castellano on the plans even then being readied for the airborne drop near Rome. Before the signing of the armistice, while Castellano was waiting explicit permission to sign, the Allies had begun to plan the airborne operation. At 1430, 3 September, Castellano had met with several Allied officers to explore possible alternatives. Presiding at the meeting, Rooks, the AFHQ G-3, stated that the airborne division had the mission of co-operating with Italian units in the defense of Rome. Castellano then outlined how he thought the Germans might act against the airborne landing. The *3d Panzer*

Grenadier Division, located between Viterbo and Lake Bolsena, could advance on Rome by three parallel roads and would probably make the main effort. Two Italian units stood in its way, the *Piave Division*, immediately north of the city, and the *Ariete Division*, some fifteen miles beyond. The commanders of these divisions, Castellano ventured, could defend just south of Lakes Bracciano and Martignano. The *Sassari Division*, stationed in Rome, could reinforce them. South of Rome, the *Centauro Division* could block the *2d Parachute Division's* approach to the capital.

The Italians did not lack men, Castellano explained. They lacked firepower. The *Ariete Division*, for example, had no antitank guns at all and could hold the Germans back for perhaps twenty-four hours, no more.

General Ridgway, commander of the 82d Airborne Division, who had suddenly been called to the conference, said that he had 57-mm. antitank guns able to penetrate Mark IV and VI tanks at ranges up to 500 yards, and still heavier weapons possibly might be landed. Furthermore, the proposed seaborne expedition to the mouth of the Tiber River could bring even more arms.

But Ridgway and the others were more concerned with protecting the airfields where the landings were to take place, and assuring that no Italian anti-aircraft battery would fire on the incoming planes. Could Castellano give assurance that Italian anti-aircraft batteries would not fire on the Allied planes?

Castellano gave several specific guarantees. The Italians would secure the fields. Anti-aircraft defenses would not open fire. A route north of the Tiber River would pass over minimum anti-aircraft defenses.

It was pointed out, and agreed to by Castellano, that sufficient time would have to be allowed to enable a specific order to get down to every gun. Castellano also promised that Italian officers of high rank would meet the commander of the airborne division on a field to be decided upon by the Allies. Navigational aids would be furnished. The airfields would be illuminated; the outlines of the fields in orange-red lights, the outlines of the runways and any obstacles within five hundred yards of the fields by means of red lights. Castellano also promised that the Italians would provide motor transportation for concentrating the airborne troops and their supplies. Finally, he gave assurances that all available intelligence regarding both German and Italian units in the Rome area would be furnished the Allies before the operation.

Castellano suggested six available airfields, none occupied by the Germans.¹³ He produced maps showing the location of German and Italian troops near Rome. He suggested troop landings at Centocelle and Littoria airfields, heavy equipment at Guidonia airfield. He recommended the Littoria airfield, just north of the city, as the point of concentration. Also, to reach these fields, which together formed a triangle with its base along the eastern outskirts of the Italian capital and its apex at Guidonia, the planes should fly in from the west-northwest.

During the meeting, certain other matters were briefly mentioned. General Rooks noted that consideration was being given to running two or three ships up the Tiber River with ammunition and supplies, and Commodore Royer Dick asked if the swing bridges could be

opened. Castellano stated that the bridge at Fiumicino could be kept open, and that this would permit ships to go as far as the Magliano airfield where supplies could be landed along the banks. The Tiber River was thirty feet deep as far as the Littoria airfield, Castellano said, but the area south of the river was occupied by German troops armed with anti-aircraft batteries. This was Castellano's reason for recommending that the approach of the planes should be about eight miles north of the river. General Taylor, the 82d Airborne Division's artillery commander, felt that such a route would be more difficult to find at night than one directly up the river, and urged that the German troops south of the river be mopped up by the Italians as an initial move in the operation. Rooks then asked if a small planning staff from the airborne division could be sent to Rome in advance to complete the details of the operation; Castellano agreed, and offered to take two or three American officers with him on his return to Rome on the following day.

After some discussion on the availability of 100-octane gasoline for such Allied fighter aircraft as might be flown into the Rome area, General Ridgway said that he had enough information on which to draft his outline plan. The meeting adjourned.¹⁴

As General Ridgway worked with a small planning group on an outline plan for GIANT II, he grew increasingly concerned over the possibility that the Italian authorities might not be able to silence a sufficient number of the guns in Rome's belt of anti-aircraft defenses. Should too few be silenced, the unescorted C-47's would be fat targets as they came in low to drop paratroopers or to land supplies. General Ridgway remembered how Allied fighters on 18 April had intercepted and shot down seventy-three Junker 52's flying supplies into Tunisia, and recalled painfully the unfortunate experience during the invasion of Sicily when friendly fire had shot down twenty-three allied transport aircraft. He also felt that he could not rely on the Italians for other acts of cooperation in the degree "considered essential to success."¹⁵

Late that night Castellano was called in for additional consultation. The Italian general was now less certain than he had been during the afternoon session, and under the pressure of questioning he admitted the enormous difficulty of silencing every gun in Rome's anti-aircraft defenses. Instead of following the instructions of his government and suggesting, as he had earlier, the Guidonia, Littoria, and Centocelle airfields, he admitted that the latter two fields lay in the midst of extensive flak batteries. He now proposed that initial drops be made at the Furbara and Cerveteri airfields, slightly to the north of Rome and on the coast. Located outside the city's anti-aircraft defenses, they were completely in Italian hands. The *Lupi di Toscana Division*, coming from southern France and scheduled to concentrate on 8 September between these two airfields, could provide additional ground security.

The airborne planners worked all night, and on the morning of 4 September they had an outline plan. Initial forces were to land on the Cerveteri and Furbara fields, followed during the next night by parachute drops on the Guidonia, Littoria, and Centocelle fields. The division was then to assemble in the western outskirts of Rome, not at Littoria. The plan carefully defined Italian responsibilities. The Italians were to secure and protect the five airfields. They alone, without German help, were to man all the anti-aircraft defenses around those fields. The flak batteries were to have explicit orders against taking any aircraft under fire during the nights of the operation. Italian troops were to block avenues of approach open to the Germans, furnish local protection of the airfields and drop zones, and guarantee

unmolested passage of naval craft up the Tiber River to Rome. The Italians were to have a horizontal searchlight beam pointing due west at Furbara airfield, and two Rome radio stations were to broadcast throughout the night as navigational aids. The Italians were to outline the perimeter of each field with amber lights, the airfield runways with white lights; to remove or silence all anti-aircraft guns in a 10-mile-wide corridor astride the Tiber and along a shorter, secondary, and more direct route from the sea to the Cerveteri and Furbara fields; to have a senior staff officer of the *Motorized Corps* meet General Ridgway at Furbara airfield and a senior staff officer at each airfield to receive the American troops; and to furnish one interpreter guide to each company.¹⁶

Castellano later claimed, incorrectly, that he had obtained an agreement for the American division to "be placed at the orders of General Carboni."¹⁷ The 82d Airborne Division was rather to "secure the city of Rome and adjacent airfields and prevent their occupation by German forces," accomplishing this "in cooperation with Italian forces." As General Taylor described the relationship:

The airborne troops upon arrival will cooperate with the Italians in the defense of Rome and comply with the recommendations of the Italian High Command without relinquishing their liberty of action or undertaking any operation or making any disposition considered unsound.¹⁸

The outline plan, a copy of which Castellano received, also stipulated the amount of logistical aid the Italians were to provide: 23,000 rations, 355 trucks, 12 ambulances, 120 tons of gasoline and oil, 12 switchboards, 150 field telephones, 100 picks, 200 shovels, 5,000 wire pickets, and 150 miles of barbed wire. A labor pool of 500 men was to be provided by the second day. The Americans would bring in rations for two days, gasoline for one day, medical supplies for the initial period, and ammunition for the entire operation.

Convinced by this time that any airborne drop in the Rome area would be a tragic mistake, General Ridgway protested strongly to Generals Smith and Alexander. Ridgway's opposition led the Allies to send two American officers to Rome to confer with the leaders of the Italian forces around the capital about the final details of Italo-American co-operation. The real purpose of their mission was to assess the feasibility of the airborne operation.

Second Thoughts in Rome

After working with the Allied officers on the GIANT II outline plan, Castellano was informed that General Eisenhower wanted to have an Italian military mission attached to AFHQ, a mission composed of ground, air, and naval representatives headed by Castellano himself. Castellano radioed a request to Rome for authority to constitute such a mission, and canceled his plans to return to Rome. Other arrangements would be made for getting the two Allied officers to Rome.

During the early afternoon of 4 September, Smith visited Castellano once more. Castellano raised the question of when the Allied landing would take place and when the armistice was to be announced. Replying through the interpreter, Smith said: "I understand very well the

great anxiety you have to know these dates, but unfortunately I can tell you nothing; it is a military secret which I must keep." Then in a lower voice, "I can say only that the landing will take place within two weeks."¹⁹ Smith then departed and that afternoon returned to Algiers.

During the afternoon Castellano saw several other Allied officers on the problems of coordinating various aspects of the armistice announcement. The Allies would notify the Italian Government what day the announcement was to be made by the secret radio link already established with Rome, and, as an alternate channel, by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The BBC would signal the day by broadcasting two special programs between the hours of 1000 and 1200, British time: a half hour of Verdi's music and a two-minute discourse, during the British overseas program, on the theme of Nazi activities in Argentina.²⁰

Castellano then prepared his reports to his government, reports to be flown to Rome on the following day, 5 September. While Montanari translated the documents from English to Italian, Castellano wrote a letter to Ambrosio. "Despite every possible effort to succeed," he stated, "I have not been able to get any information on the precise locality of the landing. Regarding the date I can say nothing precise; but from confidential information I presume that the landing will take place between the 10th and 15th of September, possibly the 12th."²¹

Castellano had reached the conclusion from Smith's spoken statement. If the main Allied invasion was to be launched within one week, Castellano reasoned, Smith would not have spoken of two weeks. Therefore, he deduced that at least one week would elapse between the initial landing in south Italy--BAYTOWN into the tip of Calabria, launched on 3 September--and the main descent on the mainland. Since Smith had talked to him on 4 September, the main attack could not, according to this line of reasoning, be expected before the 11th. It could take place any time during the second week--10 to 15 September.²²

Castellano's aide and pilot flew his letter and documents, including the GIANT II outline plan, to Rome early on 5 September. The aide delivered the papers to Ambrosio, who read them and turned them over to Badoglio. Castellano's date of 12 September for the Allied landing and the armistice announcement was only a guess, but Ambrosio accepted Castellano's estimate as definite, and he told Badoglio so. As a result, all the Italian military and political leaders involved in the armistice expected the main Allied landing no earlier than 12 September, possibly later.²³

General Eisenhower and AFHQ staff officers expected the Italians to make vigorous efforts to insure the success of the invasion--or at least of the airborne drop. But Badoglio, Ambrosio, Rossi, and Roatta remained doubtful of their ability to give real help, possibly because they felt that Badoglio had pledged the government to a course of action--the surrender of all of Italy to the Allies--that was beyond its power. The Italian Government and High Command therefore continued to be more interested in being rescued than in helping fight the Germans. While Castellano supported active co-operation with the Allies, the leaders in Rome remained, in contrast, passive. Castellano had represented the Italian Army as hating the Germans and willing to turn on them. In this way, an American officer later remarked, he "sold the Allies a bill of goods."²⁴ Badoglio, Ambrosio, Roatta, and Rossi

were hardly anxious to fight. Their primary aim was to secure Allied protection of the capital.

On 5 September, Roatta later maintained, he received notice from *Comando Supremo* that the armistice with the Allies was concluded, that the time of the armistice announcement was as yet undetermined but would not occur before 12 September, that in accord with the Italian request the Allies would land a force of six divisions in central Italy and within striking distance of Rome, an unknown number of troops by air, and nine Allied divisions in a subsequent landing perhaps farther to the north. Beyond this, the Italian Government had no details and awaited precise information regarding Allied plans.²⁵

Two days earlier, on 3 September, while Badoglio was deciding to authorize Castellano's signature of the armistice terms, Ambrosio had written a memorandum for his deputy chief, Rossi, to outline the instructions he wished issued to *Superaereo*, *Supermarina*, and *Army Group East* (controlling the Italian troops in Greece and in the Balkans). This paper, plus Roatta's *Memoria 44* (drawn on 1 September and in the process of dissemination to the commanders under his control), reached Rossi on 4 September. In compliance with Ambrosio's wish, Rossi drafted several directives. Before they reached final form, Castellano's documents arrived--on 5 September. This held up the instructions for another day. On 6 September, *Comando Supremo* issued *Promemoria I*, a general directive for each general staff--Army, Navy, and Air Force--that was, in effect, a complementary order to Roatta's *Memoria 44*. Like the earlier Army order, the *Comando Supremo* directive did not refer to co-operation with the Allies. Rather, its chief purpose was to spell out Italian reaction to collective, general German aggression as distinguished from local, irresponsible German acts. Under the illusion that 12 September was the firm date for the Allied invasion and the armistice announcement, *Comando Supremo* intended subsequently to supplement these instructions.²⁶

The intermixture of German and Italian headquarters in the Balkans and Greece made it appropriate to issue instructions to *Army Group East* as late as possible. Since Ambrosio thought of 12 September as the target date, he had a draft order (*Promemoria 2*) drawn on 6 September for that headquarters, intending to put it into effect later. The directive instructed the troops in Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania to withdraw toward the coast and maintain possession of the ports of Cattaro and Durazzo; the commander in Greece and Crete, before withdrawing his troops to suitable ports for evacuation, was to tell the Germans frankly that the Italians would not fight against them unless the Germans resorted to violence. In the Aegean Islands, the Italians were to disarm the Germans to avert open hostilities.²⁷

Thus, the only orders actually issued during the three days immediately following the signature of the armistice were essentially defensive. They indicated little intention of pursuing the aggressive action against the Germans that Castellano had described at Cassibile.

The role of the forces defending Rome was not quite so passive. The nucleus of this body of troops had begun to form on 20 July to protect the government against a possible Fascist reaction to Mussolini's imminent overthrow. Since 29 July the troops had been alerted to act against the possibility of a German stroke against the capital. Under the immediate command of Roatta, chief of the Army General Staff, the force consisted of three corps.

The *Corpo d'Armata di Roma*, controlling the *Sassari Division*, *carabinieri*, and service and school troops, was within Rome and had as its task the internal defense of the city against SS agents and other special German troops stationed there. The *XVII Corps* had small detachments of the *220th* and *221st Coastal Divisions* distributed along the coast from Tarquinia to the Volturno River--a distance of 125 miles--and the *Piacenza Division* interspersed among units of the German *2d Parachute Division*. General Carboni's *Motorized Corps* controlled the *Ariete Armored* and *Piave Motorized Divisions* north of Rome, the *Centauro Armored Division* east of the capital, and the *Granatieri Division* south of the city.

As soon as Roatta learned from *Comando Supremo* on 5 September that the armistice had been concluded, he ordered the units regrouped. The *Re* and *Lupi di Toscana Divisions* were scheduled to arrive from the Balkans and from France as a result of the agreement reached on 15 August with the Germans--who believed the divisions were slated for commitment in southern Italy. Instead, the Italians planned to use the divisions, scheduled to arrive in Rome on 8 September, to reinforce the capital's defenses. Roatta intended to have completed by the morning of 12 September the dispositions of these units, plus the deployment of a *Bersaglieri* regiment, scheduled to become available, as well as the final regrouping of the *Motorized Corps*. His faith in this date as the time of the Allied invasion and the armistice announcement was strengthened on 6 September when he received copies of the GIANT II outline plan. According to Generale di Divisione Aerea Renato Sandalli, chief of the Air Force Staff, who also received a copy of the plan and who discussed its implications with Roatta, Italian Air Force preparations to comply with the Allied requirements for the airborne operation would take at least a week. This confirmed Roatta's belief in 12 September as the effective date of the armistice.²⁸

As for the airborne plan itself, Roatta was flabbergasted. It appeared to assign missions to the *Motorized Corps* far beyond its capabilities. Four hundred trucks could be rounded up only by stripping the *Piave* and *Ariete Divisions* of all their vehicles (he did not think of collecting autos, buses, and trucks from the municipality of Rome, an expedient which Castellano had considered quite feasible). Instead of being a plan to defend Rome, it was, Roatta believed, a preliminary step for a future drive north from Rome, with the capital as the base of operations. Though he might have had no objection to this concept, he could not concur in the basic assumption as to the strength of his troops. If his forces were indeed strong enough to carry out all the actions assigned to them in the airborne plan, they would then be strong enough to defend Rome against the Germans without Allied assistance. The plan, therefore, did not project a rescue operation; rather it embodied Castellano's concept of Italian cooperation with the Allies. What was most disappointing to Roatta was the lack of indication that the Allies would land six divisions within striking distance of Rome, a move which, he maintained, *Comando Supremo* had led him to expect.²⁹

Something else seemed not quite right. Aerial photographs of the North African ports of Mers el Kebir, Oran, Arzew, and Mostagenem on 4 September and the knowledge that Allied ships were loaded with landing craft indicated an impending amphibious operation. *Comando Supremo* conjectured that the destination of the force might be Corsica. Two days later, Roatta had word of Allied convoys assembling in the open sea north of Palermo. Did this mean that the Allies were about to launch a subsidiary attack independent of and before the armistice announcement expected on 12 September? Or were the Allies getting ready to invade the mainland far south of Rome, or possibly, Sardinia?³⁰

In any event, Roatta concluded that the Allies would be in no position to march directly on Rome at once. The Italians themselves would have to defend the capital. From this belief was to come contradictory and ambiguous conduct on the part of the Italian Government for the next two days, behavior that revealed the wide discrepancy between Castellano's views and those of Badoglio, Ambrosio, and Roatta. Part of the trouble was the fact that the King gave no firm indication of his desire to turn actively against the Germans. Thus, Badoglio consistently took a passive attitude. For him, and for Ambrosio and Roatta as well, the armistice, the invasion, and the airborne operation near Rome comprised a multiple plan of rescue, not an opportunity for Italy to pay her passage with the Allies.

The thing that crystallized matters was an estimate of the situation that Roatta presented to Ambrosio during the late afternoon of 6 September. The location of Allied convoys, he averred, made possible only two conclusions as to Allied intentions. Either the Allies were about to make a landing independent of the armistice--like that of the British Eighth Army on the 3d--or they were going to launch their main attack before 12 September, an invasion directed against south Italy or Sardinia. In either case, there was little prospect of immediate help from Italian forces in the capital. Therefore, the plan for joint action with the Allied airborne division had to be adjusted to reflect the real capabilities of the Italian forces. Convinced that otherwise a fiasco would result, Ambrosio agreed to the necessity for modifying the GIANT II plan.³¹ Fortunately for the Italians, a way to get in touch with the Allies was at hand.

In response to General Eisenhower's request that the Italians send a military mission to AFHQ, a request forwarded by Castellano on 4 September, the Italian High Command had selected eleven officers headed by Col. Paolo Decarli of the Military Intelligence Service. These officers were to leave Rome that evening, 6 September. Two hours before their departure several of these officers received instructions at *Comando Supremo* for modifying the Allied plans. There were three relatively minor proposals--a change in the text of Badoglio's contemplated armistice announcement; a request that the Italian Fleet be permitted to sail to Sardinia rather than to Malta; and a request that maximum air support be sent to the Rome airfields immediately after the armistice announcement. But a fourth point was major--the Italians wanted the airborne operation to be executed two days after the main landing rather than at the same time.³²

Carboni later asserted that he gave one member of the mission, Maj. Alberto Briatore, a memorandum completely repudiating the armistice and the airborne operation, and he accused Castellano of deliberately preventing Briatore from delivering it to the Allies.³³ But Carboni's memorandum was a fabrication.³⁴ The Italians did not renounce their obligations in this fashion.

That night, at 2200, 6 September, after instructing the members of the military mission, Ambrosio left Rome by train for Turin. His purpose in going, he explained later, was to pick up his diary and other compromising documents.³⁵ In his absence, Rossi was in charge of *Comando Supremo*, but Rossi felt that he could make no basic decision without the concurrence of his chief. During this time, for two days, Carboni, Roatta, and Rossi, with the full support and co-operation of Badoglio, repudiated Castellano's commitments with respect to GIANT II and contrived to create a situation that struck the Allies as having every appearance of a double cross.

Why Ambrosio chose this moment for a trip to Turin is not clear. Perhaps he was thoroughly convinced that 12 September was to be the effective armistice date. Perhaps he did not altogether comprehend Roatta's alarm. Perhaps--though rather improbably, for he and Castellano were close associates--he had even misunderstood Castellano's point of view.³⁶

After Ambrosio's departure, Roatta talked with Carboni, who not only commanded the *Motorized Corps* but also directed the Military Intelligence Service. Carboni confirmed Roatta's low opinion of the strength of the Italian troops around Rome. The *Motorized Corps*, Carboni said, without reinforcements and more time for preparations, could not put up protracted resistance against the Germans, nor could it provide effective protection for the American airborne landings.

Embodying these objections to GIANT II in a memorandum, Roatta emphasized the danger in announcing the armistice before 12 September at the earliest. He also stressed the necessity of having the main Allied landing take place in accord with Italian expectations: the invasion would have to be made within striking distance of Rome.³⁷

As director of the Military Intelligence Service, Carboni transmitted a copy of Roatta's memorandum to Badoglio early on 7 September. Later that morning, Carboni spoke with Rossi. He told Rossi that he had conferred with Badoglio and had explained that his *Motorized Corps* had ammunition for only twenty minutes of fire, the *Ariete Armored Division* had fuel for about one hundred miles of movement. Alarmed, Rossi sought Roatta for confirmation. He learned from Roatta of Roatta's discussion with Carboni the night before, and Roatta explained that the *Lupi di Toscana* and *Re Divisions* were necessary for the defense of Rome but would not now be available until 12 September, rather than 8 September as earlier expected. Rossi thereupon became convinced that it was essential for the armistice to become effective on 15 September if possible, in any case not before the 12th. Like Roatta, Rossi concluded that Castellano had not accurately presented to the Allies the true situation in Rome. At noon, Roatta and Rossi sent a message by the special radio. *Comando Supremo*, they radioed Castellano, would soon send a "communication of fundamental importance."³⁸

Not long afterward Rossi learned that the American officers who were coming to Rome to make the final arrangements for the airborne operation were due to arrive in the city that same evening. Ambrosio had already arranged for their trip to Rome, but he had not known their ranks or exact mission. When Rossi found out that one was a general officer, he telephoned Ambrosio urging him to return from Turin to Rome by plane at once. Ambrosio, however, did not return until 1000, 8 September.³⁹

Meanwhile, on the previous evening, 6 September, AFHQ had sent two messages to Rome via the secret radio. The first read:

Please maintain continuous watch every day for most important message which will be sent between 0900 hours and 1000 hours, GMT on or after 7 September repeat seven September. It will be necessary for you to reply immediately when you receive this important message that it has been received and understood.⁴⁰

The second:

In addition to all other arrangements for the Great (G) day the Italian broadcast transmitted by BBC will give two short talks on German Nazi activity in Argentina between 11:30 hours Greenwich time and 12:45 hours. This broadcast will indicate the Great (G) day. Telegram number 36. There will not be any special program of music as requested. Please acknowledge receipt.⁴¹

In response to requests for acknowledgement, the Italians replied; the messages acknowledging Italian receipt came in to AFHQ shortly after noon, 7 September.⁴²

The Allied messages were a clear indication of the imminent approach of the invasion day and of the time for the surrender announcement. Obviously, both events were scheduled to occur soon after 7 September. Certainly, Carboni must have known because the secret radio given to Castellano at Lisbon was located in the Military Intelligence Service, which Carboni headed. Yet Carboni failed to make the information known to Badoglio, Ambrosio, Roatta, or Rossi.⁴³

Thus, when two American officers appeared in Rome on the evening of 7 September, Ambrosio, chief of *Comando Supremo*, was absent on a personal errand in Turin, Roatta and Rossi were attempting to make fundamental changes in the arrangements concluded by Castellano, and Carboni was playing a dishonest game with both the Allies and his own superiors.

