

Mr. Schurall

ITALIAN CRIMES IN YUGOSLAVIA

This is the first of a series of surveys of War Crimes in Yugoslavia. Further instalments will deal with German, Hungarian, Bulgarian and Quisling crimes.

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YUGOSLAV INFORMATION OFFICE
LONDON 1945

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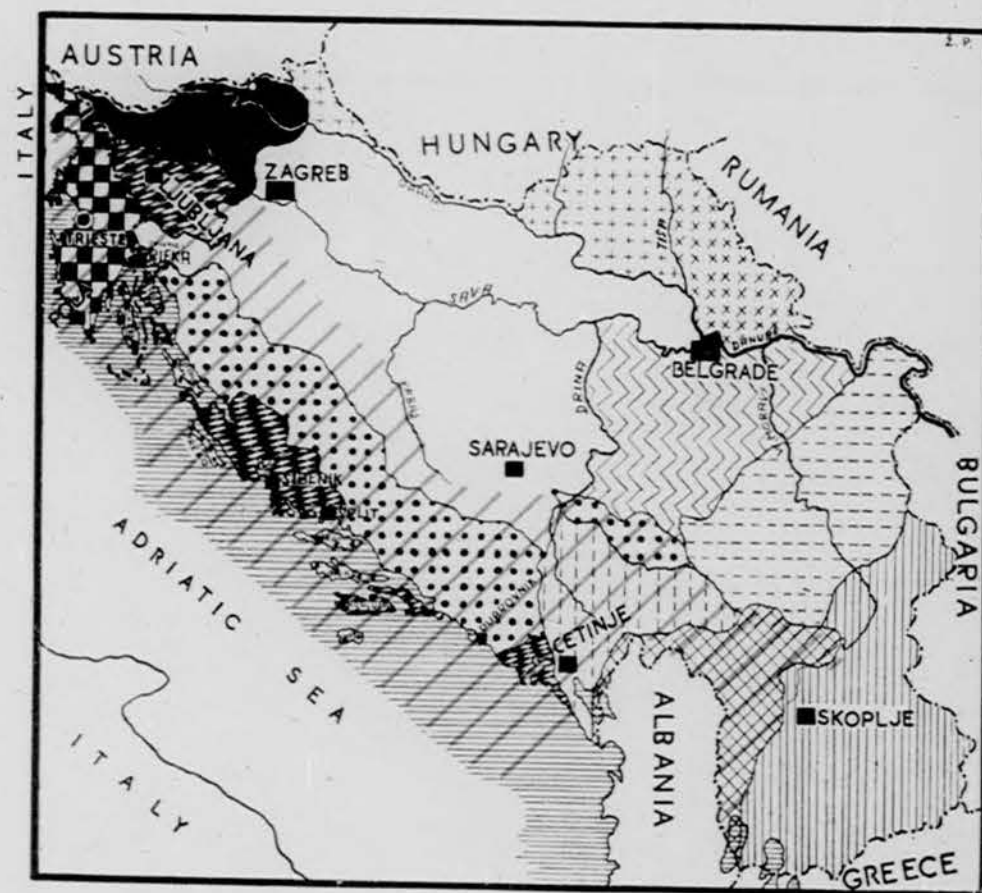
A Map showing the Area affected by Italian crimes is given on page iii with a key on page iv.

Note: Apart from the frontispiece and end-piece, the illustrations to the main text will be found in the centre of the book together with other photographs illustrative of Italian crimes in Yugoslavia and photographs of the documents described in Appendix B.

IL FASCISMO NELLA VENEZIA GIULIA DALLE ORIGINI ALLA MARCIA SU ROMA

Figure 1 (page 12)

"Fascism in the Julian Region
from the Origins to the March on Rome."



SKETCH SHOWING ENEMY PARTITION OF YUGOSLAVIA

Scale : one hundred miles = 1 inch.

KEY

1		5		9	
2		6		10	
3		7		11	
4		8		12	

1. Detached from Austria and annexed to Italy after 1914-1918 war
2. Annexed by Italy in 1941
3. Occupied by Italy 1941-1943
4. Annexed by Germany
5. Annexed by Hungary
6. Annexed by Bulgaria
7. Occupied by Bulgaria
8. Italian Protectorate of Montenegro
9. Annexed to Italian Protectorate of Albania
10. German Military Administration
11. Neditch Serbia
12. Ustasha Croatia

The area overprinted in Red is the area of Italian crimes.