Footnotes

¹. Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 152ff.

². Basic sources are: Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 161ff; Rossi *Come arrivammo*, pp. 210ff; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 112ff; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, pp. 681ff. See also Monelli, *Roma 1943*, p. 304.

³. Telg, AFHQ Adv to AFHQ, No. 121, 3 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 252, relayed by AFHQ to CCS, NAF 354, same file, p. 257.

According to Guariglia (*Ricordi*, pages 681-82), Badoglio decided to authorize Castellano to sign the armistice terms at the meeting with the chiefs of staff of the Italian armed forces.

⁴. Telg 121, AFHQ Adv to AFHQ, 3 Sep 43, cited n. 3; See also Armistice Meetings, Fairfield Camp, Sicily, Sep 43, in AFHQ 0100/4/330. A copy of the armistice document is found in 10,000/136/584.

⁵. For a detailed account of the landing, see Montgomery, *Eighth Army*, pp. 123-24; Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, pp. 202-06; and Blumenson, *Salerno to Cassino*.

⁶. Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 110-11, gives an untruthful account of this meeting. See Rahn's Report, Telg 4370, 3 Sep 43, German Foreign Office Documents, U.S. Department of State, Serial 131/frames 71960-62, NARS.

⁷. Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 156-57; Armistice Meetings, Fairfield Camp, Sicily, Sep 43, 0100/4/330; Butcher, *My Three Years With Eisenhower*, pp. 405-06; Diary Office CinC, Book VIII, p. A-720.

⁸. Telg 121, AFHQ Adv to AFHQ, 3 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 252, relayed by AFHQ to CCS, NAF 354, 3 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 257.

⁹. Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 157-58.

[10.](#) Capitulation of Italy, p. 224.

[11.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 160-61; Interv with Ambassador Smith, 13 May 47.

[12.](#) Capitulation of Italy, pp. 221-23. The copy in AFHQ microfilm records, reel R-62-I, item GIANT Two, indicates that copy 1 of the *aide-mémoire* was given to Castellano. See also copy 2, 3 Sep 43, in AFHQ 0100/4/330, with change to par. 5, dated 6 Sep 43, sent to Rome via the secret radio channel.

[13.](#) These were Littoria (Urbe), in the northern suburbs; Centocelle, southeast of the city; The Race Course, opposite Littoria; Magliana, on the river west of Rome; Guidonia, fifteen miles northeast of Rome; and Ciampino, southeast of the city (not to be thought of since it was in the midst of German troops).

[14.](#) Min of Mtg held at Cassibile on Friday, 3 Sep 43, to discuss a certain projected airborne operation, reel R-62-I, item GIANT Two; GIANT Two Outline Plan, 3 Sep 43, copy 5, reel R-62-I; GIANT Two Outline Plan, copy 3, 3 Sep 43, typewritten copy with ink insertions and corrections, 82d AB Div G-3 Jnl, 1-15 Sep 43; Gavin, *Airborne Warfare*, pp. 24-27; Ridgway, *Soldier*, pp. 80-83; Warren, USAF Hist Study 74, pp. 57-58; Craven and Cate, eds., *Europe: TORCH to POINTBLANK*, pp. 519-20; 82d AB Div in Sicily and Italy, pp. 45-49; copy 2 of GIANT Two Outline Plan may be found in 0100/12A/173; see also Hq NAAF, A-5/4363, sub: Amendment 1 to Opn AVALANCHE--Outline Plan of Troop Carrier Opns (A-5/P.501) (Final), 0100/12A/173 and Addendum to A-5/P.501 (Final), same file; Operation GIANT, in 0403/4/1029; Directive, AFHQ to multiple addressees, sub: Operation GIANT Two, 4 Sep 43, 0100/4/330; Ltr. Rpt by Maj Patrick D. Mulcahy, AFHQ Obsv, AFHQ, AG 370-1 (Airborne) GCT-AGM, 22 Sep 43, sub: Airborne Activities in the AVALANCHE Opn, to Air CinC, Med, 0403/10/296.

[15.](#) Rpt, Ridgway to Eisenhower, 25 Oct 43, sub: Lessons of Airborne Operations in Italy, contained in USAAF, A Report of TCC Activities Including the Italian Invasion, 1 Aug-30 Sep 43, II, 120; Ridgway, *Soldier*, pp. 80-81; Warren, USAF Hist Study 74, p. 58.

[16.](#) GIANT Two Outline Plan.

[17.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 167-68.

[18.](#) GIANT Two Outline Plan; Program for GIANT II, 6 Sep 43, signed by Gen Taylor, 82d AB Div G-3 Jnl, 1-15 Sep 43.

[19.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 71; Interv with Ambassador Smith, 13 May 47.

[20.](#) Memo by Brig Gen Robert A. McClure, 5 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 271.

[21.](#) This is the text of the critical paragraph of the letter as given by Castellano (*Come firmai*, page 172). The original letter has not been revealed and there is some doubt about the exact wording. See *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 28.

[22.](#) Castellano. *Come firmai*, p. 173.

[23.](#) Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 102-03; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 133-35; MS #P-058, Project #46, 1 Feb-8 Sep 43, Question 20. According to the above sources Maj. Luigi Marchesi in delivering Castellano's letter gave oral confirmation of 12 September.

[24.](#) Quote is from Interv, Smyth with Maj Gen Lyman L. Lemnitzer, 4 Mar 47.

[25.](#) Risotta is in error (*Otto milioni*, pages 301-02) when he gives the date of reception of this information as 3 September.

[26](#). Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 211-15. Curiously enough, Roatta (*Otto milioni*, pages 302-03, 314) later identified this directive as coming from AFHQ. Roatta's Army general staff on the same day issued its *Memoria 45* to supplement the *Comando Supremo* directive.

[27](#). Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 215-16. The *Eleventh Army* (in Greece and Crete) chief of staff was summoned to Rome and received the draft order during the evening of 6 September; he returned with it to Athens on the following morning. The chief of staff of *Army Group East* was summoned to Rome on 7 September, received a copy of the directive the next day, but was unable to return to his headquarters at Tirana in Yugoslavia because of bad flying weather. See *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 48.

[28](#). Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 300-305; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 30-31; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, p. 135; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 102-03.

[29](#). Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 305-06.

[30](#). *Ibid.*, p. 306; Rossi (*Come arrivammo*, pages 144-46) contradicts Roatta on this point. See also *Comando Supremo, I Reparto, Ufficio del capo reparto, No. 2087/I*, 6 Sep 43, IT 4563, and Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 168.

[31](#). Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 140-41; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 306-07; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 171.

[32](#). Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 181.

[33](#). Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 27, 59-60, 108-09.

[34](#). Briatore on 20 January 1945 testified that he had never seen such a document. Ambrosio, Roatta, and Rossi denied that the document printed by Carboni was ever composed in the *Comando Supremo* headquarters. Carboni's text was artful, for its concepts resembled somewhat a memorandum drafted by Roatta late on 6 September after the departure of the military mission. Cf. note 37. See the excellent critical examination of the Carboni fabrication by the *Ufficio Storico, Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito, Ministero della Difesa, Allegato al f.n. 1780/St.*, 12 Mar 48, Incl in Ltr, Maj James A. Gray, Assistant Military Attaché, to Director of Intelligence, GSUSA 16 Jun 48, OCMH files. See also Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 315, and *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 33-34.

[35](#). MS #P-058, Project #46, 1 Feb-8 Sep 43, Question 22.

[36](#). *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 30-31.

[37](#). Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 307; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 140-41; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 171.

[38](#). Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 141-42; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 32-33.

[39](#). Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, p. 144.

[40](#). Msgs 34 and 35, "Drizzle" to "Monkey," Capitulation of Italy, pp. 281-82.

[41](#). Msg 36, "Drizzle" to "Monkey," Capitulation of Italy, p. 283.

[42](#). Capitulation of Italy, p. 300.

[43](#). *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 37.

Chapter XXVI

The Renunciation

While the Italians toyed with capitulation and became entangled in its meshes, the Germans took further precautions against possible defection. Ambassador Rahn's meetings with Badoglio and Ambrosio on 4 September, the day after Castellano had signed the armistice agreement, produced no mitigation of German suspicion. On the contrary, OKW on 5 September instructed Kesselring to keep his German units well in hand and ready for any emergency. Rommel's *Army Group B*, which had the mission of eliminating the Italian military forces in northern Italy and occupying that part of the country, was ready to act. Contrary to Allied belief, the divisions under Rommel's control were not intended to reinforce Kesselring's troops in the south--on 6 September OKW specifically directed Rommel to remain north of the northern line of the Apennines.¹

By 7 September, although the Germans still had no positive proof, indications of Italian obstructionism had become clear enough to make Hitler absolutely certain of eventual Italian "treason." He therefore prepared to send an ultimatum to Badoglio, and he ordered Jodl to draw up a draft of the military portion of the paper. In compliance, Jodl listed five of Italy's basic military policies that seemed fundamentally anti-German in purpose: (1) the concentration of Italian troops in northern Italy, particularly in the Alpine area; (2) the seizure by these troops of the commanding ground in the frontier zone; (3) the placement of demolition charges under bridges and other installations near the frontier; (4) the expressions of hostility toward Germany among the Italian troops, so widespread as to be inexplicable unless a central direction was assumed; and (5) the failure to reinforce south Italy even though troops were available in the north and around Rome. Jodl then listed eighteen specific measures he considered it necessary for *Comando Supremo* to take to remove the anti-German character of these policies. It was Hitler's intention to serve the ultimatum on Badoglio on 9 September.² Had Hitler done so, he would have left Badoglio no choice but to make a clear decision--for a break with Germany, or for complete co-operation. Acceptance of the ultimatum would have made Badoglio the gauleiter of Italy. Refusal would probably have signaled the start of German action to take over the Italian Government and the country.

But the ultimatum was never delivered. Hitler's intended date of delivery turned out to be the same day on which the Allies landed on the Salerno beaches.

"Innocuous"

Proceeding systematically with their plans, the Allies had dispatched from North Africa on 3 September, the date when the Eighth Army crossed the Strait of Messina, the first of fifteen convoys which would leave Tripoli, Bizerte, and Oran. These convoys, carrying assault troops of the U.S. Fifth Army, were to take part in Operation AVALANCHE, the main invasion of the Italian peninsula.³ Elsewhere, other Allied headquarters worked on the planned airborne operation at Rome.

From the moment that General Ridgway had been summoned to Cassibile on 2 September to take part in the Italo-American planning, sudden change and frantic haste characterized 82d Airborne Division plans and preparations. Already in the final stages of preparing to participate in AVALANCHE and execute GIANT I--securing the north flank of the Allied beachhead at Salerno--the division now faced a completely new assignment.

Those units of the division which had fought in Sicily had, soon after the campaign ended, been shuttled by air back to the Kairouan area in Tunisia. Fully reunited there the division engaged in some sketchy training. Troops scheduled to make an amphibious assault as part of the division's role in AVALANCHE boarded landing craft on 3 September and were ready to sail. On this date GIANT I was canceled, and the entire division received word to prepare to move by air to Sicily.

Having completed the GIANT II plan as the result of the all-night session at Cassibile, General Ridgway on 4 September flew to Bizerte to brief his subordinate commanders and also to try to speed the division's move to Sicily. The division staff and representatives of the Troop Carrier Command worked most of the night of 4 September and developed detailed plans for shifting the division back to Sicily. On 5 and 6 September the division returned by air.⁴

Ready on 5 September, the final plan for the airborne operation near Rome projected a combined drop and air landing of the entire division in successive lifts.⁵ On the first night, Colonel Tucker's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (minus the 3d Battalion); Company C, 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion; Battery B, 80th Airborne Antiaircraft Battalion (with 57-mm. antitank guns); and signal, reconnaissance, and medical units were to land on the Cerveteri and Furbara airfields and push to Rome. On the second night, Colonel Gavin's 505th Parachute Infantry RCT would drop on the Guidonia, Littoria, and Centocelle airfields.

On the same day, 5 September, with everything in a rush and while the division was preparing to move back to Sicily, a radio message from AFHQ modified the plan. Now, in addition to landing on the airfields near Rome, the division would also send a small seaborne expedition to land at the mouth of the Tiber River: an artillery battalion (the 319th Glider Field Artillery Battalion was chosen); three antiaircraft batteries (of the 80th Airborne Antiaircraft Battalion); an infantry company (of the 504th Parachute Infantry); and three platoons of the 813th Tank Destroyer Battalion (attached for the operation). General Ridgway chose Lt. Col. William H. Bertsch Jr., to command this force.

Leaving Col. Harry L. Lewis, commander of the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment, to supervise the dispatch of the seaborne expedition, Ridgway flew to Sicily to supervise the final arrangements for the airborne operation. Barely in time, Lewis diverted the artillery battalion and antiaircraft batteries from the air movement to Sicily, and after some searching located the tank destroyers, stationed about forty miles from Bizerte, and started them moving to the dock area.

After much negotiating by telephone on 6 September, Colonel Lewis secured the promise of two LCI's, two LCT's, and perhaps some additional British vessels (whereabouts uncertain) for the seaborne force. When the British ships did arrive, confusion developed over their availability. To meet this emergency, the Bizerte harbor commander provided

several extra bottoms. Loading began on 7 September, and the men crowded aboard, though no one knew when the armada of three LCI's and one LST--the eventual composition of the task force--would sail. Having organized and loaded the seaborne force, Lewis flew to Sicily with the last remaining elements of the division, leaving Colonel Bertsch in charge of the seaborne troops then afloat in Bizerte harbor.⁶

In Sicily, the 504th and 505th Parachute Infantry Regiments were getting ready to head for Rome. Takeoff time was scheduled for 1830, 8 September, an hour selected to coincide with General Eisenhower's announcement of the Italian surrender. According to the Allied timetable, Badoglio was to make his announcement of the armistice to the Italian people shortly thereafter. On the following morning, at 0330, 9 September, the amphibious assault troops of Operation AVALANCHE would hit the Salerno beaches. At the same time, the airborne troops were to be in the process of securing Rome against the Germans.

To be absolutely certain of Italian cooperation at Rome and to work out the final details of the arrival of the American airborne troops, General Eisenhower had selected two American officers to make the perilous trip to the Italian capital: General Taylor, the 82d Airborne Division's artillery commander, and Col. William T. Gardiner of the Troop Carrier Command. At a briefing conducted at 15th Army Group headquarters, the Allied leaders decided that unless word to the contrary came from Taylor and Gardiner, the airborne operation would go as scheduled. Taylor could recommend changes as well as cancellation, all messages to be made in code by means of the radio given to Castellano and currently operating in Carboni's Military Intelligence Service in Rome. If Taylor was not satisfied with the Italian arrangements, if he judged that the airborne operation should be canceled, and if the Italian authorities refused to transmit that message, Taylor was to radio to AFHQ a single word--"innocuous."⁷

General Taylor and Colonel Gardiner left Palermo at 0200, 7 September, in a British PT boat and made rendezvous off Ustica Island with an Italian corvette. Escorted to a beach near Gaeta, the Americans came ashore. They entered a sedan belonging to the Italian Navy and transferred to a Red Cross ambulance on the outskirts of Gaeta. With their uniforms intentionally splattered with water to give the appearance of aviators shot down and rescued from the sea, they rode toward Rome without incident, though they passed several German patrols along the Appian Way. Just at nightfall, they entered the city.⁸

Taken to the Palazzo Caprara, opposite the War Office, the Americans found accommodations ready for them. Three officers met them: Col. Giorgio Salvi, chief of staff of Carboni's *Motorized Corps*; Lanza, who had accompanied Castellano to Lisbon as interpreter and who had become Carboni's aide; and Marchesi, who had accompanied Castellano to Cassibile.

Confronted with a surprisingly elaborate meal, the Americans dined with some impatience. Their hosts had not arranged to transact any business that evening, and it was only after becoming insistent that the Americans were able to get someone of high rank to come to see them.⁹

The Americans asked to see Carboni and Rossi. Only Carboni arrived at 2130. He proceeded to give his views of the military situation: the Germans had been building up their forces in Italy since Mussolini's overthrow; they had increased their forces around

Rome by 12,000 paratroopers equipped with heavy weapons, including 100 artillery pieces, mainly 88-mm. in caliber; they had raised the effective strength of the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* to 24,000 men with 150 heavy and 50 light tanks. In contrast, the Germans had ceased supplying the Italians with gasoline and munitions; the result was that his *Motorized Corps*, virtually immobile, had enough ammunition for only a few hours of combat.

As Carboni estimated the situation:

If the Italians declare an armistice, the Germans will occupy Rome, and the Italians can do little to prevent it. The simultaneous arrival of U.S. airborne troops would only provoke the Germans to more drastic action. Furthermore, the Italians would be unable to secure the airfields, cover the assembly and provide the desired logistical aid to the airborne troops. If it must be assumed that an Allied seaborne landing is impossible north of Rome, then the only hope of saving the Capital is to avoid overt acts against the Germans and await the effect of the Allied attacks in the South. He declared that he knew that the Allied landings would be at Salerno, which was too far away to aid directly in the defense of Rome. He stated that General Roatta shared his views.¹⁰

To the Americans, there was nothing new in the facts reported by Carboni. Castellano had explained fully at Lisbon and again at Cassibile. What was new was Carboni's realization--and if Carboni was to be believed, Roatta's too--that the main Allied landing would not be near Rome. What was disturbing was Carboni's "alarming pessimism certain to affect his conduct of operations in connection with GIANT TWO." Bypassing Rossi, the Americans asked to see Badoglio at once.¹¹

Rossi, as a matter of fact, was on his way to meet with Taylor and Gardiner. Carboni had telephoned to tell him that Taylor had informed him that the armistice announcement was to be made the next day, 8 September. Rossi said he would be right over and started immediately for the Caprara Palace. Upon his arrival, Carboni met him in an anteroom. "Everything has been fixed up," Carboni said. "We are now going to Badoglio to submit the telegram of postponement to him." Rossi wished to accompany Carboni and the Americans, but Carboni dissuaded him, saying, "No, it is not necessary; everything is already arranged."¹²

Carboni escorted the Americans to Badoglio's villa. As the result of an air raid a few minutes earlier, around midnight, the household was awake. Badoglio received Carboni at once. The Americans waited in an antechamber. After about fifteen minutes, Badoglio admitted them and greeted them cordially.

Taylor and Badoglio spoke French, their conversation being supplemented by English and Italian translated by Lanza. Badoglio repeated the figures of German troop strength exactly as Carboni had stated them earlier and advanced the same proposals: the armistice would have to be postponed, the airborne operation canceled.

To Taylor and Gardiner, it seemed that Carboni had used the fifteen minutes during which he had been alone with Badoglio in order to bring the marshal around to his point of view--wait until they rescue us. Badoglio's bland disregard of the terms signed by his accredited representative, Castellano, and his unwillingness to oppose the Germans were extremely disconcerting to the Americans.

When Taylor asked Badoglio whether he realized how deeply his government was committed as the result of the agreements already signed, Badoglio replied that the situation had changed--Castellano had not known all the facts. Italian troops could not possibly defend Rome. The only effect of an immediate announcement of the armistice would be a German occupation of the capital and the establishment of a neo-Fascist regime.

Taylor then asked whether the Italians feared a German occupation more than the possibility of full-scale Allied bombardment. With considerable emotion, Badoglio replied that he hoped the Allies would attack the Germans, that they would bomb the northern rail centers rather than the Italians, who were friends of the Allies and who were only awaiting the appropriate moment to join them.

When Taylor asked Badoglio how he expected the Allied leaders to react to his changed attitude, Badoglio made repeated professions of sympathy for the Allies and expressed the hope that Taylor would explain the situation and the new Italian point of view to General Eisenhower.

Taylor refused to do this. But he added that if the Allied command instructed him to do so, he would serve as a messenger for whatever communication Badoglio might wish to send. What Taylor was angling for was a definite statement for Allied headquarters, over Badoglio's own signature, of the Italian viewpoint and intention.

Badoglio thereupon wrote a message to General Eisenhower--a message canceling his earlier commitments. Written around 0100, 8 September, less than twenty-four hours before Eisenhower intended to publicize the armistice agreement, the message read:

Due to changes in the situation brought about by the disposition and strength of the German forces in the Rome area, it is no longer possible to accept an immediate armistice as this could provoke the occupation of the Capital and the violent assumption of the government by the Germans. Operation GIANT Two is no longer possible because of lack of forces to guarantee the airfields. General Taylor is available to return to Sicily to present the view of the government and await orders. Badoglio.¹³

At the same time, Taylor wrote a message of his own:

In view of the statement of Marshal Badoglio as to inability to declare armistice and to guarantee fields GIANT TWO is impossible. Reasons given for change are irreplaceable lack of gasoline and munitions and new German dispositions. Badoglio requests Taylor return to present government views. Taylor and Gardiner awaiting instructions. Acknowledge. Taylor.¹⁴

Imploring the Americans to trust him, Badoglio swore that there was no trickery in the change and spoke at some length of his honor as a soldier and officer. It was perhaps 0200, 8 September, when Taylor and Gardiner returned to the Palazzo Caprara and turned over both messages to Carboni for encoding and transmission.

To make certain that the Allied command understood the situation in Rome, Taylor sent a third message at 0820, a "summary of situation as stated by Italian authorities," including the Italian request for a cancellation of the airborne operation.¹⁵

Not long afterwards Taylor learned that AFHQ had acknowledged receipt of Badoglio's message. But he was concerned about his message recommending cancellation of GIANT II. Encoding long messages required, in some cases, three hours, decoding somewhat less. In order to be certain of stopping the airborne operation, scheduled to start at 1830 that afternoon, Taylor, at 1135, sent the message, "Situation innocuous."¹⁶

Meanwhile, Badoglio had telephoned Roatta early that morning to ask whether he agreed with Carboni's point of view. Roatta was cautious--he did not know what Carboni had said. On reaching Badoglio's house, Roatta learned what had taken place during the night. He then suggested that a proper course of action would be to send a high-ranking officer to explain matters fully to General Eisenhower and to point out what help the Allies would have to give in view of the situation in Rome. Badoglio agreed.¹⁷

After driving to *Comando Supremo* headquarters, Roatta informed Rossi of his meeting with Badoglio and prepared a memorandum of instructions for whoever would be selected to meet with General Eisenhower.

Rossi then went to the railroad station at 1000 to meet Ambrosio, who was returning from Turin. Rossi informed him of the latest developments--Allied convoys were headed for Salerno, the armistice announcement was scheduled for that afternoon, and Badoglio was planning to send a high-ranking officer to Allied headquarters to request basic changes in the Allied plans.¹⁸

Shortly before noon the Italians took this request to the American officers and asked them to take along a representative on their return flight. As General Taylor later reported:

The Italians showed great concern over the possible reaction of the Allied Chiefs to their reversal of position on the armistice. The American officers reinforced their apprehension by emphasizing the gravity of the situation in which the Badoglio government found itself. The Italians repeatedly urged the American officers to return and plead their case whereas the latter declined to be anything other than messengers.¹⁹

Finally, however, the Americans agreed to have a senior Italian officer accompany them to AFHQ. Roatta was first proposed and then immediately withdrawn, for he was considered indispensable in dealing with the Germans. He had an engagement with Kesselring's chief of staff, Westphal, an appointment which he felt he could not cancel without arousing German suspicion. Rossi was then selected to go to Algiers. At 1140, therefore, Taylor sent another message to AFHQ: "In case Taylor is ordered to return to Sicily, authorities at Rome desire to send with him the Deputy Chief of the Supreme General Staff, General Rossi, to clarify issues. Is this visit authorized?"²⁰

Thus, Rossi's mission, which had been inadvertently forecast a day earlier by the message to Castellano announcing a "communication of fundamental importance," was not in bad faith. Indeed, Rossi acted entirely with the best of intentions. On the other hand, all members of the Italian High Command were naive in wishfully thinking that the Allies would, or could, alter their plans radically at the last minute. What they wanted was a delay in announcing the armistice until they were certain that the Allies would occupy Rome. And they had a basis in their belief that Eisenhower was not altogether certain of proclaiming the surrender on 8 September, for certain cues were lacking. Initial

arrangements with Castellano had included a special BBC program of Verdi's music as indicating the date of the announcement, a BBC discussion of Nazi activities in the Argentine as further indication, and finally a special message via the secret radio to give the Italians several hours specific warning.

In reality, AFHQ on 6 September had canceled the program of Verdi's music. The Italians had acknowledged receipt of this information, but Carboni had apparently failed to disseminate it.²¹ As for the second cue, General Rooks, the AFHQ G-3, had on 6 September requested the BBC to discuss or refer to Nazi activities in Argentina during its broadcast of 1130 or 1230 on 8 September.²² Yet for some unknown reason, London failed to make the broadcast.²³ Finally, Rooks on 6 September also directed that the warning order be sent to Rome via the secret radio.²⁴ But this too, apparently, was not sent, perhaps because by then General Eisenhower was in direct communication with Marshal Badoglio.²⁵

Consequently, when Rossi left Rome in the late afternoon of 8 September in company with Taylor and Gardiner, he had the vivid impression that none of the signals warning of the date of the armistice announcement had been issued. AFHQ, he reasoned, must be holding up the proclamation pending his arrival there. And did he not have General Eisenhower's permission to make the trip?²⁶

Actually, he did not. Taylor's message asking whether Rossi might accompany the Americans on their return had not yet reached AFHQ when Taylor received, at 1500, AFHQ's message ordering the American officers to return to North Africa. Despite the lack of authorization for Rossi's visit, Taylor and Gardiner decided to take Rossi--and an interpreter, a Lieutenant Tagliavia--with them on their own responsibility. Though a message from AFHQ later reached Rome granting Rossi permission to come, the party had already departed from the capital.²⁷

Rossi therefore assumed that his mission had Eisenhower's approval. The basic misunderstanding lay in the fact that the radiogram ordering Taylor and Gardiner to return was a portion of a message Eisenhower sent to Badoglio, a message encoded and sent in four parts. Had the complete message been revealed at once, Rossi would have known in advance the complete futility of his errand. Without such knowledge, he had the impression that he still had time to explain the situation to the Allied commander. And when the complete text of Eisenhower's message became available in Rome, Carboni, more than likely, withheld the vital information from his superiors and associates.²⁸

Meanwhile, after canceling an interview with Ambrosio scheduled for 1830, Taylor and Gardiner rode the Red Cross ambulance to the Centocelle airfield. Hoping that their messages recommending cancellation of GIANT II had reached AFHQ in time to stop the paratroopers, they, together with Rossi and Tagliavia, boarded a tri-motored Savoia-Marchetti bomber. The plane took off at 1705. Several hours later it landed near Bizerte. The American and Italian officers were then driven to AFHQ to report to the Allied commander in chief.²⁹

The Announcement

On the Allied side, two days before Taylor's party arrived in Bizerte, intimations of the turmoil in Rome were completely lacking. The Allies informed Castellano on 6 September

that arrangements were proceeding smoothly. The Italian military mission was to leave from Rome that evening. The Allies were working hard to complete the preparations for GIANT II.³⁰

On that day General Eisenhower informed the CCS that he had made the final adjustments in his planning to take maximum advantage of the Italian surrender. The British Eighth Army was moving through the toe of Italy. The U.S. Fifth Army was on its way to the Salerno beaches--without the help of an airborne operation but with an increase in seaborne lift, secured by diverting some landing craft from the British assault across the Strait of Messina. The 82d Airborne Division was preparing to assist the Italian Government in preventing the Germans from occupying Rome, the Italians having promised to protect the airfields selected for the airborne operation. Surrender of the Italian Fleet would make it possible to think of releasing some Allied cruisers and destroyers from Mediterranean duty. The Italians had offered to open the ports of Taranto and Brindisi in the heel of Italy, and Eisenhower planned to move the British 1st Airborne Division by warship to Taranto as soon as the Italian Navy was under Allied control.³¹

Optimism seemed in order. On 7 September, the secret radio in Rome acknowledged receipt of the stand-by warning order sent the day before. The Allies informed the Italians that two propaganda officers would accompany the first American troops into Rome in order to help the Minister of Information announce the change of sides to the Italian people.³²

That afternoon the Allies brought Castellano from Cassibile (where he had remained since signing the armistice on 3 September) to Tunis. From here Castellano made a hurried flight to Bizerte where one designated member of the military mission, a Captain Giuriati of the Italian Navy, had refused to give information to British naval officers on the grounds that he had received no instructions. After informing Giuriati that the armistice had been signed and that he could in conscience give the information requested, Castellano flew back to Tunis.

The other members of the military mission had in the meantime arrived in Tunis. Although most of them were without instructions, some even being unaware of the signing of the armistice, a few members brought new instructions for Castellano: the text of Badoglio's proposed armistice announcement for Eisenhower's approval; also requests that the Italian Fleet sail to Sardinia rather than to Allied ports, that the airborne operation at Rome be executed two days after the main Allied invasion, and that Castellano make sure of maximum Allied air support immediately after the armistice announcement.³³

Castellano took up these points with General Eisenhower that evening. The Allied commander made a change in the wording of the last paragraph of Badoglio's proclamation to encourage Italian military opposition to the Germans. He permitted no changes in the program as agreed upon by the armistice--the Italian Fleet was to follow instructions and not sail to Sardinia, the airborne operation would be launched simultaneously with the armistice announcement rather than two days after the invasion of the Italian mainland. He assured Castellano that all possible air support would be furnished operations in Italy.

Though the encoding process, which required several hours, was started promptly, these instructions were not transmitted to Rome until after midnight.³⁴

Not long after the final portion of the instructions had gone from AFHQ, at 0530, 8 September, AFHQ received the message from Badoglio that Taylor had transmitted after midnight. Decoding the message took until after 0800. By that time, General Eisenhower had departed Algiers for a visit to the AFHQ advance command post at Bizerte.

When the contents of Badoglio's message, which renounced the armistice, became known in Algiers, the AFHQ staff was thrown off balance. The staff forwarded Badoglio's message to Eisenhower, and at the same time sent a message to the CCS asking whether or not to proceed with the armistice announcement and stating its own belief that the airborne operation would have to be canceled. Perhaps Ambrosio, whom Castellano and Zanussi had mentioned as the only possible successor to Badoglio, might be induced to depart from Rome, announce the armistice from another city, possibly Palermo, and carry out the provisions of the agreement. In any case, they urged, the Badoglio government itself deserved no consideration because Badoglio was retracting a signed document completed in good faith by his authorized representative.³⁵

Already nettled by the action of his staff in referring the problem to the Combined Chiefs, Eisenhower was positively enraged by Badoglio's conduct. He immediately drafted a strong reply.³⁶

As for Castellano, it appeared to him that Badoglio had scuttled the success he had so patiently achieved. Around 1100, Strong called on him and showed him a copy of Badoglio's message. Shocked, Castellano prepared a message urging Badoglio to adhere to the original agreed-upon course of action. He then accompanied Strong to Bizerte.

After being made to wait for half an hour in a courtyard where he was completely ignored, Castellano was ushered into a room. At a table sat Eisenhower, flanked by Alexander and Admiral Cunningham and an impressive array of other high-ranking Allied officers. Castellano saluted. No one returned it. He had the feeling he was facing a court-martial.

Eisenhower motioned Castellano to be seated. Then he read Badoglio's message. Finally, the Allied commander made a statement. If Badoglio did not announce the armistice that evening as agreed, he declared, the inference would be inescapable--the Italian Government and Castellano himself had played an ugly role in the armistice negotiations.

At these words, Castellano rose to reply. Neither he nor his government, he said, was guilty of bad faith. Something extraordinary must have developed in Rome. He begged General Eisenhower to reserve judgment until Badoglio should reply to Castellano's message asking adherence to the armistice provisions.

General Eisenhower knew the content of Castellano's message, he said, but he himself was sending a reply to Badoglio. He then read to Castellano his own message, which was in the process of being encoded for transmission:

Part 1. I intend to broadcast the existence of the armistice at the hour originally planned. If you or any part of your armed forces fail to cooperate as previously agreed I will publish to the world the full record of this affair.

Part 2. I do not accept your message of this morning postponing the armistice. Your accredited representative has signed an agreement with me and the sole hope of Italy is bound up in your adherence to that agreement. On your earnest representation the airborne operations are temporarily suspended.

Part 3. You have sufficient troops near Rome to secure the temporary safety of the city but I require full information on which to plan earliest the airborne operations. Send General Taylor to Bizerte at once by aeroplane. Notify in advance time of arrival and route of aircraft.

Part 4. Plans have been made on the assumption that you were acting in good faith and we have been prepared to carry out future operations on that basis. Failure now on your part to carry out the full obligations to the signed agreement will have the most serious consequences for your country. No future action of yours could then restore any confidence whatever in your good faith and consequently the dissolution of your government and nation would ensue.³⁷

General Eisenhower then dismissed Castellano, who returned to Tunis to spend the rest of the day in the greatest anxiety.

General Eisenhower informed the CCS of his course of action.³⁸ He had no reason to be concerned with the action of his staff in informing the Combined Chiefs of Badoglio's broken promise. Exchanges between London and Washington showed the Prime Minister and the President in full agreement. The CCS urged Eisenhower to make whatever public announcement would most facilitate military operations, without regard for possible embarrassment to the Italian Government.³⁹

Whatever else might be necessary, the airborne operation had to be canceled. AFHQ sent a message to the division headquarters in Sicily, but because this would take so much time for encoding, transmission, decoding, and delivery, a quicker method of getting word to the paratroopers was necessary. General Lemnitzer therefore flew from Bizerte to Sicily. His pilot, excellent at night flying, became confused in daylight. His take-off was shaky, his navigation worse. Not until Mount Etna loomed up was the pilot able to identify his location. He changed his course and flew toward the division command post, near Licata, but by then it was very close to the scheduled hour for the start of the operation.⁴⁰

At various airfields in Sicily during the afternoon of 8 September, paratroopers had begun to load into about 150 aircraft. At Licata, where the headquarters of the division and of the Troop Carrier Command were located, General Ridgway waited near a radio. Eisenhower was planning to broadcast his armistice announcement at 1830, Badoglio was to make his announcement immediately afterwards. The latter was to signal the start of Operation GIANT II.

From Bizerte harbor, Colonel Bertsch's small seaborne force had put out to sea that morning under sealed orders delivered to the flotilla commander. Though Bertsch suspected that he was bound for the Rome area, he in fact knew only that his destination was point "FF" on an unknown map (in actuality, a beach at the mouth of the Tiber River). If no one met him at "FF," he was to move on to "GG" (a point halfway between the mouth of the river and Rome).⁴¹

At AFHQ there was nothing else to do but wait until the time of the surrender broadcast announcements. At 1830, precisely on schedule, though no word had come from Badoglio in reply to Eisenhower's message, the Allied commander broadcast the news of the armistice from Radio Algiers:

This is General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces. The Italian Government has surrendered its armed forces unconditionally. As Allied Commander-in-Chief, I have granted a military armistice, the terms of which have been approved by the Governments of the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Thus I am acting in the interests of the United Nations.

The Italian Government has bound itself by these terms without reservation. The armistice was signed by my representative and the representative of Marshal Badoglio and it becomes effective this instant. Hostilities between the armed forces of the United Nations and those of Italy terminate at once.

All Italians who now act to help eject the German aggressor from Italian soil will have the assistance and support of the United Nations.

Radio Algiers then broadcast a survey of the negotiations to explain how the armistice had been reached. But no announcement came from Badoglio over Radio Rome. After waiting ten minutes, Eisenhower authorized Radio Algiers to broadcast in English the text of Badoglio's proclamation:

The Italian Government, recognizing the impossibility of continuing the unequal struggle against the overwhelming power of the enemy, with the object of avoiding further and more grievous harm to the nation, has requested an armistice from General Eisenhower, Commander-in-Chief of the Anglo-American Allied Force. This request has been granted. The Italian forces will, therefore, cease all acts of hostility against the Anglo-American forces wherever they may be met. They will, however, oppose attacks from any other quarter.⁴²

At Licata, Sicily, this broadcast signaled the start of GIANT II. Fortunately, only minutes earlier Lemnitzer's pilot had brought his plane to ground. Sixty-two planes carrying paratroopers were already circling into formation to prepare to go to Rome when word of the cancellation came through. About the same time, the telegram sent earlier by AFHQ reached the division headquarters. As for Bertsch's seaborne task force, news of the cancellation reached the flotilla in time to divert the force to the Gulf of Salerno and to a rendezvous with the AVALANCHE convoys.⁴³

The atmosphere was tense in Algiers, where General Eisenhower and his staff waited for Badoglio's voice over Radio Rome. Had the Germans already seized the Italian Government to prevent Badoglio from broadcasting? Could Ambrosio escape from the capital and make the announcement elsewhere?

The questions were disturbing because the AVALANCHE convoys were fast approaching the Gulf of Salerno. When the ground troops landed on the following morning of 9 September, would they find Italian and German units embroiled in conflict? Or would they find them joined together in overwhelming numbers ready to oppose the amphibious landing? Unless

the voice of Badoglio came over the air, the Allies would not know until the moment the assault troops went ashore.

Footnotes

- [1.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.IX.43*, 5 and 6 Sep 43.
- [2.](#) *OKW/WFSt, KTB, 1.-31.IX.43*, 7 Sep 43; MS #C-093 (Warlimont), pp. 164-68.
- [3.](#) A detailed account of the Salerno invasion may be found in Blumenson, [Salerno to Anzio](#).
- [4.](#) 82d AB Div in Sicily and Italy, pp. 41-47; Rpt of TCC Activities Including the Italian Invasion, vol. II; Ltr, Ridgway to Eisenhower, 25 Oct 43, in above rpt, p. 120; Gavin, *Airborne Warfare*, pp. 19-24; Msg 640, AFHQ to Br X Corps, 5 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, I.
- [5.](#) 82d AB Div FO 5, 5 Sep 43, 82d AB Div G-3 Jnl, 1-15 Sep 43; Msg A.284, MAC to AHQ Malta, 7 Sep 43; Msg A.281, MAC to NATAF, 7 Sep 43; and Msg 318, NATAF to MAC, 6 Sep 43, all in 0403/4/1029. See also Tregaskis, *Invasion Diary*, pp. 99-100.
- [6.](#) Ridgway Ltr cited above, n. 4; 82d AB Div in Sicily and Italy, pp. 47-48; Msg 975, AFHQ to 82d AB Div, 5 Sep 43; Msg 1086, AFHQ to Fifth U.S. Army, 6 Sep 43; and Telg 1750, AFHQ to CinC, Med, 7 Sep 43, all in 0100/4/4, I.
- [7.](#) Program for GIANT II, 6 Sep 43, 82d AB Div G-3 Jnl, 1-15 Sep 43; Msgs 822 and 823, AFHQ to 15th AGp, 5 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, I.
- [8.](#) Maugeri, *From the Ashes of Disgrace*, pp. 170-77; 82d AB Div in Sicily and Italy, p. 56, which quotes in full Taylor's report on his mission to Rome, a report also in 0100/4/330 and in 0100/12A/65, II.
- [9.](#) See David Brown, "The Inside Story of Italy's Surrender," *Saturday Evening Post* (September 16, 1944), p. 65; Richard Thruelson and Elliott Arnold, "Secret Mission to Rome," *Harper's Magazine* (October, 1944), p. 466.
- [10.](#) As quoted in Taylor Rpt. Carboni's account (*L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pages 28-29) is highly fictitious. His statement that Taylor revealed the imminent invasion at Salerno is not true. Nor did Taylor charge Castellano with misrepresenting the situation to the Allies at Cassibile. See also, Tregaskis, *Invasion Diary*, pp. 102-08, quoting an interview with Gardiner.
- [11.](#) Taylor Rpt, pars. 2 and 4.
- [12.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 35; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 151-52.
- [13.](#) Taylor Rpt, Incl I. There are slight variations in the English translation made at AFHQ, where the message was received at 0535 and decoded at 0810. See *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 333-35.
- [14.](#) Taylor Rpt, Incl 2.
- [15.](#) *Ibid.*, Incl 3.
- [16.](#) *Ibid.*, par. 8.
- [17.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 36; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 311; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 177.
- [18.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 36-37; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 156-57.

- [19](#). Taylor Rpt, par. 9.
- [20](#). *Ibid.*, Incl 5; Capitulation of Italy, p. 336; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 177.
- [21](#). Capitulation of Italy, p. 283.
- [22](#). Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 358, 6 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 294, with copy in 0100/4/4, I.
- [23](#). In response to a request by Smyth, Mr. Ellis Porter, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, received this reply from Mr. Orin W. Kaye, Jr., Chief, London Bureau, FBIS: "Have now obtained from BBC copies of both 11:30-11:45 GMT and 12:30-12:45 GMT Italian show of 8 September 1943. Neither repeat neither--any reference to Argentina or Nazi activity therein." In reply to further requests by Smyth, additional replies were received on 1 November and 1 December 1948. The second reply reported: "Word had now been received from the Librarian of the Foreign Office that a complete search had been made through the file of broadcasts to Italy and no trace has been found of a broadcast referring to Nazi activities in the Argentine." The documents are in OCMH files. See also *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 37.
- [24](#). Capitulation of Italy, p. 320; Interv, Smyth with Rooks, 28 Sep 48.
- [25](#). The message ordered by Rooks does not appear in the "Monkey-Drizzle" code-named series of messages in Capitulation of Italy.
- [26](#). Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, p. 157.
- [27](#). Taylor Rpt, par. 10; Capitulation of Italy, p. 337.
- [28](#). *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 38; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, p. 158. General Eisenhower's message is given in full in Capitulation of Italy, page 341; with one slight variation, it appears in Diary Office CinC, Book VIII, page A-737.
- [29](#). Taylor Rpt, par. 10.
- [30](#). Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 179.
- [31](#). Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 359, 6 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 291-2.
- [32](#). Msg 13, "Monkey" to "Drizzle," received 1304, 7 Sep 43, and Msg 38, "Drizzle" to "Monkey," 7 Sep 43, both in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 299-300.
- [33](#). Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 181.
- [34](#). Msg 40 (TOR 0039, dispatched 0455), "Drizzle" to "Monkey"; Msg 41 (TOR 0015, dispatched 0445); Msg 42 (TOR 0101, dispatched 0430), 8 Sep 43, all in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 330-32. Cf. Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 182.
- [35](#). Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 365, 8 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 347. The plan for Ambrosio as alternate for Badoglio is mentioned in: Min of Confs with Castellano at Cassibile, 3 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 245; Telg 129, Rooks to Gen Sugden, 4 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 261-62; Memo by McClure, 5 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 272; Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 356, 5 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 279-80.
- General Eisenhower, General Rooks, Brigadier Strong, and Captain Royer Dick remember only that such a plan was discussed. See Intervs, Smyth with Eisenhower, 16 Feb 49; with Rooks, 28 Sep 48; with Strong, 29 Oct 47; and Ltr. Dick to Smyth, 5 Nov 48; MS #P-058; Project #46, 1 Feb-8 Sep 43, Question 21.

- [36.](#) Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, p. 186; Intervs, Smyth with Eisenhower, 16 Feb 49, and with Lemnitzer, 4 Mar 47.
- [37.](#) Castellano. *Come firmai*, pp. 183-85; Text from Capitulation of Italy, p. 341, where it is listed as No. 45 to "Monkey," 8 Sep 43. In transmission, the text was divided into four parts as indicated. Another copy is in Diary Office CinC, Book VIII, p. A-737. Castellano (*Come firmai*, pages 184-85) correctly gives the Italian text.
- [38.](#) Telg W-9443/1972, FREEDOM to AGWAR, 8 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 354.
- [39.](#) Telg 7196, Marshall to Eisenhower or Smith, 8 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 352.
- [40.](#) Interv with Lemnitzer, 4 Mar 47; See also Tregaskis, *Invasion Diary*, pp. 101-102, and Morison, *Sicily-Salerno-Anzio*, pp. 239-42.
- [41.](#) 82d AB Div in Sicily and Italy, p. 48; See also Telg A.277, MAC to AHQ Malta, 6 Sep 43, 0403/4/1029.
- [42.](#) Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service, Federal Communications Commission, *Daily Report Foreign Radio Broadcasts*, Wednesday, September 8, 1943.
- [43.](#) Interv with Lemnitzer, 4 Mar 47; 82d AB Div in Sicily and Italy, p. 48; Telg A.288, MAC to CinC Med, 8 Sep 43, 0403/4/1029; 82d AB Div G-3 Jnl, 1-15 Sep 43.

Chapter XXVII The Surrender

Badoglio's Announcement

On the afternoon of 8 September, General Roatta, the Army chief, drove from Rome to Monterotondo, his headquarters just outside the city. He found a message from Kesselring. Because air observation indicated an imminent Allied landing near Naples, Kesselring asked permission, in accord with protocol, to move the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* southward to meet the invasion.¹

Suspecting that the request disguised a desire to move the division closer to the capital, Roatta stalled. It would be well, he replied, to defer the movement until the following morning in order to avoid any incident between the German troops and the *Ariete* and *Piave Divisions* north of Rome. When Rintelen telephoned and renewed Kesselring's request, Roatta yielded, though he limited the German movement to advance elements and, during darkness, to a certain line north of the capital.

Later that afternoon Kesselring's chief of staff, Westphal, telephoned to confirm his appointment with Roatta for early that evening. Roatta said he would be waiting.