FOREWORD

The present Statement concerning Italian War Crimes against Yugoslavia, based almost entirely on Italian official documents, does not purport to be a complete account of all that has happened. It is rather a general survey of the purpose, scope, and methods of Italian crimes, planned and executed by and for the Italian State against Yugoslavia and the South Slav peoples, both during the recent war and throughout the foregoing generation during which these war crimes were planned and rehearsed. The State Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes of the Invaders and their Assistants has to date published 16 Reports containing evidence which, thoroughly examined and approved by legal experts, makes it possible to illustrate Italian documents captured by units of the Yugoslav forces, and to present the present story of what has happened in the Slovene lands, in parts of Croatia (the Littoral) and Montenegro, leaving Italian crimes committed in other parts of Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina to be recorded later.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

This is an account of crimes committed over a long range of years by the Italian State against the South Slav people and State. The victim has been the Yugoslav State in two senses. The crimes have been committed against thousands of Yugoslav people, men, women and children, not only as part of the Yugoslav national organism, but also as individuals, because they have persisted in their right, if they so choose, to think and act as Yugoslavs and to reject pressure brought on them to be Italians.

The crimes have been committed by the Italians in one sense only—to increase the physical area of the Italian State, even though this demanded the destruction of another people.

It is a long record of crime, which as the years went by grew steadily more open and ruthless. It is a record of crime which has brought some of the most prominent names of the Italian State, and hundreds of their accomplices, on to the Yugoslav list of War Criminals.

It has become commonly recognised that to suppress the people of occupied territory by acts of general terrorisation of civilians, is criminal in time of war. It is criminal to burn down their public buildings, to attempt to ruin them economically, to subject them to unbearably drastic repressive laws, in themselves infringements of a commonly recognised

human code. It is criminal to sentence them to incarceration in concentration camps and to death in order to conquer their territory. If it is criminal to do this in time of war, it is surely all the more criminal in time of peace.

The present story of crime begins in 1918, when the Julian Region (Istria, Trieste with the Slovene Littoral and the former Austrian County of Gorica) was first occupied by the Italian State, and ends with the liberation of this territory by the Yugoslav and Allied Armies on May 1, 1945.

The area covered by the record thus varies. Part of the country touched by these Italian crimes—Montenegro, Dalmatia and the Croat Littoral, all but Zadar, Fiume, Istria, Slovenia and some of the islands, came under the sovereignty of the Yugoslav State in 1918. This was a natural achievement, if incomplete, which the Italian State tried to reverse completely by annexation to Italy after 1941 of still further Yugoslav national territory. The inhabitants of all this newly annexed area are also South Slavs, quite indistinguishable from the other South Slavs of the interior of the Balkan Peninsula.

These newly annexed districts suffered from criminal acts only from April, 1941, after the enemy had over-run Yugoslavia, to final liberation on May 1, 1945.

In those four years occurred a series of crimes equal in horror and extent to any the Germans have committed anywhere. These crimes of the Italian invaders threw fresh new light on what since 1918 had been going on in other Yugoslav territory under Italian occupation.

As will be seen, what happened in occupied areas of Yugoslavia State territory after April, 1941, was merely the continuation and culmination of what had for a generation been happening in the Yugoslav national territory at the head of the Adriatic. Even had there been any success from Italian terror there prior to April, 1941, the events subsequent to 1941 annulled that success for ever.

Italian war crimes, in other words, have a long pre-war preamble. In order to understand what has taken place during the war, it is *essential* to understand what took place between 1918 and 1941. Therefore, it is the

country at the head of the Adriatic in which these pre-war preparations for the Italian war crimes took place, that must first attract our attention. This area, though outside the Yugoslav State, in this matter of mass terrorisation by aliens and of crimes authorised by the Italian State, forms an uninterrupted whole with the Adriatic coast of Yugoslavia, from Susak (Fiume) in the north, to the Gulf of Kotor in the south, together with the deep hinterland of that coast, and was in the course of this war so treated by the Italian State.