At 1800, Roatta received a telephone message from Ambrosio, who urgently requested Roatta's presence at a conference with the King. Assuming that the conference would explore the methods of persuading General Eisenhower to postpone the armistice announcement, and hopeful of its success, Roatta felt it expedient to remain on good terms with the Germans a little while longer. He decided to stay in his office to meet with Westphal and sent his deputy, Generale di Corpo d'Armata Giuseppe De Stefanis, to attend the conference with the King.

Actually, the meeting with the King was prompted by Eisenhower's message to Badoglio insisting that Badoglio keep his word and announce the armistice in accord with his agreement. The message had thrown the Italian Government and High Command into panic. Until the message arrived, at approximately 1730, 8 September, an hour before the scheduled announcement, the Italians had assumed that the climactic moment would be postponed, an assumption based on the fact that Taylor and Gardiner had agreed to take Rossi to North Africa. To them, this had meant that AFHQ was willing to enter into new discussion of joint Italo-Allied plans. Certainly, therefore, it appeared that General Eisenhower would take no decisive action until he heard Rossi's "communication of fundamental importance." And Roatta would have a few more days to complete his preparations for the defense of Rome.

Eisenhower's telegram had destroyed these illusions. The opening sentence alone left no room for misunderstanding: "If you or any part of your armed forces fail to co-operate as previously agreed I will publish to the world full record of this affair." This was precisely what Guariglia, the Foreign Minister, had feared when he learned that Castellano had put into writing Italy's willingness to surrender. Worst of all, Eisenhower had the power to frustrate any attempt to patch things up with the Germans.²

Upon receiving the full text of the telegram, Badoglio summoned those most intimately involved in the armistice negotiations to assist him in presenting the problem to the sovereign. Attending the conference in the Quirinal Palace at 1815, 8 September, fifteen minutes before Eisenhower's broadcast, were: the King; Acquarone, Minister of the Royal Household; Badoglio, Head of Government; Guariglia, Foreign Minister; Ambrosio, chief of *Comando Supremo*; Carboni, in his capacity as chief of military intelligence; Ammiraglio di Squadra Raffaele de Courten, Minister and Chief of Staff, Navy; Sandalli, Minister and Chief of Staff, Air Force; Sorice, Minister of War; De Stefanis, deputy chief of the Army General Staff and representing Roatta; Puntoni, senior aide-de-camp to the King; and, at Ambrosio's insistence, Major Marchesi, who was asked to attend because of his familiarity with the negotiations Castellano had conducted in Sicily, at which Marchesi had been present.

Ambrosio opened the meeting with a short exposition of the military situation. The Allied armistice date, he said, had caught the Italians with their Army plans not quite complete.

Sorice, who knew little of the previous negotiations, and Carboni, who had followed the negotiations with great care, both agreed that the Allies had broken faith with the Italian Government by moving up the date of the announcement. Because of their brusque demand, Sorice and Carboni believed that the Allies deserved no consideration. Both urged rejection of the armistice, particularly since the German reprisals would be terrible. Carboni proposed that the King disavow Castellano's negotiations, if necessary dismiss Badoglio, and thereby indicate that the pledges given in Badoglio's name had not been authorized. Sorice thought this a good idea.

In the discussion that followed, some generals appeared blind to every aspect of the situation except the impossibility of having the Italian armed forces face the Germans alone. Eisenhower's telegram, they maintained, was nothing but a trap to compromise them with the Nazis.

Though not asked to speak, Major Marchesi felt that his presence at the signing of the armistice justified his comments. He rose and presented to the senior generals and statesmen a grim picture of the consequences in store for the Royal Government if it failed to keep its pledge. He explained the import of General Eisenhower's threat: if the Allies published the surrender documents, the government would have no chance of continuing the alliance with Germany.

After Marchesi's remarks, Guariglia, seated at the King's left, rose to speak. He had not approved the way in which the military negotiations had been conducted, he declared, but at this stage it would be absurd to disavow them. Disavowal would leave Italy in the position of facing simultaneously the hostility of both the Anglo-Americans and the Germans. Ambrosio expressed agreement with this view.

Thirty minutes had gone by when word arrived of a Reuters dispatch from London announcing the armistice. Carboni promptly proposed that the government issue an immediate denial. But a few minutes later, when the news came that Eisenhower himself was broadcasting a detailed statement of the armistice, the councilors' spirits sank to the nadir. Support for Carboni's proposal to disavow everything vanished.

In Monterotondo, Roatta was conferring with Westphal and the new German Military Attaché, Toussaint, on joint measures to meet the Allied invasion when the German Embassy telephoned. The American Government in Washington, the embassy spokesman revealed, had announced an armistice with Italy. Stunned by the timing of the announcement, Roatta had little difficulty convincing Westphal and Toussaint that he knew nothing of an armistice. He denounced the broadcast from Washington as an Anglo-American trick designed to embroil the Italians and Germans in warfare.³

Westphal and Toussaint departed immediately. Roatta decided to move his staff back to the Palazzo Caprara in Rome. Even before the Germans were out of the building, Zanussi alerted other members of the headquarters for the move and began to select papers to be burned. In the Quirinal Palace at the royal conference, Badoglio expressed no conviction, even at that late hour, on what course the government ought to follow. He did no more than explain to the King the alternatives which he faced. The sovereign might disavow Badoglio's pledges, declare that Badoglio had contracted them without the King's knowledge, and accept Badoglio's resignation, which he, Badoglio, was ready to offer. Or, the King could accept the conditions on which General Eisenhower insisted, regardless of the consequences.

Both alternatives were staggering. The Allies demanded complete and abject surrender. They refused to believe that the Italian Government was not a free agent. They shared none of their plans. They had avoided giving assurance of their readiness to occupy the country whose surrender they demanded.

What the Italians were not aware of was the politico-military Allied strategy. They did not know that the Allies were assaulting the Italian mainland with limited means, in effect, a holding attack subordinate to a cross-Channel invasion of northwest Europe. Overestimating the strength available to AFHQ for commitment on the Italian peninsula, they did not realize how vital the armistice was to the Allies.

As for what the Italians could expect from Germany, there was only the grim prospect that the Germans would wage war to the bitter end. They expected to fight on the Italian peninsula and use it as the glacis of Fortress Germany. Yet they could not altogether conceal their intention to withdraw to the line of the northern Apennines. In this case, there was a basis at least for a slight hope that Rome might be spared the destruction of combat.

Since Badoglio could not or would not make up his mind on what the government ought to do, the King decided. It was no longer possible, Victor Emmanuel III concluded, to change sides once again. Italy was committed to the armistice.⁴

The decision made, Badoglio hastened to Radio Rome. At 1945, 8 September, an hour late, he read his announcement of the armistice, following exactly the text approved by AFHQ. The broadcasting station recorded the announcement and repeated it at intervals throughout the night.⁵

To the Italian people, Badoglio's armistice announcement came as startling news. His only other public statement had been his declaration on assuming office that the war would continue. The abrupt change itself was a shock, and the announcement gave little explanation--no indication of swift and harsh German reprisals, no suggestion that

Germany had become the enemy, no guidance for the future. Badoglio merely acknowledged Italy's defeat, and this had been apparent for some time.⁶

As for the armed forces, the radio broadcast offered no strong and definite instructions for the behavior of the few hundred aircraft, the effective and powerful fleet, the sixty divisions of about 1,700,000 men who, though woefully ill-equipped, still comprised a disciplined force. Without clear directives from a central authority in Rome, the military forces did not know what to do. The vague orders issued before the armistice had reflected Badoglio's indecision. He had not wished, and had not permitted, the armed forces to organize their plans and dispositions for real anti-German action. Hoping to the last to get an Allied guarantee to occupy Rome and protect his government, thereby gaining more time, Badoglio had refused to risk anything that might have brought a showdown with the Germans.

Flight of the King and High Command

At Monterotondo, as soon as Badoglio's announcement confirmed the news of the armistice, Roatta telephoned *OB SUEDE* headquarters twice to assure the Germans on his honor as an officer that when he had given his word to Westphal, he had known nothing of the surrender.

Fifteen minutes later, Roatta issued an order to the three Italian corps defending Rome to man the roadblocks around the capital. German troops leaving the city were to be permitted to go; German columns moving toward the capital were to be stopped. All units were to "react energetically against any attempt to penetrate [into Rome] by force or against any hostile actions whatsoever."⁷

The order was defensive in nature. Though reports had come in that two Italian sentinels had been killed by German troops nearby, Roatta declined to order his forces to attack. He apparently hoped that the Germans would withdraw to the north.

The initial reaction of the staff of the German Embassy to the news of the armistice encouraged this Italian hope. The announcement of the armistice had taken the Germans by surprise. Ambassador Rahn had had an audience with the King shortly before noon, 8 September, and though he attempted to discover some indication of future Italian policy, he had learned nothing. Embassy members burned papers in haste, made frenzied arrangements to evacuate civilians. About 2100, the Chargé d'Affaires requested Italian armed protection, and Rahn took his embassy staff posthaste by special train to the northern border. For the first two hours after the armistice announcement, the German civilians seemed intent on escaping, the German military forces appeared to be trying to withdraw.⁸ To expedite the hoped-for exodus, Ambrosio issued instructions around 2200 to let the Germans pass if they presented themselves at the roadblocks peaceably.⁹

The King, his family, and Badoglio had, in the meantime, taken refuge for the night in the Ministry of War, which had a detachment of armed guards. Ambrosio also installed his office there. By 2300, Roatta had transferred the key members of his staff and set up his command post in Rome.¹⁰

Soon after midnight, in the early minutes of 9 September, Ambrosio issued the first order to the Italian military forces. Because *Promemoria 2*, the order drafted several days earlier for the forces in the Balkans, Greece, and the Aegean Islands, had not reached the various headquarters in Tirana, Athens, and Rhodes, Ambrosio repeated and reaffirmed the provisions of the earlier directive. He made one addition: "Do not in any case take the initiative in hostile acts against the Germans."¹¹ Though the directive went to Roatta for his guidance, Roatta refused to transmit it to the Army troops under his command because he felt that the final prohibition contained in the addition was in conflict with his own *Memoria 44*, dispatched several days earlier.¹²

Ambrosio's order had not yet gone out when the rosy picture of German reaction to the armistice announcement began to assume dark shadows. Reports coming in to *Comando Supremo* and the Army revealed that German paratroop units along the coast near Rome had surrounded Italian batteries and had begun to attack strongpoints of the *Piacenza Division*. From Milan came a telephone call reporting a German attack and asking for instructions. Though these could have been nothing more than attempts by the Germans to secure their lines of withdrawal to the north, the movement of the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* against the outposts of the *Ariete Division* seemed significant--and ominous, clearly not part of a northward withdrawal. Roatta then ordered the three corps in defense of Rome to close all barricades and oppose German moves with force. Not long afterwards, a telephone intercept between the German Foreign Office and the Embassy in Rome gave rise to greater alarm. The *2d Parachute Division*, the message stated, was disarming adjacent Italian units; the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* was marching south on Rome; and both divisions were confident of success.¹³

Should, then, Roatta put into effect *Memoria 44*, the directive that had alerted each army headquarters in Italy and Sardinia for specified offensive operations? Carboni, De Stefanis, General Utili (Roatta's chief of operations), and Zanussi urged Roatta to issue the order. Roatta declined to take the responsibility since he would be contradicting and disobeying the latest *Comando Supremo* directive, but he put the question to Ambrosio. Ambrosio decided that such a serious decision needed the assent or concurrence of Badoglio. Badoglio could not be found.

The result was that *Memoria 44* was never put into effect.¹⁴ Badoglio's radio announcement, which had failed to launch the armed forces on an anti-German course, remained the determining guide. Having declined to resist the movement of German troops into Italy and having acquiesced in the movement of German troops to key positions, Badoglio now failed to authorize the attempt by Italian ground forces to save themselves and their honor. The only effort toward this end was an order issued by Ambrosio at 0220, 9 September:

The Italian Government has requested an armistice of General Eisenhower, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces. On the basis of the conditions of armistice, beginning today 8 September at 19:45 hours, every act of hostility on our part should cease toward the Anglo-American forces. The Italian Armed Forces should, however, react with maximum decision to offensives which come from any other quarter whatsoever.¹⁵

This directive too was strictly defensive, its limit precisely set, by inference at least, by the framework of Badoglio's announcement. As for Roatta, he too confined himself to ordering his troops to react against force if hostile German acts were verified.¹⁶

Increasingly serious reports continued to pour into Rome--a concentric German attack against the capital, a *2d Parachute Division* advance against the *Granatieri Division* south of the city, threats against strongpoints along the Via Ostiense and Via Laurentina, clashes north of Rome between the *Ariete* and *3d Panzer Grenadier Divisions*, a movement in unknown strength north from Frascati, and about 0330, notice from the *XVII Corps* at Velletri that the *15th Panzer Grenadier Division* was marching from the Garigliano River area north along the Via Appia with its forward point already seventy miles from the capital.¹⁷

The most dangerous threat was the situation arising from the clash of German paratroopers and the *Granatieri Division* south of Rome. To reinforce the southern defenses, Roatta at 0330 ordered two reserve groups of the *Ariete Division* to move from north of the city to the south, the separate *bersaglieri* regiment to move south as a reserve, and all anti-aircraft and field artillery units along the right bank of the Tiber River to come into support of the forces defending along the Via Ostiense.¹⁸

Having taken these steps, Roatta spoke with Carboni. The latter estimated that a defense of Rome could last no more than twenty-four hours. Shortly thereafter, Roatta received word of German forces southeast of Rome engaged with Italian troops not far from the Via Tiburtina. Thus, the Germans were surrounding the capital, and the Via Tiburtina remained the only exit still open. Of an Allied approach to Rome, there was no sign. The sea south of Naples was filled with Allied ships; north of Naples, the sea was empty.¹⁹

Shortly before 0400, Roatta reported the situation to Ambrosio. Meeting Badoglio soon afterwards, Roatta, in the presence of Prince Humbert and the King's senior aide, repeated his report. If the King and the government had any thoughts of escape, he added, they should move quickly. Only the Via Tiburtina remained open, and it too might soon come under fire.

Badoglio reached a decision: the King and the government would leave Rome; the military forces defending the city would withdraw to the eastern outskirts and consolidate on positions near Tivoli.²⁰

This was a sudden decision, even though the removal of the King and the government from the German threat had been discussed on earlier occasions. Castellano had mentioned the matter at Lisbon. Badoglio had directed his Minister of the Interior as late as the morning of 8 September to prepare a plan to evacuate the government from Rome; he had canceled the order that afternoon.²¹ Similarly, the decision to withdraw the troops defending Rome to the Tivoli area east of the city was made on the spur of the moment. Ambrosio and Roatta had planned to defend Rome if the Allies landed a powerful supporting force within striking distance of the capital. But in the absence of immediate Allied support, Badoglio's decision made sense. It implied only a temporary change. Certainly the Allies would sweep northward quickly and seize the city. Within a week or two, the King and Badoglio would return.

Now more than ever, the Italians depended on the Allies. Hoping to remove any residue of resentment that General Eisenhower might have, Badoglio sent a message about this time to AFHQ to explain why he had delayed making his announcement broadcast:

Missed reception signal agreed wireless and delayed arrival your number 45. He did not consent broadcast proclamation at agreed hour. Proclamation would have occurred as requested even without your pressure being sufficient for us pledge given. Excessive haste has however found our preparations incomplete and caused delay. . . .²²

Having revealed to Roatta his decision to evacuate Rome, Badoglio now told Ambrosio, then went to see the King. He found Victor Emmanuel III listening to his aide, who was reporting Roatta's appreciation of the situation. The King quickly concurred in Badoglio's decision, and determined to take with him Badoglio, Ambrosio, and the chiefs of the military services.²³

Some time before 0500, the King, the Queen, Prince Humbert, Badoglio, and four military aides to the sovereign were ready to leave Rome. The King summoned Ambrosio and directed that he, the three chiefs of staff, and the three service ministers depart Rome by way of the Via Tiburtina and plan to meet the King's party later that day at Pescara, on the Adriatic coast. Though Ambrosio protested that he could not leave immediately because he needed time to make final arrangements, the King insisted.

To provide for the civil government of Rome and the country during the absence of the Head of Government, Badoglio left instructions with General Sorice, the Minister of War, to inform the civilian ministers of the King's and Badoglio's departure and to charge the Minister of the Interior, Umberto Ricci, with the task of heading a caretaker, skeleton government. Perhaps the Germans would permit the Italian civil authorities to carry on, for, with the exception of Guariglia, the civilian ministers had no knowledge of the armistice negotiations and no responsibility for them. The departing group comprised those persons who were most directly involved in the surrender and who, therefore, had most to fear from the Germans.

Around 0500, five automobiles carrying the royal party left Rome.²⁴ Ambrosio returned to his office, notified the Navy and Air Force chiefs, Admiral De Courten and General Sandalli, that they were to leave, and made arrangements for warships and planes to meet the royal party at Pescara. After leaving a message for Generale di Brigata Vittorio Palma to remain in Rome as *Comando Supremo* representative, Ambrosio, shortly after 0600, was ready to depart. Sometime during the night he had given Major Marchesi the diary and other compromising documents he had supposedly gone to Turin to get, and had asked Marchesi to destroy them.²⁵

Roatta, after receiving the royal command to leave Rome, though with no destination specified, decided to move his staff to Tivoli to keep in contact with the troops. He went back to his office in the Palazzo Caprara and, about 0515, in the presence of Carboni and Zanussi, he wrote in pencil on a sheet of notebook paper the draft of an order to Carboni--turning over to Carboni command of the forces defending Rome and directing Carboni to withdraw those forces to the Tivoli area. Roatta read the order to Carboni and told him to have it typed for his, Roatta's, signature.

After protesting that the order could not be carried out because the troops were already engaged and therefore could not break contact and withdraw, Carboni had a clean copy of Roatta's draft order prepared. When he brought it back for Roatta's signature, he found that the Army chief had gone.²⁶

Roatta, it turned out, had hastened to the Ministry of War around 0545 and had discovered Ambrosio ready and anxious to depart. After dashing back to the Caprara palace for a last look, Roatta joined Ambrosio, and the two officers left in the same automobile. Not until they were safely out of Rome did Roatta learn that they were bound for Pescara, there to transfer to a plane or ship that would take them to southern Italy.

Other key figures followed. Zanussi got out in an armored car about the same time. De Stefanis left about 0700, Uti approximately 0815. General Sorice, Minister of War, remained.

Guariglia, the Foreign Minister, remained, too. He was busy all night long, giving instructions to representatives abroad and formally notifying Germany that Italy had concluded an armistice with the Allies. He had received no message whatsoever on the decision of the government to leave Rome.

In Roatta's absence his deputy, De Stefanis, just before his departure, signed the order addressed to Carboni. It was in this fashion that Carboni, commander of the *Motorized Corps*, became the commander of all the forces assembled for the defense of Rome. By now, however, the mission was changed.

Roatta's intention was to concentrate these forces--except for the police and *carabinieri* units, which were to remain in the city to maintain order--in the Tivoli area as a threat to the Germans, who would by then, Roatta expected, have seized Rome. He therefore had ordered Carboni to move his headquarters to Carsoli near Tivoli and had instructed his own staff to set up its command post there.

Carboni, however, had no clear concept of his mission. Assuming that he actually could get those forces engaging the Germans to break contact and withdraw--a difficult maneuver--what was he then supposed to do? The withdrawal would perhaps spare Rome a bombardment by German planes and reprisals on the civil population. Perhaps that alone justified Roatta's order. But why Carsoli, unless the real purpose of the withdrawal and concentration was to protect the Via Tiburtina, the King's escape route?²⁷

Carboni's chief of staff, Colonel Salvi, was bitterly critical of Roatta's order. He started to rail against it, but Carboni cut him short. Carboni directed Salvi to prepare orders to the division commanders for the withdrawal to the Tivoli area and asserted that he himself intended to go there immediately as ordered.

After going to the Office of Military Intelligence Service to order certain documents destroyed, Carboni went home and changed into civilian clothes. He returned to the Palazzo Caprara to look once more for Roatta, went a second time to his office in the intelligence bureau, then drove toward Tivoli. His son, who was a captain, and two other junior officers accompanied him. To avoid difficulties from Fascist or German elements along the road, Carboni's automobile bore diplomatic license plates. There were no incidents, and shortly before 0800, the party reached Tivoli.²⁸

In Rome, Colonel Salvi, upon Carboni's departure, went to pieces. Though he prepared the detailed orders for the withdrawal to Tivoli, he did not issue them. Suspecting that Carboni was going to Tivoli not to set up a headquarters but to join the King in escape, Salvi tried to

get Roatta's order revoked. At 0730 he went to General Utili, who would soon leave the capital, showed Utili Roatta's order, declared that Carboni was dead, and asked who would sign the orders to the division commanders. Utili suggested that Salvi get the senior division commander to do so.

Salvi returned to his office and burst into tears. Embracing a captain who entered, he cried: "We are abandoned by everybody!" With tears streaming down his face, he told the commander of the *Granatieri Division*: "The cowards! They have all escaped and left me alone!" To everyone he saw, he shouted that Carboni had gone off with the King and Badoglio. Though he managed to inform two division commanders by telephone of the withdrawal movement, he appealed to them at the same time to get Roatta's order nullified.

Salvi finally determined to call up the senior division commander, Generale di Divisione Conte Carlo Calvi di Bergolo, the King's son-in-law, who commanded the *Centauro Division*. Carboni, Salvi said, could not be found; would Calvi di Bergolo take responsibility for the defense of Rome? Would Salvi, Calvi di Bergolo countered, put his statement and request in writing? Salvi declined. Calvi di Bergolo then said that he had no authority to assume command of the *Motorized Corps* and that the order for withdrawal must be confirmed.

Only then did Salvi issue, without equivocation, the order to withdraw to Tivoli. But by then, time had elapsed, making the maneuver infinitely more complicated. Furthermore, as the result of his antics, Salvi had disseminated distrust and pessimism in the minds of the troop commanders around Rome.²⁹

Interpretations

In North Africa, no one knew that the Italian Government had fled Rome.

Having flown to North Africa with General Taylor and Colonel Gardiner, Rossi arrived at El Aouina airfield at 1905, 8 September, forty minutes before Badoglio went on the air. The Allies took Rossi to Castellano, who asked him why he had come to AFHQ. To obtain a postponement of the armistice announcement, Rossi explained. Furthermore, he had documents to show why a postponement was necessary. His shock was genuine when he learned that Badoglio had confirmed the surrender.

The Allies then took Rossi and Castellano to Eisenhower. Rossi explained the difficulties of proclaiming the armistice at the same time that the Allies launched their invasion; he explained the advantages, both to the Allies as well as to the Italians, that would have been gained if the armistice announcement had been delayed.³⁰

These arguments, and the "documents of fundamental importance," were by now an old story to the Allied commander in chief. From the first meeting with Castellano in Lisbon, the Allies had stipulated in accordance with instructions from the Combined Chiefs of Staff that the announcement of the armistice was to precede the main invasion by a few hours. There had been no subsequent divergence from that condition.

General Eisenhower listened patiently to Rossi despite the irritation he must have felt. When Rossi charged Eisenhower with "anticipating" the date of the armistice announcement because he distrusted the Italians, General Eisenhower, according to Rossi's later recollection, replied: "But we were enemies until two hours ago. How could we have had faith in you?"

At the end of the discussion, Eisenhower sought to establish mutual good faith as the basis for co-operation. "If some mistake has been made," he said, "we ought now to accept the situation as it is." No more than a courteous statement recognizing the lack of complete Italian understanding of Allied plans, the remark was an invitation to look forward. The Italians interpreted the sentence as an admission of error, as conceding that Eisenhower had, in actuality, advanced the date of the announcement.³¹

All the Italians involved in the surrender negotiations believed that the Allies had "agreed to," "suggested," or "indicated" a specific time for the surrender announcement and had then advanced the date. But the Italians displayed a lack of unanimity on the date allegedly given by the Allies. Badoglio expected the time to be the 12th or 15th of September; Roatta the 12th, as did Zanussi; Carboni awaited the 20th or the 25th.³²

Prime Minister Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons on 21 September 1943, seemed to confirm the Italian belief when he said: "The date, which had originally been the 15th, was, however, in fact brought forward to the 9th--the night of the 8th and 9th."³³ In this remark Mr. Churchill was answering the charge, raised in Parliament and in the British press, that the Allies had been slow in taking advantage of Mussolini's downfall. Precisely what Churchill had in mind was not clear. Perhaps he was referring to the belief at AFHQ during the earliest stages of the AVALANCHE planning that shortages of landing craft appeared to make it necessary to have a longer time interval between BAYTOWN (the Strait of Messina crossing) and the assault landings at Salerno.

Yet the only significant change in the Allied time schedule occurred between the preliminary planning in June and the final planning started in early August. In June, the earliest date for an invasion of the Italian mainland had appeared to be 1 October. In early August, when it appeared the Sicilian Campaign would be short, an earlier invasion date seemed feasible.

The Allies decided on the timing for the Italian invasion before the Italians had made significant contact with them. On 9 August, AFHQ forecast AVALANCHE for 7 September. On 16 August, three days before the first meeting with Castellano in Lisbon, AFHQ scheduled the Salerno invasion, AVALANCHE, for 9 September. No sudden change in schedule to surprise or take advantage of the Italians was ever made.

Footnotes

¹ Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 318.

² Guariglia, *Ricordi*, p. 669.

³ Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 179-80; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 318; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 39-41; Albert Kesselring, *Soldat bis zum letzten Tag* (Bonn: Athenaeum-Verlag, 1953), pp. 242-45; Col. Karl Heinrich Graf von Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, p. 9.

- [4.](#) Chief sources for the Quirinal Palace conference are: Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 105-06; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 30-31; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 38-40; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, pp. 704-06; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 312; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 179. Puntoni (*Vittorio Emanuele III*, pages 161-62) incorrectly states that Roatta attended the conference.
- [5.](#) Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 106-07, *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 40; *Daily Report Foreign Radio Broadcasts*, Thursday, September 9, 1943, gives the time of Badoglio's announcement as 1345 Eastern War Time, which was 1945 B time, or Rome time. See also Telg W-9512 AFHQ to AGWAR, 9 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, I, and Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 367, 9 Sep 43, 0100/12A/65, II.
- [6.](#) Bonomi, *Diario di un anno*, pp. 93-94; Maugeri, *From the Ashes of Disgrace*, p. 185.
- [7.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 58; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 185-86.
- [8.](#) Rudolf Rahn, *Ruheloses Leben: Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen* (Duesseldorf: Diedrichs Verlag, 1949), p. 229; *Il Processo Roatta-Carboni*, p. 59; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, p. 240; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 189; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 35-36; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, p. 712.
- [9.](#) Carboni, in *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, page 36, gives the instruction presented him by Ambrosio to let the Germans pass.
- [10.](#) Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 113-14; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 58-59; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 189.
- [11.](#) Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 217-18; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 50.
- [12.](#) Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 332-33; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 50.
- [13.](#) Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 190-91; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 59.
- [14.](#) Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 190-91. In his postwar testimony, Badoglio affirmed that he was not asked whether to order the execution of *Memoria 44*.
- [15.](#) Order No. 11/36463, 9 Sep 43, signed by Ambrosio, receipt acknowledged by countersignature [Generale d'Armata Italo] Gariboldi (commander, *Eighth Army*), IT 2.
- [16.](#) Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 333; Caracciolo di Feroletto, "E Poi," p. 159. One copy of Roatta's order is found in IT 2 as received at Territorial Defense Headquarters at Treviso, 0430, 9 Sep 43, No. 02/5651.
- [17.](#) *Il Process Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 59-60; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 192-94.
- [18.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 60; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 192 (which gives the time of sending the order as between 0200 and 0230). Raffaele Cadorna, in *La riscossa: Dal 25 luglio alla liberazione* (Milan: Rizzoli and Co., 1948), page 37, mentions receipt of the order and the beginning of his movement at 0530.
- [19.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 60-61; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 321; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 194-95.
- [20.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 61; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 322-23; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 195-96; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 114-16.
- [21.](#) Carmine Senise, *Quando ero Capo della Polizia 1940-1943; Memorie di colui che seppe tutto* (Rome: Ruffolo editore, 1946), p. 244.

- [22.](#) Msg 24, "Monkey" to "Drizzle," received 0905, 9 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 371; Cf. Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 187.
- [23.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 61; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 196.
- [24.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 62-63; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, p. 117.
- [25.](#) MS #P-058, Project #46, 1 Feb-8 Sep 43, Question 22.
- [26.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 63-65; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 196-97, 199-200; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 323, 327; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 37.
- [27.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 63-65; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 323-29; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 197-201.
- [28.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 73-75; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 37-38; Alfredo Sanzi, *Il generale Carboni e la difesa di Roma visti ad occhio nudo* (Turin: Vogliotti editore, 1946), pp. 123-24.
- [29.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 74-75; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 41, n. 9; Sanzi, *Il generale Carboni*, pp. 135-37; Cadorna, *La riscossa*, pp. 37-38.
- [30.](#) Castellano, *Come firmai*, pp. 186-87; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 160-61.
- [31.](#) Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, p. 161; Castellano, *Come firmai*, p. 187.
- [32.](#) Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 103-04, 105, 138; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, pp. 300-301; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 164, 166; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 25-26.
- [33.](#) Winston S. Churchill, *Onwards to Victory: War Speeches*, compiled by Charles Eade (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1944), p. 259.

Chapter XXVIII

The Dissolution

German Reaction

Like the rest of the Germans in Italy, Field Marshal Kesselring was surprised at the announcement of the armistice. While Hitler and OKW had been basing their calculations on the likelihood of Italian betrayal and were concerned chiefly with Badoglio's suspicious behavior, Kesselring and his *OB SUEDE* staff had been primarily concerned with the Allies.

Aerial reconnaissance reported on 5 September that Allied landing craft previously assembled between Mers-el-Kebir and Tunis were moving eastward. On 7 September it was known that large numbers of landing craft had moved out of Bizerte and entered the latitude of southern Calabria. Because these flotillas appeared too large for mere tactical landings in support of the British Eighth Army, Kesselring looked for an imminent major invasion of the Italian mainland.

Where the Allied troops would come ashore was the question. The bay of Salerno seemed a likely place, but so did the Rome area--Anzio and Nettuno, possibly even Civitavecchia. Though the Rome area might be too far from their airfields for the Allies to gamble on, and though the Allies had until then displayed a conservative strategic approach, a landing near Rome was within the realm of possibility. So were landings near the northern ports of La Spezia, Genoa, and Leghorn, in Rommel's *Army Group B* area. Nor could Kesselring ignore Puglia, the heel of Italy, for within striking distance in eastern Sicilian harbors were assembled numerous Allied landing craft.

Still, the greatest concern was the possibility that the Allies might land near Rome. The Rome area represented the German waistline--between the hip bulge filled by the six divisions of the *Tenth Army* and the overdeveloped bust containing Rommel's *Army Group B*.¹

Rommel's forces in the north and Vietinghoff's *Tenth Army* in the south were strong enough to handle the Italian forces and at the same time offer effective opposition to an Allied landing. But in the center, strong Italian units outnumbered Kesselring's relatively small forces. Despite their smaller numbers, the Germans might well be able to handle the Italians alone. But should the Italians join with Allied troops coming ashore near Rome, what chance would the Germans have?

Around noon on 8 September, the Allies delivered a heavy aerial attack against Frascati, where Kesselring's headquarters was located. The bombs wreaked havoc on the town, and several struck in the immediate area of the command post. Kesselring himself was uninjured--when the last wave of bombers flew away, he crawled out from beneath the wreckage. But communications were disrupted except for one telephone line from General Westphal's bedroom which remained in contact both with OKW and with Kesselring's subordinate commands.² The Germans judged correctly that the air attack, obviously meant to interrupt the exercise of command, presaged an Allied landing. After directing certain German units to help rescue civilians and clear wreckage, Kesselring sent Westphal and Toussaint to keep the appointment made earlier with Roatta.

While Westphal and Toussaint were with Roatta, Kesselring received his first intimation of the Italian surrender. Jodl telephoned from OKW headquarters to ask *OB SUEDE* in Frascati whether the Germans in Italy knew anything about the capitulation. OKW had picked up an English radio broadcast announcing the surrender. One of Kesselring's staff officers, knowing that Westphal and Toussaint were consulting with Roatta, phoned the deputy military attaché and suggested that he put through a call to his chief. This was the telephone call that had come into Roatta's office.

About an hour and a half after Jodl's call, the German Embassy in Rome received Guariglia's formal message from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Italy had surrendered to the Allies. The deputy military attaché telephoned the information to *OB SUEDE*, and Kesselring issued the code word *ACHSE*, the signal to take the offensive against the Italian forces and seize Rome.³

Since the armistice announcement implied the close co-operation of Italian and Allied forces, the Germans expected an immediate invasion of the coast near Rome, including an airborne landing. The Germans acted with dispatch. Kesselring's first task was to bring the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* from the area immediately north of Rome to consolidate with the *2d Parachute Division*, distributed for the most part south of Rome between the Tiber River and the Alban Hills. His major purpose was to seize control of the lines of communication and supply leading to the *Tenth Army* in the south, thereby securing the army's withdrawal route to the north. At the same time, Kesselring sent a detachment of paratroopers to seize Roatta and the Army staff at Monterotondo in a *coup de main*.

Attacking adjacent Italian units immediately, the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* advanced rapidly along the two highways, the Via Claudia and the Via Cassia, leading from Lake Bracciano into Rome. The *2d Parachute Division* quickly overran some Italian defensive positions south of the city, the *Piacenza Division* making scarcely even a show of resistance. The paratroopers racing to Monterotondo had more trouble. They ran into Italian opposition, and, by the time they seized the Army headquarters the following morning, they found that Roatta and his staff had gone.⁴

Along with the combat, the Germans conducted a skillful propaganda campaign. Exploiting Italian confusion and lack of central direction, the Germans arranged local truces and appealed to the honor of Italian officers as former comrades for the prevention of bloodshed. They assured the Italian soldiers that the war was over and they might go home if they wished. The latter point of view seemed strangely similar to Badoglio's announcement of the armistice, and many Italians threw away their weapons and disappeared.⁵

Though all proceeded favorably during the early hours of 9 September, German concern over Allied intentions continued until daylight. Only after news of the Allied invasion at Salerno came did the nightmare of an Allied amphibious envelopment vanish. The Allies had then, the Germans sighed in relief, run true to form after all. Their landing on the Italian mainland was a methodical advance beyond Sicily and well within range of Allied air cover--not an employment of their command of the sea and air that would threaten the destruction of the *Tenth Army* in south Italy. The invasion at Salerno was not an operation designed to take advantage of Italian co-operation. Nor was it designed, from the German

viewpoint, to exploit fully the surprise and uncertainty arising from the armistice announcement.⁶

The Battle for Rome

At Tivoli, where Carboni arrived around 0800, 9 September, he found no orders waiting for him as he had expected. Nor could the members of the Army General Staff, who were establishing their headquarters at Tivoli, clarify the situation. General De Stefanis and Generale di Divisione Adamo Mariotti, immediate subordinates of Roatta, passed through Tivoli that morning en route to Pescara, but though they saw Carboni, they did not talk with him. Finding no message from Roatta at the *carabinieri* barracks, Carboni drove eastward along the Via Tiburtina in quest of a mission. At Arsoli, twelve miles beyond Tivoli, he learned that several automobiles containing high-ranking officers had passed through not long before. Deciding to return to Tivoli, Carboni dispatched two junior officers to find Roatta. After driving seven miles to Carsoli, they overtook the Army chief. They reported that Carboni was at Tivoli and that he had sent them to maintain communications between him and Roatta. Roatta listened but gave no orders. Leaving the problem of what to do with the forces around Rome to Carboni, Roatta--and Ambrosio--continued toward Pescara.⁷

On returning to Tivoli around 1300, Carboni took command. His first act was to start the withdrawal to the Tivoli area of the two most reliable mobile divisions, the *Ariete* and the *Piave*. The *Ariete Division* had that morning given the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* a bloody nose at Manziana (on the Via Claudia) and at Monterosi (on the Via Cassia), when the Germans had tried to rush tank columns through Italian strongpoints which were protected by well-placed road mines and well-directed artillery fire. The Germans halted, regrouped, brought up infantry, and threatened an attack. During this interval, the *Ariete* and *Piave* Divisions withdrew, replaced in line by the *Re Division*. Unaware of the substitution, the *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* commander maintained his threatening attitude but forebore launching an attack. By the morning of 10 September, the two mobile divisions were in the Tivoli area.⁸

South of Rome the *Granatieri Division*, unlike the *Piacenza Division* which no longer existed, refused two appeals from the *2d Parachute Division* for *pourparlers* to give the Germans the right of passage to the city. Exerting the strongest pressure against strongpoints guarding the Via Ostiense and the Via Laurentina, the paratroopers late in the afternoon knocked out several Italian artillery batteries. The Italians pulled back slightly but maintained a solid front. Carboni telephoned the division commander, Generale di Brigata Gioacchino Solinas, and encouraged him to continue his fight.

Meanwhile, Carboni had been discussing with Calvi di Bergolo, the *Centauro Division* commander, the problem of what to do. Calvi di Bergolo suggested that the Italian forces move eastward along the Via Tiburtina toward the Avezzano River basin and into the Abruzzi Mountains, there to establish a redoubt. Vehicles might be abandoned when they ran out of gasoline, but the units, Calvi di Bergolo recommended, should be maintained intact so far as possible.⁹

Calvi di Bergolo's suggestion did not impress Carboni. What did make an impression were two other developments that afternoon. First, Calvi di Bergolo reported the erratic, disloyal behavior in Rome of Carboni's chief of staff, Salvi. This was discouraging, for the only explanation of such behavior was a disheartening situation in the capital. Carboni asked his Chief of Engineers, Col. Giuseppe Cordero Montezemolo, to serve informally as Salvi's replacement, an arrangement that continued even after Salvi appeared that afternoon at Tivoli. Second, a telephone call came from Generale di Corpo d'Armata Gastone Gambarra, who commanded the *XI Corps* in Fiume. Gambarra asked whether the order to put *Memoria 44* into effect had been issued. At Carboni's direction, Montezemolo did not mention the lack of communication between Carboni's forces and *Comando Supremo* but said that on the basis of Badoglio's proclamation and in consequence of the German attack on Rome, *Memoria 44* should go into effect. The puzzling and discouraging thing about all this was that Gambarra's question indicated that no Italian troops except those under Carboni were actively opposing the Germans.¹⁰

The Germans, meanwhile, continued their appeals to the Italian divisions to cease fighting their former comrades. These appeals had little effect on the *Granatieri Division*, which fought stubbornly and well.¹¹ But they did find a receptive audience in the *Centauro Division*, which had thus far taken no part in the fighting. According to the Germans, the initiative for a truce came from the Italians. An Italian lieutenant who had known Westphal in North Africa appeared at Kesselring's headquarters to propose Italian capitulation. Westphal worked out the terms.

According to the Italians, the more plausible account, the initiative came from the Germans. At 1700, 9 September, a German *parlementaire*, Capt. Hans Schacht, presented himself at the *Centauro Division* headquarters at Bagni Acque Albule, about twelve miles east of Rome. Schacht brought an oral appeal from General Student to the Italian division commander, Calvi di Bergolo. Student sent an expression of personal esteem for Calvi di Bergolo, a declaration of faith in the friendly attitude of the *Centauro Division* troops, and a request that Calvi di Bergolo treat his German troops as friends. Whether this constituted a demand for surrender, a request to let the German forces pass unmolested to the north, or an offer of honorable capitulation, was not clear. But Schacht, in any event, declared that "within a few hours the Germans will be unopposed masters of Rome."¹²

In reply, Calvi di Bergolo sent his chief of staff, Lt. Col. Leandro Giaccone, to Kesselring's headquarters to learn exactly what terms the Germans would offer. Whether Calvi di Bergolo was preparing to surrender or whether he was trying merely to gain time is not clear. Whether Carboni knew of and approved Giaccone's mission in advance is not clear either. In any case, when Carboni learned of Giaccone's mission, he, as chief of intelligence, ordered Giaccone closely watched.

Accompanied by a lieutenant as interpreter, Giaccone reached Kesselring's headquarters at 2100, 9 September. With Kesselring, Westphal, and Student, he carried on a protracted discussion of eight points, four formulated by Giaccone, the others stipulated by Kesselring. Giaccone proposed that the Germans continue to recognize the open city status of Rome and evacuate the capital; that one Italian division and the police force remain in the city; that other Italian troops lay down their arms and be sent away on unlimited leave; and that the Italians be permitted to surrender honorably. Kesselring insisted on having German troops occupy the German Embassy, the Rome telephone exchange, and the Rome

radio station; the Italian division permitted to serve in Rome was to have no artillery; he wanted the Italian officer designated as commander of the city to render a daily report to Kesselring; Italian soldiers, after their discharge from active duty, were to have the option of taking up military or labor service with the Germans.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Kesselring said that the Italian situation was hopeless. He said he was prepared to blow up the aqueducts and bomb the city if the Italians refused his terms. Giaccone said he thought the conditions were acceptable. He proposed, and Kesselring agreed to, a three-hour truce to start at 0700, 10 September. At the end of the truce, Giaccone promised, the Italian reply would be delivered. At 0130, 10 September, he and his interpreter started back to Tivoli.

Giaccone reported to Calvi di Bergolo, who was quite uncertain what to do. He was disappointed and annoyed because the terms brought from Frascati comprised a surrender--quite different from Schacht's verbal message from Student.

Yet Calvi di Bergolo could not overlook the difficult Italian situation, the unreliability of his own *Centauro* troops, and the impossibility of effectively opposing the Germans.

Calvi di Bergolo sent Giaccone to Carboni. Though Carboni later said he refused the terms (and though Giaccone later said Carboni accepted them), Giaccone at 0530, 10 September, sent his interpreter back to Frascati with a message accepting the German conditions. He, Giaccone, would follow later.

Whatever Carboni's precise words to Giaccone might have been, Carboni had no intention of surrendering. Still hoping for Allied support, from sea or from air, he wished to stall by talking with the Germans, intending to break off the talks at the right time on some pretext. He told Calvi di Bergolo of his aims but the latter would have no part in this scheme.

Giaccone returned to Frascati, reaching Kesselring's headquarters at 0700, 10 September. Carboni, meanwhile, ordered the *Ariete* and *Piave Divisions*, assembling near Tivoli, to attack the *2d Parachute Division* in order to relieve pressure on the *Granatieri Division*. While the divisions prepared to execute the attack that afternoon, Carboni left Tivoli about 0700 and went to Rome with several of his staff officers. He went in response to a telephone call from Sorice, the Minister of War.¹³

On his way to Rome, Carboni noted that all seemed quiet north of the city, but on the south the German paratroopers continued to press closer to the city limits.¹⁴

Sorice wanted to see Carboni because a peculiar situation had arisen in Rome. Maresciallo d'Italia Enrico Caviglia, an elderly officer who had been a rival of Badoglio for years, had taken what amounted to *de facto* command of the civil and military forces in the capital and had become what resembled the head of a provisional government.

During the spring of 1943, the King had considered Caviglia as a possible successor to Mussolini, but Caviglia had made no move to further the possibility.¹⁵ He had maintained his contact with the crown but had remained aloof from governmental matters until the summer of 1943, when he became increasingly concerned with what he judged to be Badoglio's mismanagement of affairs. His impatience with Badoglio's leadership had led

him to arrange for an audience with the King. Scheduled to see Victor Emmanuel III on the morning of 9 September, Caviglia went to Rome on the 8th. While he was having dinner with friends that evening, he heard a recording of Badoglio's announcement of Italy's surrender. This confirmed his worst suspicions--Caviglia was certain that Badoglio had arranged to escape from Rome. But Caviglia never doubted the King and the high command. With faith that they would remain in Rome to meet the critical situation, Caviglia calmly went to bed.

The next morning, 9 September, Caviglia discovered the greatest confusion in the city. Only the doormen were on duty at the Quirinal Palace--no guards, no *carabinieri*. No responsible official was at the Ministry of War.

Caviglia's mounting concern was heightened when he met Generale di Corpo d'Armata Vittorio Sogno, a corps commander stationed in Albania who had come to Rome in civilian clothes to receive orders from *Comando Supremo*. Sogno told Caviglia that he had looked in vain for Barbieri, commander of the *Army Corps of Rome*. Barbieri was not at his office. Carboni, Sogno had learned, had been placed in command of all the forces around Rome, but Carboni had disappeared. Sogno had been at *Comando Supremo* but had found not a single general officer. Roatta's office was empty. And Sogno had heard a rumor that the *carabinieri* and the service school formations had been dissolved. At the Palazzo Caprara, Caviglia ran into Colonel Salvi. His eyes red from weeping, Salvi declared he did not know where his commander, Carboni, had gone. After further efforts to find out what was happening, Caviglia made the painful discovery that the King had fled Rome in company with Badoglio and high-ranking officers. Shocked and depressed, Caviglia went back to the Ministry of War, where he met General Sorice.¹⁶

Sorice had been having no easy time. Badoglio had instructed him the previous evening, after deciding to leave Rome, to notify the civilian ministers of the government's move. Sorice was to inform the ministers to meet the King and his party at Pescara. But Sorice did not get the civilian members of the cabinet together until the morning of 9 September, when, meeting at the Viminale Palace, with Caviglia present, they were startled by the news of the departure of the King and Badoglio. The first reaction of the Minister of Propaganda, Carlo Galli, was to summon a notary public and make an official record of his complete ignorance of the armistice negotiations. When Sorice advised the Minister of the Interior, Ricci, that Badoglio had invested him with responsibility for the civil government of Rome, Ricci declined the honor.¹⁷

At this point, Caviglia stepped into the breach. He tried to send a telegram to the King for authorization to assume full powers in Rome during the absence of the Head of Government. But he could not learn precisely where the King was and undertook to act on his own responsibility, deriving his power from his prestige as a marshal of Italy.¹⁸

Caviglia's first thought was to spare Rome and its population the devastation of battle. To that end, he felt it necessary to pacify the Germans. From Generale di Divisione Umberto di Giorgio, who seemed to have succeeded General Barbieri in command of the internal defenses of Rome, he learned not only that the Italian troops could not stand up to the Germans but also that the available supplies for the civilians were sufficient for only a few days. He made repeated attempts, but in vain, to get in touch with Carboni. He tried to negotiate with the Germans, but the German Embassy staff had gone and Kesselring's

headquarters outside the city was hostile. To tranquilize the civil population, Caviglia had the Minister of Propaganda, Galli, issue bulletins over the radio and post billboard notices calling on the people to remain calm and assuring them that negotiations were being carried on with the Germans.¹⁹

When the broadcasts and public notices appeared on the morning of 10 September, they undermined whatever spirit remained among the civil population and the troops. Carboni's plan for continued opposition to the Germans thus received a check even before Carboni could move over to the offensive.