It was in the South Slav lands at the head of the Adriatic that the liberation of Yugoslavia from foreign rule in this recent war was concluded. Similarly it is here that the story of Italian crime began.

It may, therefore, be convenient to give a few brief historical notes on this disputed area, the Julian Region. Who inhabits this territory? Since when, and under what conditions?

1. The "Julian Region" consists of Trieste, Istria, and the former Austrian County of Gorica, also known in Austrian administration as the *Kustenland*. The modern Yugoslav term is "Istria, Trieste and the Slovene Littoral."

2. This region, mainly unfertile limestone upland, was settled by Slav peasants from the 6th Century A.D. Constituting a narrow link between the Italian Peninsula and the Balkan Peninsula, and at the same time a gate into Central Europe from the Mediterranean, it had become depopulated by the passage of barbarian and other armies of the ancient world.

3. This peasantry lived in comparative peace for many centuries, before nationality became a decisive factor in international life. Much as the Romans in their invasion of Britain stopped short at the line of Hadrian's Wall, and preferred not to penetrate into the highlands, Latin civilisation had left these Slavs at the head of the Adriatic alone.

4. They received a vernacular bible from the Salonica Monks, Cyril and Methodius, who invented the first (Glagolitic) Slavonic alphabet, and made the first Slavonic bible expressly for the ancestors of these Slavs. This was done with the full approval of the Papacy. It is, therefore,

within this area that, till interruption during the past twenty years, the Slavonic bible had its most ancient use.

5. Though Venetian traders established small townships down the South Slav Adriatic coast (as also round the Albanian and Greek coasts) they never succeeded in obtaining control of the most important port of this region, Trieste. Naturally serving its hinterland, Trieste sought the protection of the Hapsburgs as the then effective rulers of that hinterland, and in 1382 became an "Austrian" port.

6. With the 19th Century two important changes in the position of this region took place: (a) the Slav peasantry "awoke" and began to develop their own modern national culture; (b) Austria came more and more under the domination of the German Reich, and Bismarck pronounced Trieste "the point of the German sword."

7. In the political action of the South Slavs which played a great part in breaking up Austria-Hungary in 1917-18, against the new German Imperialism, to the advantage of the Allied Powers, the Slav inhabitants of this region played a prominent part. On August 16, 1918, a South Slav "National Council" of 50 members was set up in Ljubljana, consisting of 12 representatives of Dalmatia, 18 of the Slovene Populist Party, 10 of the Yugoslav Democrat Party, 3 of the Social Democrat Party, and also—2 for Trieste and 5 for Istria.

These same representatives were later, through their plenipotentiaries, jointly signatories to the Act of Union of the South Slav territories of Austria-Hungary and the Kingdom of Serbia with Montenegro, on December 18, 1918. The people of this region were thus numbered among the *founders* of the Yugoslav State.

8. At Versailles the weight of Italy, as one of the major allies, in the councils of the Peace Conference taking advantage of the secret "Pact of London" of 1915, prevailed over the principle of self-determination of peoples, and by this and subsequent treaties, the 538,331 South Slavs of this region, though in the full sense of the word, founders of Yugoslavia, were placed under Italian rule.

9. In the intervening years from 1918 to the attack made

by the Germans and Italians on Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941, Istria, Trieste and the Slovene Littoral were in fact in a concealed state of war. The Italian State was endeavouring to force the Yugoslavs to become Italians, the Yugoslavs were resisting.

The crimes committed by the Italian invader in the territories of the pre-1941 Yugoslav State, which after April, 1941, were annexed by Italy or occupied by Italy, were thus a continuation and culmination of the series of crimes committed in other parts of the Yugoslav littoral by organs of the Italian State. These were throughout crimes committed with the definite aim of de-nationalising territory which for many centuries had been compactly South Slav. They were crimes committed either by independent Italian nationalist and imperialist bodies, tolerated by the State, or generally by organs of the State. Later, as the final preparations were being made for the present war, the crimes committed were part of the general plan for the extermination of the South Slav population which stood in the way of Italian aspirations.