When Carboni arrived at Sorice's office in the Ministry of War that morning, he was ushered in immediately to see Caviglia. Out of respect to Caviglia, Sorice took no part in the discussion.²⁰

Caviglia had never seen Carboni before, and even though Carboni, now in uniform, made a favorable impression, Caviglia was prepared to dislike him. Caviglia had not thought very much of the military articles Carboni had written for the daily press; Sorice had described him as headstrong and willful. And, finally, Carboni was a product of the Badoglio era of the Italian Army.

Despite these handicaps, Carboni persuaded Caviglia of his competence and of the sincerity of his intentions. He briefed Caviglia on the military situation, explained how he had received from Roatta the order to withdraw his forces to Tivoli for no apparent reason, and indicated that he could not simply leave the troops in Tivoli indefinitely. He had insufficient fuel to move into the Abruzzi Mountains. He was therefore turning the *Ariete* and *Piave Divisions* back to Rome to fight to save the capital from the Germans.

Still without authorization from the King for his assumption of quasi command, Caviglia expressed rather unclearly what Carboni construed as approval of Carboni's intention to continue the fight. Sorice agreed that Carboni's course of action was correct.²¹

Carboni then set up his command post in a private apartment in Rome--at *Piazza dello Muse 7*--which belonged to an employee of the intelligence bureau. Equipped with two telephones and with good observation of strategic streets, the apartment was well located for Carboni's purpose. There Carboni began to urge civilian resistance against the Germans and to direct the operations of the military units.

Carboni approved General Cadorna's final orders for the *Ariete Division's* attack. He ordered Generale di Divisione Ugo Tabellini, the *Piave Division's* Commander, who reported in person, to bring up his troops to support the hard-pressed *Granatieri Division*. He encouraged Generale di Brigata Ottaviano Traniello, the *Re Division* commander. He sent whatever separate units he could locate to reinforce the *Granatieri Division*, and he urged the division commander, General Solinas, to hold out at all costs.

As for getting the civilians to fight in defense of the city, four days earlier, on 6 September, Carboni had secured and set aside 500 rifles, 400 pistols, and 15,000 hand grenades for distribution to the population. Luigi Longo, leader of the Communist party, had taken charge of the distribution, and on 10 September Longo arrived at Carboni's apartment home command post. Carboni urged him to get civilian fighters to support the *Granatieri* troops

south of the city. A little later, around noon, Carboni sent Dr. Edoardo Stolfi to tell the Committee of National Liberation that it was time to arm the population and to help the troops resist the Germans. The committee declined to take action, though a few individual citizens joined and fought with the military, particularly at Porta San Paolo.

There was nothing in Rome on 10 September even resembling a popular uprising. The Romans were disillusioned, fearful, and tired of war. They had welcomed the armistice with joy. Wanting only peace, they preferred to listen to Caviglia's radio broadcasts and read the billboard announcements that were urging them to be quiet rather than to Carboni who offered only strenuous and dangerous adventure.²²

Meanwhile, Giaccone and an aide had arrived at Frascati at 0700. Westphal met them. Giaccone stated that the Italian command had accepted the terms formulated the night before. He also complained that the Germans were not properly observing the truce, which was supposed to last for three hours, until 1000. Westphal at once dispatched two staff officers to accompany Giaccone's aide in order to ensure observance of the truce by the German units.

At this point, around 0730, Kesselring appeared. He said that Italian resistance was altogether hopeless because the Allies had confined their invasion to Salerno, thereby leaving the Italian troops near Rome to stand alone. As a result, he presented a new set of terms--drafted by Westphal during the night--considerably more severe. Undeniably, these conditions meant capitulation, nothing less.²³

Giaccone discussed with Westphal the new terms in detail and with care. At 1000 he departed for Rome, taking with him the surrender document in the German and Italian languages, both already signed by Westphal. Giaccone arrived at the Palazzo Caprara around noon, got the telephone number of Carboni's command post, and phoned Carboni about the outcome of his mission.

Carboni ordered Giaccone to break off negotiations immediately. Replying that the situation was extremely delicate and serious, Giaccone requested an order in writing, or, he added, Carboni could make a direct and personal communication to Kesselring. Responding that the situation was indeed serious and delicate, Carboni declined to assume any responsibility. He recommended that Giaccone refer the problem to Sorice, the Minister of War.²⁴

When presented with the problem and after listening to Giaccone's estimate that no other course existed except to agree to Kesselring's terms, Sorice did not feel up to the responsibility of making a decision.

He suggested that Giaccone lay the matter before Caviglia, the highest ranking military person in Rome. Sorice had that day found out the whereabouts of the King, and he had sent a telegram requesting authority for Caviglia to become the government representative in Rome. But neither Caviglia nor Sorice ever received the King's reply, which was actually sent and which invested Caviglia with full powers "during the temporary absence of the President of the Council who is with the military ministers."²⁵

Giaccone, after leaving Sorice, found Caviglia at the house of a friend. Soon after Giaccone's arrival, his commanding officer, General Calvi di Bergolo, appeared in search of Giaccone to learn the results of the second discussion with Kesselring. All three officers discussed the problem of whether to accept the German demands and capitulate. Caviglia said he had no authority to capitulate because he had not heard from the King. But he added that if his assumption of authority had been confirmed, he would decide in favor of accepting the German ultimatum. He did not believe that the military situation permitted further resistance--and this despite his approval of Carboni's decision to resist. Caviglia advised Calvi di Bergolo to send Giaccone back to Frascati to accept the German terms.

The discussion was still under way when other guests were announced--Ivanoe Bonomi, Alessandro Casati, and Meuccio Ruini, politicians who were members of the Committee of National Liberation, and Leopoldo Piccardi, Badoglio's Minister of Industry. Caviglia received them and explained his views. Accepting his estimate of the military situation, for the marshal was an acknowledged military expert, they concurred in the wisdom of Caviglia's decision.²⁶

This decided, Calvi di Bergolo and Giaccone shortly after 1400 returned to Sorice at the Ministry of War, where Calvi di Bergolo telephoned Carboni and asked him to come over. Carboni arrived in a matter of minutes.

The four officers argued over whether to accept Kesselring's terms. Sorice and Carboni declared them unacceptable and refused to sign the documents Giaccone had brought. Calvi di Bergolo and Giaccone insisted that they had no alternative but to accept, particularly in view of Kesselring's ultimatum. While the argument continued, machine gun fire sounded nearby. Upon investigation, they learned that German troops had made their way to the Via dell'Impero. Without further ado, Giaccone placed his signature on the documents.²⁷

Almost immediately afterwards, Caviglia arrived at the Ministry of War. Carboni was still arguing in favor of resisting the Germans on the basis that the Allied invasion would soon force the Germans to withdraw north of Rome. Caviglia scoffed at the idea--such a belief, he said, was mere propaganda; the landings at Salerno could not free Rome. Only an Allied landing north of the capital, Caviglia said, could liberate Rome and northern Italy from German occupation. Carboni remained adamant. He refused to sign the capitulation papers. Saying that he knew the Germans well, he felt that they would not honor even the harsh terms that they were imposing. Calvi di Bergolo said that he trusted the German officers. He had faith in their honor, and he urged Carboni to speak directly to Kesselring and get his personal assurance.

With some bitterness, Carboni said he would do nothing of the sort. Calvi di Bergolo's *Centauro Division*, he said, had stood by idly while the *Granatieri*, *Ariete*, and *Piave Divisions* had fought and fought with distinction. If Calvi di Bergolo had such faith in the Germans, let him take command of the city and responsibility for the armistice. The others agreed.

Surprised by this turn of events, Calvi di Bergolo after considerable hesitation, acquiesced. Upon Calvi di Bergolo's responsibility then, Giaccone returned to Kesselring's headquarters with the surrender documents bearing his signature opposite that of Westphal. Giaccone

reached Frascati at 1630, half an hour beyond the ultimatum's expiration but in time to save Rome from bombardment and the Italian troops from further combat.²⁸

Kesselring thus became, after two days, master of Rome. Playing his cards with great skill, he overcame more than five Italian divisions though he himself held only a pair, and in so doing he kept open his line of communications to the *Tenth Army*. By occupying Rome and dispersing the strong Italian forces in the area, he made possible a stubborn defense against the Allies in southern Italy.

In the meantime, the King and his party had reached Pescara on 9 September. That evening the monarch decided to continue the voyage by ship, and shortly after midnight, the party boarded a naval vessel and sailed to the south.²⁹

During this time the King and his party were receiving only the vaguest kind of reports from the rest of Italy. Fighting seemed to be going on around Rome, and this caused concern. A message came in asking permission for Caviglia to assume full military and political power in the capital, and this caused puzzlement--what had happened to Carboni and to Ricci?³⁰ For all the confusion, someone had nevertheless had the foresight to bring the radio and code for communicating with AFHQ. On the evening of 9 September, before the King and his party went aboard the warship, a message went out to the Allies: "We are moving to Taranto."³¹

Around 1430, 10 September, the royal party debarked at Brindisi. There the members of the government stayed, and Brindisi became the new capital of Italy. There was some talk among the generals of sending an officer to Rome by air to discover the extent and results of the fighting. But before an officer could depart, news came that Caviglia had arranged for a cessation of Italo-German hostilities.³²

Dissolution of the Italian Armed Forces

At La Spezia the main part of the Italian Fleet had escaped German seizure. Late in the afternoon of 8 September, the battleships *Roma*, *Italia*, and *Vittorio Veneto* had left the harbor, the Germans having been convinced by De Courten that the ships were steaming out to meet and destroy the Allied convoys moving toward Salerno.³³ Joined by cruisers and destroyers from Genoa, the fleet on the morning of 9 September was sailing, in accord with Allied instructions, off the western shore of Corsica. The ships passed south of Corsica to pick up other vessels at Maddalena. That afternoon, German aircraft based on Sardinia attacked the fleet and sank the *Roma* (the commander, Ammiraglio Carlo Bergamini, and most of the crew were lost), and damaged the *Italia*. Ammiraglio Romeo Oliva took command and turned the ships toward North Africa. At 0600, 10 September, this fleet of two battleships, five cruisers, and seven destroyers met the *Warspite*, the *Valiant*, and several destroyers which escorted the Italian ships to Bizerte. The same afternoon, the battleships *Andrea Doria* and *Caio Duilio*, two cruisers, and a destroyer, on their way from Taranto, reached Malta.³⁴

The capitulation of the Italian forces around Rome to the Germans, rather than the surrender of the fleet to the Allies, proved to be the main pattern of Italian action. Paucity

of matériel, declining morale, and lack of direction from Rome were the reasons why the half-million troops or more in north Italy and occupied France seemingly vanished into thin air. Four divisions of Rundstedt's *OB WEST*--in a series of police actions rather than military operations--rounded up the Italian *Fourth Army* in southern France and Liguria. Some units of the *5th (Pusteria) Alpine Division* resisted, but only briefly, at the Mount Cenis tunnel. A few soldiers of the *Fourth Army* in France accepted German invitations and volunteered to fight under German command. Some 40,000 Italians were taken prisoner and later sent north to Germany as labor troops.³⁵

In the Brenner area, the German *44th Infantry Division*, composed mostly of Austrians redeemed the South Tyrol with avidity, overrunning General Gloria's *XXXV Corps* headquarters at Bolzano on 9 September, occupying Bologna the same day. The following evening, two thousand railway workers arrived from Germany and took over the major railroad centers in northern Italy.³⁶

At La Spezia, German forces disrupted telephone communications, then appealed to the Italian units to disband, the men to go home. The Germans surrounded the Italian *XVI Corps* headquarters (which had been in Sicily), fired several machine guns, then walked into the main building and captured the corps commander and his staff. Enraged by the escape of the Italian warships, the Germans summarily executed several Italian naval captains who had been unable to get their ships out of the port and who had scuttled their vessels.³⁷

The German takeover in northern Italy proved much easier than OKW had anticipated.

The initial reports showed such Italian confusion and paralysis as to make Hitler contemptuous and passionately vindictive. As early as 9 September, an order issued by Keitel on the treatment of Italian troops under German jurisdiction reflected Hitler's feelings. Commanders in France, northern Italy, and the Balkans, the order said, could accept Italians who were willing to fight in German units but had to take all others as prisoners of war for forced labor. Skilled workers were to be assigned to the armament industry, the unskilled to help construct a contemplated East Wall. Rommel put the order into immediate effect. His subordinate commanders took Italian troops into custody, disarmed them, and prepared them for transfer to Germany.³⁸

In southern Italy, the armistice announcement had taken the Italian *Seventh Army* completely by surprise. Less than six weeks earlier, when Roatta had thought that the government might decide to resist the unwanted German reinforcements, he told the army commander, Generale di Corpo d'Armata Adalberto di Savoia Genova, the Duke of Bergamo, to react energetically in case of German violence. He had repeated the order to General Arisio, who had succeeded to the army command in August--telling Arisio to act against the Germans only if the Germans committed acts of open hostility. Beyond that, there was no warning, no indication--not even the transmittal of *Memoria 44* to Arisio--to suggest that the government was thinking of changing course.

In contrast to the developments in northern Italy and in the Rome area after Mussolini's overthrow, there had been no acute friction between Italian and German forces in the south. The armistice announcement humiliated the Italian generals, who, led by Arisio himself, freely turned vehicles, supplies, and facilities over to the Germans and voluntarily gave

German troops the good coastal positions they occupied. Only the *9th (Pasubio) Infantry Division* suffered from German aggression--the division was torn to pieces as the Germans rushed toward Salerno to oppose the Allies. Only one commander suffered, General Gonzaga of the *222d Coastal Division*, who refused German demands that his troops be disarmed and was promptly shot. Only the *209th Coastal Division*, stationed at Bari, remained intact. Except for this latter unit, a few elements of the *58th (Legnano) Infantry Division* (in the Brindisi and Taranto area), a few units of the *152d (Piceno)* and *104th (Mantova) Infantry Divisions* in Puglia, and some unspecified coastal formations--the forces under the *Seventh Army*, three regular divisions and six coastal divisions grouped into four corps--were disarmed, the men permitted to go home.³⁹

In the Balkans, Greece, and the Aegean, the Italian ground forces, numbering more than 600,000 men, were with but few exceptions completely dissolved by 15 September, having offered little aid to the Allies on the Italian mainland and even less resistance to the Germans. On the islands of Sardinia and Corsica, though the Italians outnumbered the Germans by more than four to one, they were unable to exert a positive influence on the war. The Germans evacuated their troops, numbering a division and a half, from Sardinia to the mainland where, a most welcome addition to Kesselring's forces, they participated in the battles south of Rome. A significant part of the Italian *184th (Nembo) Parachute Division* went over to the German side and served actively with the German forces.

The ineptness of the Italian ground troops and the passivity of Badoglio's government during the early and critical days of the Salerno invasion brought serious disappointment to AFHQ. During the afternoon of 10 September, General Eisenhower sent a message to Badoglio in the hope of galvanizing the Italians into action:

The whole future and honor of Italy depend upon the part which her armed forces are now prepared to play. The Germans have definitely and deliberately taken the field against you. They have mutilated your fleet and sunk one of your ships; they have attacked your soldiers and seized your ports. The Germans are now being attacked by land and sea and on an ever increasing scale from the air. Now is the time to strike. If Italy rises now as one man we shall seize every German by the throat. I urge you to issue immediately a clarion call to all patriotic Italians. They have done much locally already but action appears to be uncoordinated and uncertain. They require inspired leadership and, in order to fight, an appeal setting out the situation to your people as it now exists is essential. Your Excellency is the one man that can do this. You can help free your country from the horrors of the battlefield. I urge you to act now; delay will be interpreted by the common enemy as weakness and lack of resolution.⁴⁰

General Eisenhower also recommended that President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill call on the Italian people to oppose fiercely every German in Italy--such opposition, he explained, would greatly assist Allied military operations.⁴¹ Accordingly, on 11 September, Roosevelt and Churchill made public a letter to Marshal Badoglio, calling on him to lead the Italian people against the German invaders. They instructed Eisenhower to convey the message directly to Badoglio.⁴²

These efforts to prod the Italian Army into activity were like beating a dead horse. Perhaps the Allies achieved a final wiggle when on 11 September Roatta issued by radio a general order to all army commanders to consider the Germans as enemies.⁴³ On the same day,

Badoglio informed Eisenhower that he had, the day before, ordered all Italian armed forces "to act vigorously against German aggression." For the Allies' edification, he included a final appeal for an Allied landing north of Rome and an airborne drop in the Grosseto area.⁴⁴

By then it was too late. Only a few Italian commands were still functioning actively. Indecision, fear of the Germans, and lack of communication with commanders in the field had doomed the Italian Army. Not only did this inaction facilitate Kesselring's plans and permit him to give his whole attention to the Allied invasion at Salerno, but it also deprived the King and the Badoglio government of resources they might have used to gain a better bargaining position with respect to the Allies.

Mussolini

Everything seemed to be going Hitler's way except for one thing, the rescue of Mussolini. If Skorzeny, under Student's supervision, could locate Mussolini's prison and kidnap him, Hitler felt that he would have a good chance of restoring fascism in Italy and regaining an ally. Skorzeny had missed getting Mussolini by one day, when the Duce's captors had moved him from the island of Maddalena back to the Italian mainland just before Skorzeny could execute his planned raid.

Shortly thereafter, however, Skorzeny's agents informed him that Mussolini had been moved to the Campo Imperatore on the Gran Sasso, a ski lodge completed shortly before the outbreak of the war and located on the highest peak of the Apennines. No military map carried its location. Not even mountain climbers' charts identified the place. The only information that Skorzeny could get came from a German citizen living in Italy. He had once spent a holiday there, and he had a circular describing the hotel accommodations. This intelligence was hardly adequate for a military operation, so Skorzeny arranged to have a pilot fly him and his intelligence officer over the camp.⁴⁵

On 8 September, while flying over the Gran Sasso in a Heinkel III plane, Skorzeny located the Campo Imperatore from the air and noticed a small triangular green area behind the hotel that might serve for an air landing operation. He and his intelligence officer tried to take pictures, but the camera built into the plane froze at 15,000 feet, and it was only with great difficulty that they managed to take some photographs with a hand camera.

This air reconnaissance was responsible for Skorzeny's absence from Frascati during the Allied air bombardment of Kesselring's headquarters. It was fortunate for him that he had left, for his quarters were badly damaged. As a result, he had to go to Rome to have his film developed. In the capital that evening, he pushed his way through joyous crowds of civilians who were celebrating the armistice, made known not long before by Badoglio's announcement.

Before Skorzeny could go ahead with rescue plans, he needed confirmation of Mussolini's presence at the ski lodge on Gran Sasso. He induced a German staff doctor to visit the lodge on the pretext that it might be suitable for use as a convalescent home for soldiers recuperating from malaria. The doctor started out that night and returned the following day.

He reported he had been unable to get to the lodge itself. He had reached Aquila, the nearest village, and from there had gone to a funicular station at the base of the mountain. A detachment of Italian soldiers guarded the station. A telephone call to the lodge disclosed that Italian troops stood guard there, too. Whether Mussolini was at the lodge was uncertain.

On the next day, 10 September, Student and Skorzeny discussed their problem. They felt they had to act quickly, for every hour that went by increased the possibility that the Italians might transfer Mussolini to Allied custody. Though they were not absolutely certain, they decided to act on the chance that Mussolini actually was at the lodge on Gran Sasso.

Because the capitulation of the Italian troops around Rome that day made the *2d Parachute Division* available for the new mission, Student thought it best to send first a battalion of paratroopers into the valley at night to seize the funicular station. But a ground attack up the side of the mountain was impractical. The troops might sustain heavy losses, the attack would endanger Mussolini's life. A parachute drop in the thin air over the Gran Sasso was also dangerous. Student therefore decided to make a surprise attack on the top of the mountain with a company of glider-borne troops. He ordered twelve gliders flown from southern France to Rome.

Detailed planning for the operation was completed on 11 September. Paratroopers were to seize the cable car station in the valley and make a surprise landing on top of Gran Sasso. H-hour was 0600, 12 September. To help persuade the Italian guards to give up Mussolini without resistance, Skorzeny induced an Italian general to accompany him.⁴⁶

Because the dozen gliders coming from France were late in arriving in the Rome area, Skorzeny postponed the operation for eight hours. The planes towing the gliders took off at 1300, 12 September. Though the paratroopers were well equipped with light arms, Skorzeny counted most on the element of surprise. He rode in the third glider in the hope that the men in the preceding two would have the situation well in hand when he arrived. But the two leading tow planes went off course, and Skorzeny's glider was the first to land. It crash-landed to earth less than fifty yards from the lodge.

Piling out of the glider, Skorzeny and his men rushed to the hotel and scrambled to a second story window. Inside they found Mussolini. The Italian guards offered no resistance. Meanwhile four more gliders landed successfully on the little green area near the lodge.

With Mussolini safely in hand, Skorzeny demanded the surrender of the Italian garrison. The colonel who appeared to be in command asked for time to consider. He withdrew, but he soon returned with a flask of wine and saluted his conquerors. By then, the paratroop battalion in the valley, after a show of force, was in possession of the funicular station.

Skorzeny relayed a message to Student--by telephone to the valley, thence by scout car radio--advising that he had accomplished the first part of his mission. This message reached Student, but subsequent communications were interrupted, and Skorzeny was unable to consult with higher authority on the best way to remove Mussolini from the Gran Sasso.

Wishing to get Mussolini to Hitler's headquarters as fast as he could, Skorzeny got in touch by radio with a small Storch aircraft flying overhead to observe the operation. He wanted the pilot, Captain Gerlach, to land on the mountain. With Italians assisting, the Germans cleared boulders from a short path to create a runway. Gerlach brought his small craft down safely. But he was far from pleased at the prospect of taking off from the mountain top with so precious a passenger. Skorzeny's insistence on accompanying Mussolini increased Gerlach's take-off problem by adding to the weight. Skorzeny reasoned that if the little plane failed to get off the ground, he would not be around to explain his failure to an enraged Fuehrer.

After a questioning glance at the little ship, Mussolini climbed into the Storch with Skorzeny and Gerlach. Paratroopers held the wings and tail of the plane as the pilot revved up the engine. Then, with much shaking and bouncing, the plane made its short run, barely cleared the rim of the escarpment, and leveled off only after a breath-taking drop below the mountain top. This was the last of the excitement. Without further incident, the plane proceeded to Pratica di Mare, where three Heinkel III aircraft were waiting to transport Mussolini to Germany. They took off at once, and shortly after 1930 that evening, Mussolini and Skorzeny were in Vienna. On the following day they flew to Munich; two days later, on 15 September, they were at Hitler's headquarters in East Prussia.