Thus the crimes to be examined in the present account fall into three main groups and will be treated under three separate headings:

1. Acts of sporadic and organised violence, from 1918 to 1941 (Chapter II).
2. The history of the pre-war work for the planned destruction of the South Slav population of the Julian Region, and the work of Mussolini's Personal Adviser on this subject, Italo Sauro (Chapter III).
3. The Organisation of Sauro's Special Office for the "Co-ordination of the Extermination" of the Yugoslav-conscious population of all areas previously annexed, and the continuation of this work of extermination in the officially organised wholesale crimes committed against the civilian population in all Yugoslav areas annexed, whether at a later or an earlier date (Chapter IV).

CHAPTER II

ACTS OF SPORADIC AND ORGANISED
VIOLENCE 1918-1941

Under this heading in its charges against Italian war criminals, the Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of Crimes of the Invaders and Their Assistants, considers all acts of violence whether of mob violence or of State repression directed against persons of Yugoslav nationality but citizens of Italy from 1918 to 1941, for the purpose of compelling them to renounce their claim to Yugoslav nationality and turn them into Italians. They are mainly the subject of published Report No. 49 of the State Commission.

It has for long been an admitted principle of International Law and of the common laws of humanity, that a man should be at liberty to use, at least in private life, the language which he chooses, and through that language to develop the culture which he chooses. By the close of the 1914-1918 war the question of the right of people to live within their own national frontiers had become one of the major war aims of the Allied Powers.

It was nevertheless evident that no frontiers drawn without large scale migration of population could hope to form completely satisfactory demarcation lines between people of one and another nationality. There were bound to remain large groups of nationals of one country within the frontiers of another country. In some cases special opportunities were

given to members of these minorities to "opt" for their own State, and to migrate to it with some measure of economic compensation for any loss involved. At the same time, special clauses were inserted into Peace Treaties to protect the rights of minorities which did not opt or if such a possibility of opting was not considered. Thus it came about that the Yugoslav State retained within its frontiers a sporadic Italian population, scattered down the coastlands, of up to some 10,000 persons (9,362), who were accorded special minority rights. The Yugoslav State agreed contractually to these special rights of the Italian minority.

Whereas only about 10,000 Italians remained within the Yugoslav State, over 500,000 Yugoslavs (538,331) remained in Italy. The Italian Government adopted the standpoint that, being one of the major Allied Powers, it was not required to undertake any special obligations towards this minority. Liberal Italian statesmen declared, despite official Italian publications which gave reasons for doubt, that the rights of these South Slavs within the Italian frontiers would be respected.

Nevertheless, only a few weeks had gone by after the Italian occupation of these western portions of Yugoslav populated territory when the first assault was made on the rights of the Slovenes of Trieste. The premises of the Slovene paper "Edinost," which was founded as far back as 1878, and however vigorously the Austrian State may have oppressed the Slovenes, was never suppressed under Austrian rule, were attacked and destroyed. This act of destruction, aimed at the leading public organ of Slovene opinion in Trieste, took place on December 29, 1918, only 11 days after the formation of the Yugoslav State. Although such an act of violence, if tolerated by the Italian authorities—thereby was in contradiction to the principles expressed by liberal Italian statesmen of the then Italian Government, no action was taken against the perpetrators of the outrage.

Eight months later this repressive work was renewed, when the Slovene "National House" in Trieste, the Slovene School on the Aqueduct, and the Commercial Co-operative

House in the via Battista were destroyed by organised Italian bands.

Following these serious acts of arson and pillage, committed with the benevolence, if not the connivance of the Italian authorities, in September, 1919 acts of terrorism by the Italian gendarmerie (Carabinieri) began to take place. On September 19, 1919, Tomasini, Chairman of the Parish Council in Kojski, arrested and beat up a widow named Karolina Simcicev, because she had come to him as the public authority and, having lost her husband in the war, requested support, but using her native Slovene tongue. In the same village, on September 24, 1919, the gendarmerie arrested all the adult peasants for what was termed "resistance to public authority." These were not isolated incidents, but links in a chain of increasing terrorism.

To close the lesser events of 1919, the South Slav "People's House" in Pazin was attacked by an organised mob and destroyed, and on October 30, the premises of the Slovene "Catholic Printing Press" at the intellectual centre of Pazin in Istria were destroyed.

On September 12 occurred a major assault on Yugoslav national interests, by which at the same time Italian imperial interests flaunted legality and challenged the principle of an international agreement. This was the seizure by d'Annunzio, at the head of an armed band, of Fiume. Fiume had not even been claimed by Italy, let alone "promised" Italy by the 1915 Pact of London, yet now, with the backing of the Italian State, it was possible for this attack on Yugoslav national interests in the Adriatic to be made and acquiesced in.