Despite his dramatic rescue from the possibility of standing trial before the Allies, Mussolini was but a hollow shell of his former self. Eventually Hitler established him in power to govern that part of Italy under German control. There he served as Hitler's puppet and as the facade of a new government called the Italian Social Republic, which could not conceal the German military power that supported it.

No more than a mere symbol of the final brief revival of fascism, Mussolini, until his death in April 1945 at the hands of anti-Fascist partisans, nevertheless lightened Hitler's problems of holding central and northern Italy. Spared the necessity of establishing a military government for the four-fifths of the Italian peninsula he occupied, Hitler, by rescuing Mussolini, also divided Italian loyalties. The Allies possessed one symbol of leadership in the King; Hitler held the other in Mussolini.

The surrender of Italy achieved by the armistice of Cassibile was not much more than a paper capitulation, for the Allies had neither the Italian capital nor the administrative apparatus of government. What the Allies had was a symbol of sovereignty scarcely one whit more appealing to the Italian people than the discredited Duce.

Footnotes

[1](#). Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, pp. 3-5, 10; Westphal, *Heer in Fesseln*, p. 229.

[2](#). Jane Scrivener (pseud.), *Inside Rome With the Germans* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1945), p. 1; Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, p. 8; Kesselring, *Soldat*, pp. 241-42; Westphal, *Heer in Fesseln*, p. 227.

[3](#). Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, pp. 9-10.

- [4.](#) Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 321; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 200; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 79-80; Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, pp. 10-11; Kesselring, *Soldat*, p. 255; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 34.
- [5.](#) Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, p. 13.
- [6.](#) Westphal, *Heer in Fesseln*, p. 230; Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, pp. 11-12.
- [7.](#) Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 38-39; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 75.
- [8.](#) Cadorna, *La riscossa*, pp. 38-46, 49.
- [9.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 83.
- [10.](#) Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 43.
- [11.](#) Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, p. 13.
- [12.](#) The German view is presented by Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), page 13; the Italian view is in a statement made by Lt. Col. Leandro Giaccone, the *Centauro's* chief of staff, in *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, page 81.
- [13.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 81-90; Cadorna, *La riscossa*, pp. 53-57.
- [14.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 77.
- [15.](#) Enrico Caviglia, Maresciallo d'Italia, *Diario (Aprile 1925-Marzo 1945)* (Rome: Gherardo Casini editore, 1952), pp. 392-414.
- [16.](#) Caviglia, *Diario*, pp. 435-40; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 89.
- [17.](#) Senise, *Quando ero Capo della Polizia*, p. 249; Maugeri, *From the Ashes of Disgrace*, p. 185; Guariglia, *Ricordi*, pp. 714, 717.
- [18.](#) Caviglia, *Diario*, p. 441; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 90.
- [19.](#) Caviglia, *Diario*, pp. 439-41.
- [20.](#) Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 44; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 90.
- [21.](#) Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 44; Caviglia, *Diario*, pp. 443-44; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 90; Sanzi, *Generale Carboni*, p. 224.
- [22.](#) Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 44-45; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 90-92; Sanzi, *Generale Carboni*, pp. 149-50; Scrivener, *Inside Rome With the Germans*, pp. 3-4.
- [23.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 87-88. The authors have followed the recorded testimony as given in the trial of Carboni, Roatta, Ambrosio, *et al.*, in which some, but not all of the relevant facts regarding the surrender were established. German postwar writings are less valid as evidence. Note, however, that both Kesselring and Klinckowstroem assert that General Calvi di Bergolo and Colonel Montezemolo appeared at German headquarters early in the morning of 10 September along with Colonel Giaccone. See Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, pp. 13-14; Kesselring, *Soldat*, p. 255. The new set of terms may be found in *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 88-89.

- [24.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 88, 92; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 46-47. Sanzi (*Generale Carboni*, page 157) states that it was General Calvi di Bergolo who called, not Giaccone.
- [25.](#) Caviglia, *Diario*, p. 441; *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 90; Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 329; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 209.
- [26.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, pp. 92-93; Caviglia, *Diario*, pp. 445-46; Bonomi, *Diario di un anno*, pp. 101-03.
- [27.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 93; Carboni, *L'armistizio e la difesa di Roma*, p. 47.
- [28.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 93; Caviglia, *Diario*, pp. 446-47; see also Pietro Pieri, "Roma nella prima decade del settembre 1943," *Nuova Rivista Storica*, vol. XLIV, No. 2 (August 1960), pp. 403-09.
- [29.](#) *Il Processo Carboni-Roatta*, p. 64; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 118-19; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 203.
- [30.](#) Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 329; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 209.
- [31.](#) Capitulation of Italy, p. 379.
- [32.](#) Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 330.
- [33.](#) Kesselring, *Soldat*, p. 238; Westphal, *Heer in Fesseln*, pp. 226-27.
- [34.](#) Klinckowstroem in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. V, p. 21, indicates that the attack was made by the *Support Aviation Wing 4*. In Rome, *Supermarina* seems to have believed that the attack was by Allied planes (Butcher, *My Three Years With Eisenhower*, p. 413). See also Morison, *Sicily-Salerno-Anzio*, pp. 242-43; Basso, *L'Armistizio del Settembre 1943 in Sardegna*, pp. 41, 48; Cunningham, *A Sailor's Odyssey*, pp. 562-63.
- [35.](#) See Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack*, [p. 144](#).
- [36.](#) Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 260-61.
- [37.](#) Cunningham, *A Sailor's Odyssey*, p. 573; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 258, 261.
- [38.](#) For text of the order, see *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10 Nuernberg, October 1946-April 1949* (Washington, 1950), vol. XI, DOC. NDKW-898, pp. 1078-79. B. H. Liddell Hart, ed., *The Rommel Papers* (London: Collins, 1953), pp. 445-47. See also Caracciolo di Ferroletto, "E Poi?" pp. 140-55, and Giuseppe Gariboldi-Farina, *Follia delle Folle* (Rome: Staderini, 1945), pp. 194-95.
- [39.](#) Vietinghoff in MS #T-1a (Westphal *et al.*), ch. VI; Rossi, *Come arrivammo*, pp. 257, 277; Col. Gaetano Giannuzzi, *L'Esercito vittima dell'armistizio*, (Turin: P. Castello, 1946), p. 38; *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, Office of United States Chief of Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality (hereafter cited as *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*) (Washington, 1946), vol. VII, trans of Doc. L-172, p. 935, shows the *Pasubio Division* as definitely disarmed; Msg 477, Mason-MacFarlane to Whiteley, 15 Sep 43, *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 503-04.
- [40.](#) Msg 443, sent both over "Drizzle-Monkey" and by naval channels, 10 Sep 43, 1657B time, *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 405-07.
- [41.](#) Telg W-9635 FREEDOM to AGWAR, 10 Sep 43, *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 409-10.

[42](#). Text of message in U.S. Department of State, *United States and Italy 1936-1946: Documentary Record*, p. 68; Telg 7473, President and Prime Minister to Eisenhower, 11 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 414.

[43](#). Roatta, *Otto milioni*, p. 338; Zanussi, *Guerra e catastrofe*, II, 248.

[44](#). Radiograms, "Monkey" to "Drizzle," 11 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 428, 434.

[45](#). This account of Mussolini's liberation is based largely on Skorzeny, *Geheimkommando Skorzeny*, pp. 127-59.

[46](#). Identified as General Soleti by Mussolini in *Storia di un anno*, p. 34.

Chapter XXIX

The Second Capitulation

Mission to Brindisi

At Brindisi, the King and his entourage found it difficult even to find accommodations and to organize a mess. Clearly the government was one in name only. Four-fifths of the country was under German control. The Allies on the Salerno beaches seemed perilously close to defeat. Yet the Badoglio government could claim some legitimacy because surrender had brought it Allied recognition as the government of Italy.

Contact with the Allies, therefore, was of critical importance to the King and Badoglio. And fortunately, the royal party had the radio and code originally given to Castellano in Lisbon. This made it possible to communicate with AFHQ. But there were no real facilities at Brindisi for maintaining contact with the rest of the country--Radio Bari was so weak that its emissions scarcely reached Rome.

After receiving from General Eisenhower on 11 September the message from Roosevelt and Churchill urging him to lead the Italian people in a crusade against the Germans, Badoglio asked Eisenhower to send a liaison officer to help maintain close relations.¹ Eisenhower agreed and promptly selected for the post Lt. Gen. Sir Noel Mason-MacFarlane, the Military Governor of Gibraltar. He directed Mr. Murphy and Mr. Macmillan, the American and British political advisers at AFHQ, to accompany Mason-MacFarlane, whose task would be the establishment of official contact with the Badoglio government.²

After expressing his pleasure over the choice, Badoglio suggested that Eisenhower and his staff meet with him and his military staff "to discuss further operations in Italy, a theater of war which we [Italians] naturally know perfectly."³

The suggestion was not well received. Still grievously disappointed in the performance of the Italian Government from the time of the armistice announcement, Eisenhower was in no mood to confide his plans to members of that government. It seemed hardly logical, now that the Italian Fleet had surrendered and the Army had dissolved into virtual nothingness, for Badoglio to tell Eisenhower how to wage the war and for Eisenhower to listen. What seemed very clear was that "Castellano had been the moving spirit in military armistice," not Badoglio or any member of Badoglio's cabinet. Why had Castellano brought the negotiations to a head? Probably, AFHQ speculated, "chiefly due to his treatment by the Germans who apparently ignored the Italians militarily and told them nothing about operations."⁴ But whatever the reason, it was of little import compared to the problem of gaining some benefit from the surrender.

On the day when the Allies at Salerno were closest to defeat, 13 September, General Eisenhower wrote General Marshall to depict how hollow a shell the Allies had inherited as a potential ally:

Internally the Italians were so weak and supine that we got little if any practical help out of them. However, almost on pure bluff, we did get the Italian fleet into Malta and because of

the Italian surrender, were able to rush into Taranto and Brindisi where no Germans were present. . . .

The Sardinian and Corsican situations show how helpless and inert the Italians really are. In both those places they had the strength to kick the Germans into the sea. Instead they have apparently done nothing, although here and there they do occupy a port or two.

Badoglio wants to see me and has suggested Sicily as a meeting place. I am telling him he has to come here. He also wants to bring along some of his general staff but I can't make out what his general staff can possibly be directing just now. A few Italian artillery units are supporting the British Airborne Division in Taranto. Aside from that there has been some local battling throughout the peninsula. This has, of course, served to keep the Germans preoccupied, but there has been nothing like the effect produced that was easily within the realm of possibility.⁵

Despite his low expectations, Eisenhower was not giving up in his effort to salvage something practical out of the surrender, and Mason-MacFarlane's mission to Badoglio's government was to be his instrument. Eisenhower defined Mason-MacFarlane's task as the transmission of Eisenhower's instructions to the Italian Government; the collection of intelligence information; and the arrangements "for such coordinated action as the Italian armed forces and people can be induced to take against the Germans." Mason-MacFarlane and his subordinates were to bear in mind "the extreme importance of inculcating in the Italian Government, armed forces and people, the will to resist and hamper in every way the German forces in Italy and the Italian possessions." Mason-MacFarlane received for guidance copies of the short military terms of the armistice and the long comprehensive conditions, but because the Italian Government had not yet officially received the latter, he was not to discuss the contents of the long terms.⁶

On the day that the mission established its first official contact, 15 September, the British Government proposed that the Allies secure Badoglio's signature to the long terms and asked for Eisenhower's views on the proposal. In reply, General Eisenhower acknowledged the desirability of obtaining the signature but recommended delay. He also urged strongly the omission of the unconditional surrender formula, for he still had hope of gaining some practical benefits from the capitulation.⁷

For their part, the Italians were also disappointed. The members of the Italian Government had attributed extraordinary military capabilities to the Allies. They had entertained visions of an Allied landing in great strength near Rome. Thus, they felt that the Allies were responsible--at least morally--for the hasty abandonment of the capital. The Allies, they thought, had advanced the timing of the armistice announcement and had come ashore at the wrong place. "They all say we should have landed north instead of south of Naples," Mason-MacFarlane reported. "On this point I tell them they know nothing about it and to shut up."⁸

The impression made by the Italian Government prompted pity rather than confidence. The King appeared

pathetic, very old, and rather gaga; 74 years old; physically infirm, nervous, shaky, but courteous, with a certain modesty and simplicity of character which is attractive. He takes

an objective, even humorously disinterested view of mankind and their follies. 'Things are not difficult,' he said, 'only men.' I do not think he would be capable of initiating any policy, except under extreme pressure, e.g. Mussolini's march on Rome and the Communist threat, which led to his decision of 1920 [*sic*]; the hopeless state of the Fascist regime which led to his decision of July 25, 1943; the German threat to Rome, which led to his decision on September 9, 1943.

Badoglio seemed old, benevolent, honest and very friendly. Said all the right things. A loyal servant of his King and country, without ambitions. . . . He is a soldier and clearly without much political sense, believing that he has the popular support at the moment and that it can all be concentrated in a military movement without a political side.

Ambrosio was "intelligent and friendly," though "depressed and lacking in enthusiasm." Roatta was "a good linguist" and "the perfect military attaché" but with questionable loyalty "to any cause that should show remote signs of becoming a lost one." Zanussi's "position in this rather dreary military hierarchy is rather low."⁹

The prospect of getting help from the Italians did not seem bright. All that remained of the Italian Army were: in southern Italy--the *Mantova Division* near Crotone, the *Piceno Division* near Brindisi, part of the *Legnano Division* north of Brindisi, and some coastal formations; in Sardinia--four divisions in a "recuperative" stage; in Cephalonia and the Dodecanese--one division each. The rest of the Italian Army, according to Ambrosio, was "surrounded by the Germans and finished." It could be "written off." Of the divisions in southern Italy, all had "hardly any motor transport left," their armament was "mostly 1918" type, they had "practically no petrol," very little ammunition, and were "very short of boots." Except for the fleet, "the genuine military help we are likely to get," Mason-MacFarlane estimated, "is going to be practically nil."¹⁰

As for the political side of the picture, the Brindisi group was hardly worthy of being called a government. It was important only because of its unchallenged claim to legality--"except for the Fascist Republican Party now being organized in Germany by Mussolini and his gang, no other Government has so far claimed authority."¹¹

The Long Terms

While Mason-MacFarlane and the military members of his mission remained at Brindisi, the political advisers--Murphy and Macmillan--returned to report to General Eisenhower. On 18 September, after conferring with these men, Eisenhower informed the Combined Chiefs of Staff of the problem he faced at this juncture of the surrender developments.

The chief question, as Eisenhower saw it, and one that would have significant influence on Allied military operations in Italy, was the status to be accorded the Badoglio government. Determination of the status of Italy would dictate all "executive action" in the military, political, and propaganda spheres. Eisenhower had instructions covering support to be given to Italian units and individuals who resisted the Germans, and to this end he was planning to group three Italian divisions in the Calabria-Taranto area into a corps to be placed under British Eighth Army control for the purpose of defending ports, lines of

communications, and vital installations; two or three divisions would become available in Sardinia, and Eisenhower contemplated using them for similar duties; Italian divisions in Corsica were collaborating with French forces landed there and conducting anti-German operations; two Italian cruisers were transporting troops and supplies from North Africa to Corsica "at considerable risk." Yet all this activity, though desirable and even necessary to the Allies, was inconsistent with the terms of the armistice, which called for the Italians to be disarmed and disbanded. Because Eisenhower would soon have to confer directly with Badoglio, he wished to be able to reassure him on a number of matters Badoglio was sure to raise, matters having "a profound effect on our military relations with Italy during the period of active hostilities." Instructions from the CCS, the dictates of military necessity, and his own judgment provided him the answers to most points. But these, Eisenhower found, were "not at all consistent with the provisions of the Long Term Armistice conditions" he was supposed to get Badoglio to sign. Badoglio, he had learned, did not understand the need to sign further terms, for additional conditions were illogical if the Allies expected active Italian co-operation in the war effort against Germany. Finally, drawing up an effective propaganda program to be addressed to the Italian people was impractical "until the government structure and the Italian status are clarified."¹²

His recommendation, Eisenhower continued, was to institute a new Allied policy toward Italy. Could the Allied governments consider giving the Badoglio administration "some form of *de facto* recognition . . . as a co-belligerent or military associate" provided the Italians would strengthen the national character of the administration; restore the former constitution and promise free elections after the war for a constitutional assembly; consider possible eventual abdication of the King in favor of his son or grandson; adhere to whatever military requirements the Allies might decide on; and accept an Allied organization in the nature of an armistice commission, but with a different title, from which the Italian administration could accept guidance and instructions?

What prompted Eisenhower to make such a recommendation was the "hard and risky campaign before us." Italian assistance might spell the difference between complete and only partial success. Since he could defer a meeting with Badoglio for not more than ten days, he wished answers to his questions as soon as possible. And because he realized that his suggestion would "provoke political repercussions" and perhaps "arouse considerable opposition and criticism," he recommended that "the burden be placed upon us, on the ground of military necessity, which I am convinced should be the governing factor."¹³

After another day of reflection, General Eisenhower dispatched another message to the Combined Chiefs. There were, he said, only two alternatives: either to accept and strengthen the legal government of Italy under the King and Badoglio; or to sweep that government aside, set up an Allied military government over an occupied Italy, and accept the heavy personnel and administrative commitment involved in the latter course. He recommended very strongly the first line of action. As a cobelligerent, the legal government would have to declare war on Germany and on the Fascist Republican Government. It would thereby become the natural rallying point for all elements wishing to fight against fascism.¹⁴

The first major indication of the effect of Eisenhower's recommendation came on 21 September, when Prime Minister Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons, reviewed the war in the Mediterranean and revealed much of the Italian surrender negotiations.

Justifying the conduct of the Badoglio government, and noting the threat of civil war arising from Mussolini's escape to Germany, he urged the necessity "in the general interest as well as in that of Italy that all surviving forces of Italian national life should be rallied together around their lawful Government. . . ." ¹⁵

With the assent of his War Cabinet, Churchill on the same day telegraphed President Roosevelt. He recommended that the Allies build up the authority of the Brindisi administration and make it "the broadest-based anti-Fascist coalition Government possible." Rejecting an Allied status for that government, he felt that co-belligerency was sufficient. Yet he did not relinquish his wish for Badoglio to sign the full instrument of surrender. ¹⁶

Churchill informed Stalin of his desires, perhaps as a bid in advance for Stalin's support should Roosevelt be reluctant to have the comprehensive surrender terms imposed. "I am putting these proposals also to President Roosevelt," Churchill wired the Russian, "and I hope that I may count on your approval." ¹⁷

President Roosevelt was, indeed, reluctant. Yet he appreciated Eisenhower's need for a clear and firm directive. On 21 September, therefore, he sent Churchill his views in a message that crossed Churchill's telegram to him. Except with regard to the long terms, the views of the two were similar. With Churchill's concurrence, consequently, Roosevelt on 23 September laid down the basic policy for Eisenhower's guidance in dealing with the Italian Government. Eisenhower was to (1) withhold the long term armistice provisions until a later date; (2) recommend from time to time the relaxing of the military terms to enable the Italians to fight more effectively against the Germans; (3) permit the Italian Government to assume the status of a trusted cobelligerent in the war against Germany if that government declared war on Germany and if it promised to give the people the right to decide the form of government they wished, though not before the Germans were evicted from Italian territory; (4) merge the functions of the Allied military government and of the contemplated armistice control commission into an Allied commission under himself, with the power to give guidance and instructions to the Badoglio government on military, political, and administrative matters; (5) make vigorous use of the Italian armed forces against Germany; and (6) inform the French military authorities of these new instructions to the "extent that you deem advisable." ¹⁸

President Roosevelt also forwarded to Eisenhower the text of Churchill's views. And in response to Eisenhower's suggestions, slight modifications were made in the text of the long terms. Furthermore, invitations previously issued to the other United Nations governments to send representatives to discuss the signature ceremony were not to be renewed. ¹⁹

Upon receipt of the Presidential directive, Eisenhower instructed Mason-MacFarlane to make arrangements for a formal conference between him and Badoglio. The conference, to take place no earlier than 26 September, was to be restricted to the five basic items of the presidential directive. The long terms were not to be discussed. Badoglio was to be informed that additional terms or instructions of a political, financial, and economic nature would be communicated to him from time to time. ²⁰

Meanwhile, the naval members of the Mason-MacFarlane mission had worked out the disposition of the Italian Fleet and merchant marine. All ships were to continue to fly the Italian flag. The battleships were to go into a care and maintenance status. Cruisers and small craft, both naval and maritime, were to serve the Allied cause by acting in accord with instructions that Admiral Cunningham would issue to the Italian Ministry of Marine through a liaison officer attached to the Badoglio government.²¹

About this time, Mr. Macmillan sent a personal message to Churchill. He said he thought it might be possible, if the Allies acted promptly, to secure Badoglio's signature to the long terms. With this estimate in hand, and with Stalin's support, the Prime Minister again urged President Roosevelt to agree to Badoglio's signing the comprehensive document. Informed of Churchill's action, Eisenhower instructed Mason-MacFarlane to suggest the 29th of September as the day for his conference with Badoglio. By then, surely, the issue of the long terms would be settled.²²

President Roosevelt had pretty much had his way in the directive of 23 September, and he had placed a heavy mortgage on the postwar continuance of the Italian monarchy. Although the Prime Minister made no secret of his preference for monarchical government, he had concurred in Roosevelt's directive and had endorsed in the House of Commons the principle of free choice by the Italian people on their form of government at the end of hostilities. It was now the President's turn to defer to Churchill's enthusiasm in favor of the long terms. Late on 25 September, therefore, Roosevelt gave his assent to using the "long set of terms," if Badoglio's signature could be obtained quickly.²³

The final decision having been made, General Smith, AFHQ's chief of staff, decided to go to Brindisi himself, together with Murphy and Macmillan, and try to insure by careful preliminary discussion the smoothness of the Eisenhower-Badoglio conference. Instructing Mason-MacFarlane to arrange for his reception at Brindisi, Smith intended to have preliminary talks with the Italians in preparation for the formal meeting, scheduled for the 29th.²⁴

By this time a rift had developed between the King and Badoglio. Victor Emmanuel III opposed the whole program that AFHQ presented, and the issue came to a head on 26 September, the day before General Smith was due to arrive at Brindisi. On that day the King asked to see General Mason-MacFarlane alone.

In conference with Mason-MacFarlane, the King made known his opposition to an immediate declaration of war against Germany. He alone, the King said, could declare war, and then only if a properly constituted government upheld the declaration. The King did not feel he could declare war on Germany until he returned to Rome and constituted a new government. Otherwise, a declaration of war would be unconstitutional. Furthermore, the King was hardly in favor of letting the people decide the form of government they wanted. "It would be most dangerous," the King said, "to leave the choice of post-war government unreservedly in the hands of the Italian people." The King also wanted to know whether the Allies would insist on Badoglio as Prime Minister for the duration of the war. Mason-MacFarlane said he thought so. The King pointed out that it might be very difficult, in that case, to form a representative anti-Fascist government. The sovereign then stated his wish for Italian troops to be among the first when the Allies reached Rome. Mason-MacFarlane

suggested that if the King desired to pursue these points, he should instruct Badoglio to raise them during the scheduled conference with Eisenhower.²⁵

The King did more than consult with Mason-MacFarlane. Writing in his own name directly to the King of England and to President Roosevelt, Victor Emmanuel III made known his wish for the immediate status of an allied power. President Roosevelt replied that he considered the request premature. Churchill, replying on behalf of his King, stated that there had never been any question of an alliance.²⁶

Badoglio's position was quite different from that of the King. Badoglio saw clearly the necessity for Italy to declare war on Germany, not only to regularize the status of Italian soldiers who fell into German hands, but also as a prerequisite for improving Italy's position with the Western Powers. Though Badoglio urged the King to make the declaration of war, the monarch refused. The King feared "that the Germans, who now occupied more than five-sixths of Italy, would certainly be induced to barbarous reprisals against the population." And the King took comfort in the fact that Acquarone stood with him on this issue.²⁷

Victor Emmanuel III did not easily grasp the implications of his new role as titular leader of the anti-Fascist effort for which he had been cast by Churchill and Roosevelt. To Badoglio's chagrin, the first royal proclamation from Brindisi made no acknowledgment, implicit or otherwise, that significant changes had occurred--the sovereign issued the proclamation in the name of His Majesty the King of Italy and Albania, Emperor of Ethiopia. At Mason-MacFarlane's insistence, the monarch agreed to refer to himself only as the King of Italy. But Victor Emmanuel III insisted stubbornly that he could not surrender his titles without an act of parliament and such an act could not be passed until a constitutional parliament was elected and assembled.²⁸

The Allied representatives at Brindisi had scarcely regained their equanimity in the face of this royal gaucherie when the King requested General Eisenhower to forward a message to Dino Grandi, believed to be somewhere in Portugal. Because Guariglia was in Rome, the King wanted Grandi to come to Brindisi to assume the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. According to the King, Grandi was a symbol of anti-Fascism, his presence in the Badoglio government would create a schism in the Fascist Republican ranks. Furthermore, Grandi could produce and develop an active pro-Allied propaganda program among the Italian people.²⁹

Meanwhile, General Smith, accompanied by the two AFHQ political advisers, arrived at Brindisi on 27 September with copies of the long terms as most recently revised. Together with General Mason-MacFarlane, they had a lengthy conference with Badoglio that afternoon. Mason-MacFarlane presented two copies of the long terms document to Badoglio, reminding him that they were the additional conditions mentioned in the armistice terms signed at Cassibile. The signature of the long terms, he said, was to be the principal item at the conference with General Eisenhower scheduled for Malta on the 29th. The preamble, as the marshal would note, had been amended. But the Allies required the signature, Mason-MacFarlane explained, for two basic reasons: to satisfy Allied public opinion and to avoid any possibility of later misunderstanding. General Eisenhower had the power to modify the application of the terms as he saw fit, Mason-MacFarlane continued. Already the Allies recognized the course of events had outdated some of the clauses. In any

case, the Allies would apply the terms as a whole in the spirit of the declaration made by the President and Prime Minister. Badoglio agreed to discuss the terms with the King that evening and to meet again with the Allied representatives the next morning.

General Smith then took up the other points on the agenda--the coming Malta conference with General Eisenhower, and the program for Italy as outlined by President Roosevelt in his directive of 23 September, which Mason-MacFarlane had discussed with the King the day before. In favor of declaring war on Germany, Badoglio appreciated Smith's arguments; *i.e.*, a declaration of war would give Italian soldiers regular status, and would prepare Allied public opinion for future modifications of the armistice terms. Smith suggested that such modifications might include changes in Allied military government and return of the administration of Sicily to the Badoglio government. The marshal was willing to accept the status of co-belligerency for his country. As for broadening the royal government, Badoglio felt it could be done effectively only after the King returned to Rome. But Badoglio did not want a specific commitment giving the Italian people the right to choose their form of government after the war. He suggested that the Italian leaders pledge only: "It should be understood that free elections will be held after the war." He did not think the King and his government ought to throw open by their own act the question of the monarchy. He doubted that the Italian people were adapted to a republican form of government. The monarchy, in his opinion, was necessary for maintaining the stability and unity of Italy.³⁰

The King remained stubborn. Though authorizing Badoglio to sign the long terms, he refused to declare war on Germany, to make a pledge to broaden his government, or to promise to permit the Italian people to choose their own form of government at the end of the war. He repeated his request for Grandi to serve as Foreign Minister.

Nonetheless, his approval for Badoglio to sign the comprehensive surrender document was a significant step. As for Grandi, President Roosevelt had his own ideas of the type of man that Italy needed. On the day that Badoglio was meeting with Eisenhower at Malta, Count Carlo Sforza, a distinguished anti-Fascist politician who had fled Italy years before, got War Department clearance, at the President's instigation, to go to England, thence to North Africa, and General Eisenhower was so notified.³¹

Malta

The last act of the Italian surrender was anticlimactic. Aboard the British battleship H.M.S. *Nelson*, in Valetta harbor, Malta, around 1100, 29 September, Marshal Badoglio, accompanied by Admiral De Courten, Generals Ambrosio, Sandalli, and Roatta, and four officers of lesser rank, met General Eisenhower. The Allied commander had with him Lord Gort (the Governor of Malta); Admiral Cunningham; Generals Alexander, Smith, Mason-MacFarlane, and Maj. Gen. A. A. Richardson; Air Chief Marshal Tedder and Air Vice Marshal Keith Parks; Messrs. Murphy and Macmillan; and a number of lesser ranking officers. Badoglio and Eisenhower placed their signatures on the long terms.

General Eisenhower then handed Badoglio a letter, which read:

The terms of the armistice to which we have just appended our signatures are supplementary to the short military armistice signed by your representative and mine on the 3rd September, 1943. They are based upon the situation obtaining prior to the cessation of hostilities. Developments since that time have altered considerably the status of Italy, which has become in effect a co-operator with the United Nations.

It is fully recognized by the Governments on whose behalf I am acting that these terms are in some respect superseded by subsequent events and that several of the clauses have become obsolescent or have already been put into execution. We also recognize that it is not at this time in the power of the Italian Government to carry out certain of the terms. Failure to do so



ABOARD H.M.S. NELSON, standing off Malta, 29 September 1943. Officials present at the signing of the long terms surrender document are, from left: Lord Gort, Air Chief Marshal Tedder, Marshal Badoglio, Lt. Gen. Sir Noel Mason-MacFarlane, General Eisenhower, and General Alexander.

because of existing conditions will not be regarded as a breach of good faith on the part of Italy. However, this document represents the requirements with which the Italian Government can be expected to comply when in a position to do so.

It is to be understood that the terms both of this document and of the short military armistice of the 3rd September may be modified from time to time if military necessity or the extent of cooperation by the Italian Government indicates this as desirable.³²

Thus, the Italian Government surrendered unconditionally, but in the hope of redemption. The Allies had wanted the conference to serve as the point of departure for charting the new course of co-belligerency. But the conferees did no more than discuss the program outlined in President Roosevelt's directive. The Eisenhower-Badoglio conference was exploratory and reached no agreement. Still underlying the discussion was the frustration imposed by the obduracy of the King.

Badoglio opened the plenary conference with a general statement conveying his own desire to see the formation of a government with a broad, liberal base. But he made no commitment. He stated that the King would determine the new members of the government. Declaring himself to be only a soldier, Badoglio said he could not advise the sovereign with respect to politicians. And to General Eisenhower's question whether the royal government would promptly be given a definitely anti-Fascist character, Badoglio avoided a direct answer. Eisenhower made it clear that the Italian Government would have to take on an anti-Fascist complexion before it could join the Allies in combat. Badoglio replied simply by saying that the King planned to invite the leaders of the political parties to take part in the government.

At the King's direction, Badoglio renewed the request for Dino Grandi as Foreign Minister. Explaining that such an appointment would find no sympathetic response in Allied public opinion, Eisenhower made known the message he had received from Washington--the Americans desired Count Sforza to visit Brindisi in the near future. Badoglio said that the King had a distinct antipathy for Sforza because of Sforza's remarks about the monarch.

Badoglio stated his own desire for a declaration of war against Germany as soon as the Italian Government returned to Rome. He added that until then he personally considered the Italian forces to be in a *de facto* state of war with the Germans in Corsica, Dalmatia, and elsewhere. Eisenhower again urged an immediate declaration of war and said he would turn over to Badoglio the administration of Sicily and other liberated areas if his government took such a step. The marshal would make no commitment. Under Italian law, he said, only the King could declare war.

Toward the end of the conference, venturing the hope that General Eisenhower considered him a complete collaborator, Badoglio asked to be initiated into Allied plans. He requested that Italian troops be permitted to participate in the entry into Rome, an event expected, not only by the Italians but by the Allies as well, to take place in the near future. Eisenhower was evasive on sharing military plans with the Italians, but he promised a token participation of Italian troops in the liberation of the capital if Italy declared war on Germany and co-operated with the Allies.

In conclusion, General Eisenhower expressed his thanks to Badoglio and said he hoped that great good would come from the meeting. In reciprocating, Badoglio referred to the situation prevailing in 1918, when the Italians, he said, gave the decisive blow to the Germans--operating with the Italian Army had been three British divisions and one American regiment, and all had co-operated closely to bring about the German defeat.³³

On that day, 29 September 1943, Allied troops were at the gates of Naples, the Germans were withdrawing to the Volturno River and trying to establish a defensive line across the Italian peninsula. With the Germans retiring northward, with the Allies having established two armies on the Italian mainland (Clark's U.S. Fifth and Montgomery's British Eighth), the prospects for advancing rapidly to Rome appeared to be good. The Allies did not yet realize the extent to which the Germans could use the Italian winter weather, the Italian terrain, and the skill of their own outnumbered troops to deny the Allies, and incidentally the Italians, quick entry into the capital.

Crossing the Strait of Messina had been easy, securing a beachhead at Salerno more difficult. But no one could foresee the bitterness ahead of the fighting at the Volturno and the Sangro Rivers, on the approaches to the Liri valley, along the Rapido and Garigliano Rivers, in the shadow of Cassino, and in the Anzio beachhead. No one could anticipate the expenditure of men and matériel that would be necessary before Rome fell to Allied arms. Least of all the Italians, who on 13 October 1943 finally declared war on Germany.

Epilogue

What had the Allies gained by the surrender of Italy? A cobelligerent of doubtful value if judged in terms of material military resources--the Army was virtually ineffective; the Air Force was obsolete; only the Navy and merchant marine made substantial contributions to Allied power.

The surrender had eliminated a ground force of tremendous size that, even though ill-equipped and low in morale, had confounded and troubled Allied planners and intelligence experts. Had the Italian Government not surrendered before the Salerno invasion, the Italian units manning the coastal positions along the Salerno beaches, acting in concert with the Germans, perhaps might have increased Allied casualties. Unless, to take the opposite viewpoint, the Germans were relieved by the surrender because they no longer had to bother even to be polite to an ally of dubious worth. Did the Germans, therefore, resist the Allies more effectively without the Italians? Was this perhaps at least part of the reason why the landings at Salerno were more difficult for the Allies than those made on the beaches of Sicily?

What the Allies really achieved by the Italian capitulation was an enormous psychological victory, not only in the eyes of the world, but, more important, for the fighting man. One of the three major enemy powers had fallen to the combined weight of joint Allied arms, and this gave increasing hope that the end of the conflict would not be far distant.

This had been brought about by military diplomacy. Not a new phenomenon, this particular performance showed great ingenuity and unusual perception. A military command and staff had played the role of the diplomatist with considerable skill.

If the Allies were taken in during the negotiations by their belief that the Italian Government was eager to change sides in the war, it was because the Italian representatives--D'Ajeta, Berio, Castellano, and Zanussi--all of them, had misrepresented, perhaps unwittingly, the desires of their government. Though Churchill credited the King and Badoglio with the initiative in Mussolini's downfall and the subsequent switch to the Allied side, the real motivation was a desire to choose the lesser of two evils--to be crushed by Germany or to be redeemed by the Allies.

"If the Germans would [only] attack [us]," Badoglio had said late in August, "the situation would have a solution." Along with his fear of German armed might was the question of honor. "We cannot, by an act of our own will," Badoglio had said, "separate ourselves from Germany with whom we are bound by a pact of alliance." Only a German attack could relieve Italian pangs of conscience and make it easy to go over to the Allies and "turn for aid to our enemies of yesterday."³⁴

As late as 3 September 1943, the day Castellano signed the armistice at Cassibile, the German naval attaché in Rome was reporting to his superiors: "In higher circles the opinion prevails that ever since he assumed office, Badoglio has been trying to bring the war to as favorable a conclusion as possible, but only with Germany's consent, for Badoglio takes Italy's honor as an Axis partner very seriously."³⁵

The King, too, felt this way. Despite the fears he expressed of German reprisals on the Italian population, he was also motivated by the desire to be a man of honor. Even after the Germans had destroyed most of the Italian Army, he refused to take the ultimate step of

breaking with his former ally. And only as the result of continued Allied pressure, when his government was practically a prisoner of the Allies, did he make his final capitulation and declare war on Germany.

The campaign on Sicily that led to the capitulation of Italy proved several things. Like the invasion of North Africa, the Sicilian landings showed that Axis-held Europe was vulnerable to amphibious and airborne attack. It demonstrated the superiority of Allied weapons and equipment. It illustrated the resourcefulness and skill of the German foot soldier, who, despite numerical and technological inferiority, demonstrated once again the fundamental importance of terrain and its use in a struggle between ground forces. It gave the American field commanders in Europe experience, and particularly with respect to the British ally, a maturity not achieved before. Most of all, the Sicilian Campaign, by making possible the Italian surrender, marked a milestone on the Allied road to victory.

Footnotes

- [1.](#) Msg 38, "Monkey" to "Drizzle," 11 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 434; Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 123-24.
- [2.](#) Capitulation of Italy, pp. 440-41, also in file 10,000/100/1; Msg 5646, AFHQ to TROOPERS, 17 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, II. See the nine-page typewritten account of the establishment and operations of the Allied Military Mission at Brindisi covering the period 3 September-17 November 1943, 10,000/100/76.
- [3.](#) Msg 46, "Monkey" to "Drizzle," 12 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 453; Ltr. Whiteley to Mason-MacFarlane, 13 Sep 43, 10,000/100/1.
- [4.](#) Telg 441, FAIRFIELD REAR G-2 for Strong, FREEDOM, 10 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 412.
- [5.](#) Ltr, Eisenhower to Marshall, 13 Sep 43. Diary, Office CinC, Book VIII, pp. A-765--A-767. See also Telg 009, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 18 Sep 43, 10,000/100/1.
- [6.](#) Instrs for Mil Mission with the Italian Government, 12 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 460-61. General Taylor (82d AB Division) was the senior American representative and apparently handled administration and communications. See Memo, AFHQ for Taylor, 12 Sep 43, sub: Notes for Allied Mil Mission; Organizational Chart for Mission; and Ltr, Taylor to Whiteley, 15 Sep 43, all in 10,000/100/1; see also Telg 584, AFHQ to FATIMA (MacFarlane Mission), 25 Sep 43, and Telg 9907, AFHQ to FATIMA, 26 Sep 43, both in 10,000/100/10; Decisions Made by CinC in Mtgs, Bizerte, 9 Sep-22 Sep 43, 0100/4/168; Notes for Mason-MacFarlane, 15 Sep 43, 10,000/100/76.
- [7.](#) Telg 4929, Gilmer to Smith, 15 Sep 43, and Telg 478, FAIRFIELD REAR to FREEDOM, 16 Sep 43, both in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 501, 526.
- [8.](#) Msg 477, Mason-MacFarlane to Whiteley, 15 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 503-04; see also Ltr, Mason-MacFarlane to Whiteley, 14 Sep 43, and Diary Notes of Mason-MacFarlane Mission, 12-21 Sep 43, both in 10,000/100/1; Diary Notes of Mason-MacFarlane Mission, 22 Sep-4 Oct 43, 10,000/100/2.
- [9.](#) Msg 477, Mason-MacFarlane for Whiteley, 15 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 503-04.
- [10.](#) Memo, Mason-MacFarlane for AFHQ, 16 Sep 43; Telg 11, Mason-MacFarlane to AFHQ, 16 Sep 43; and Ltr, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 20 Sep 43, all in 10,000/100/1; Msg 5986, AFHQ to USFOR, 17 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, II.

- [11.](#) Rpt of Macmillan, 17 Sep 43, Diary Office CinC, Book VIII, pp. A-790--A-796; see also Telg 548, Macmillan to Mason-MacFarlane, 22 Sep 43, 10,000/100/2.
- [12.](#) Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 409, 18 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 538-42; see also Ltr, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 20 Sep 43, 10,000/100/76; Telg 7074, Eisenhower to Mason-MacFarlane, 20 Sep 43, 10,000/100/1; Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 377, 22 Sep 43, 0100/4/3, III; Msg 8636, AFHQ to MIDEAST, 23 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, II.
- [13.](#) Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 409, 18 Sep 43.
- [14.](#) Telg 502, Eisenhower to Smith, forwarded to CCS, 20 Sep 43, NAF 410, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 544, 548; see also Memo, Whiteley for Mason-MacFarlane, 21 Sep 43, 10,000/100/1.
- [15.](#) Churchill, *Onwards to Victory*, p. 267.
- [16.](#) Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, pp. 189-90.
- [17.](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 192-93.
- [18.](#) Telg 8432, Presidential Directive, 23 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 560-62; see also Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, pp. 190-91, and Memo, Hammond for Hull and Marshall, 20 Sep 43, OPD 300.6 (OCS Papers).
- [19.](#) Revised Proposals for the Signature of the Long Armistice Terms, 21 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, pp. 563-64; see also Telg 550, Eisenhower to Mason-MacFarlane, 23 Sep 43, 10,000/100/2.
- [20.](#) Telg 565, Smith to Mason-MacFarlane, 24 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 583; see also Telg 7134, AFHQ to Mason-MacFarlane, 20 Sep 43; Telg 37, Mason-MacFarlane to AFHQ, 20 Sep 43; and Telg 110, Mason-MacFarlane to Smith, 25 Sep 43, all in 10,000/100/1; Telg 57, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 22 Sep 43, 10,000/100/2.
- [21.](#) Cunningham, *A Sailor's Odyssey*, pp. 572-73; see Telg, F.O. "Z" to CinC Med, 12 Sep 43, and Telg, F.O.T.A. to CinC Med, 16 Sep 43, both in 10,000/100/1; Memo on Agreement of Employment and Disposition of the Italian Navy and Merchant Marine, No. Med 00380/17D, 23 Sep 43, 10,000/100/76; Telg 066, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 23 Sep 43; Telg 061, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 22 Sep 43; Telg 560, Eisenhower to Mason-MacFarlane, 24 Sep 43; Telg 583, Smith to Mason-MacFarlane, 25 Sep 43, all in 10,000/100/2.
- [22.](#) Memo, Macmillan for Smith, 25 Sep 43, and Telg 583, Smith to Mason-MacFarlane, both in Capitulation of Italy, pp. 585, 590; Msgs, Churchill to Roosevelt, 24 and 25 Sep 43, in Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 194.
- [23.](#) Msg, President to Prime Minister, 25 Sep 43, in Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 194; Telg 8611, Roosevelt to Eisenhower, 25 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 593; Memo, Hammond to Stimson, 25 Sep 43, OPD 300.6 (OCS Papers).
- [24.](#) Telg 583, Smith to Mason-MacFarlane, 25 Sep 43; see also Telg 565, Smith to Mason-MacFarlane, 24 Sep 43, 10,000/100/10; Telg 9780, Smith to Mason-MacFarlane, 26 Sep 43, and Telg 118, Mason-MacFarlane to Smith, 26 Sep 43, both in 10,000/100/2; Telg 120, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 26 Sep 43, 10,000/100/76.
- [25.](#) Telg 121, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 26 Sep 43, Capitulation of Italy, p. 601; Telg 136, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 26 Sep 43, 10,000/100/2; Puntoni, *Vittorio Emanuele III*, p. 173.
- [26.](#) Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 113-32; Cf. Churchill to Roosevelt, 21 Sep 43, in Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 189. See also Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 379, 23 Sep 43, reel R-67-K; Telg, AFHQ to AGWAR, No. W-993, 26 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, II. Copies of the letters from the President and from King George VI to Victor Emmanuel III found in 10,000/100/2.

[27](#). Badoglio, *Memorie e documenti*, pp. 133-34.

[28](#). Telgs 104, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 25 Sept 43; unnumbered, 25 Sep 43; and 124, 26 Sep 43, all in *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 586, 594, 603. Cf. Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 195. See also Telg 9525, Eisenhower to Mason-MacFarlane, 25 Sep 43, 10,000/100/1, and Telg 109, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 25 Sep 43, 10,000/100/2.

[29](#). Telg 161, FATIMA to Eisenhower, 28 Sep 43, *Capitulation of Italy*, p. 647; Summary of Visit by General Taylor to Italian Supreme Command, 28 Sep 43, and Telg 161, Taylor to Eisenhower, 28 Sep 43, both in 10,000/100/2.

[30](#). Memo by Robert Murphy, Brindisi, 27 Sep 43, *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 610-11.

[31](#). Msg W-9586, AFHQ to AGWAR, 9 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, II; Telg 575, Eisenhower to Mason-MacFarlane, 25 Sep 43, and Telg 155, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 28 Sep 43, both in 10,000/100/2; Telg, Marshall to Eisenhower, No. 8935, 30 Sep 43, Reel R-67-K; Memo, John J. McCloy for Admiral Leahy, with draft of cable, 1 Oct 43, OPD 300.6 Sec (OCS Papers); telg, Eisenhower to Mason-MacFarlane, No. 2580, 3 Oct 43, 10,000/100/2; Puntoni, *Vittorio Emanuele III*, p. 174.

[32](#). The text is printed in U.S. Department of State, *Treaties and Other International Acts*, Series 1604, *Armistice with Italy 1943* (Washington, 1947), p. 22. See further, file 10,000/136/548, sub: Ltrs, Badoglio, *Armistice*; Telg 151, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 28 Sep 43, 10,000/100/2.

The long terms of surrender remained secret until 6 November 1945.

[33](#). Robert D. Murphy, Notes of the Conference Aboard H.M.S. *Nelson* in Valetta Harbor, Malta, 11 a.m., September 29, 1943, *Capitulation of Italy*, pp. 658-59; see also Telg 1647, Phillips to Mason-MacFarlane, 30 Sep 43, and Telg 192, Mason-MacFarlane to Eisenhower, 1 Oct 43, both in 10,000/100/2; Memo, McCloy for Leahy, 30 Sep 43; Telg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 426, 30 Sep 43; and Telg 9081, Marshall to Eisenhower, 1 Oct 43, all in OPD 300.6 Sec (OCS Papers); Msg, AFHQ to CCS, NAF 431, 30 Sep 43, 0100/4/4, II; Ltr, Badoglio to President Roosevelt, 20 Nov 43, 10,000/136/854.

[34](#). Bonomi, *Diario*, p. 82.

[35](#). ONI, Translation of German Naval Staff Operations Division War Diary, pt. A, vol. 49 (September, 1943), p. 37.