In this way, from December, 1918, throughout 1919, the free exercise of their minority rights was menaced both by the action of unofficial but permitted mobs, and by organs of Italian State law and order.

Persons responsible were not brought to book, and it goes without saying that the mass of the South Slav inhabitants of Istria, Trieste and Gorica felt themselves to be seriously menaced.

Were these only sporadic acts of violence, they might be

written off as the inevitable consequences of the four trying years of war which had just ended, and of the delicate frontier adjustment. But they were not merely sporadic acts. Viewed as they can now be viewed from a distance, and in the light of the events of this war, they constituted a growing menace.

July 13, 1920, has for the past generation been specially remembered in Trieste as "Black Tuesday." On this day, the Italian mob burned down the "People's House." The material damage amounted to 15,000,000 lire, or at the then rate of exchange, or about £227,240.

This Tuesday was a day of serious and widespread disorder in Trieste. The offices and homes of prominent Slovenes were fired with cans of petrol. Dr Kimovec and Dr Vilfan, prominent leaders of thought of the Slovenes of Trieste, were personal sufferers. Lencek's Inn was also attacked, and in addition to suffering damage, the proprietor was compelled under threat of serious violence, to sign an obligation not to serve Slovene patrons. Other Slav buildings attacked were the Credit Bank, the Adriatic Bank, the Trieste Savings Bank, the Orthodox School, the offices of Dr Pretnar Okretic, Josip Abram and Josip Agneletto, the transport firm of "Balkan Ltd" and the Offices of the Yugoslav Consulate.

The total damage done to Yugoslav property in Trieste on this Black Tuesday was over 100,000,000 lire, or about £1,515,150. At the same time, the "People's House" in Pulj (Pola) was destroyed, the damage done estimated at about 5,000,000 lire, and the offices of the solicitor, Dr Zukon. At Pazin, yet another Yugoslav-language printing press was destroyed.

Later in the year, on November 17, there were new outbursts. During a concert of Yugoslav music in the Central Hall in Gorica, bombs were thrown which caused numerous casualties. Two days later the "People's Press" in Gorica was also attacked with grenades, and serious damage caused. It was common knowledge that one of the ring-leaders of this attack was the son of the local Questore, Giganti.

On January 27, 1921, an Italian mob broke into a Yugoslav

Reading Room in Trieste and destroyed everything they could lay their hands on.

Later in the year, on September 8, they once again wrecked the presses of the paper "Edinost" in Trieste, and burned down the Slav House of Labour, the Spartacus Society, and the "People's House" in St Ivan.

During local elections in Skofije in Istria, on May 15, 1921, a number of houses were destroyed. On May 16, soldiers of the Italian Royal Army committed a similar crime in Mackovlje.

In Crni Kal on the same day, the property of a land-owner named Andrijasic was destroyed, and in Blari in Istria, the houses of peasants named Ludovic, Herak Lukovic and a widow named Radovic.

These are but examples, for as 1921 passed by and 1922 and 1923 followed, acts of this kind became more frequent. It became impossible for the simple peasantry of these Yugoslav lands to be sure when or where the next blow would fall. Report No. 49 of the State Commission gives a further long list of similar incidents, chosen from among many more, which it would be tedious for the English reader to give in detail. In village after village, town after town, Slovene "People's Houses" or other offices connected with the public life of the South Slavs were destroyed.

These "People's Houses" were not in any sense centres of irredentist propaganda. They were cultural centres in the best modern sense, premises in which activities closely identical with the Clubs and Institutes developed by the British Council in Great Britain and abroad, were organised and pursued by the people in their own towns. They were centres for recreation and serious study, for public meetings, concerts and debates. They were institutions without which the natural intelligent life of the Yugoslavs of Istria, Trieste and the Slovene Littoral could not possibly be developed. To destroy them was not merely an act of terrorisation in itself, but an act intended to inhibit further activities. It was also in every case a deliberately intended act of destruction of property, an act intended to weaken and impoverish the Yugoslavs, for in no case was insurance compensation forthcoming. These

"People's Houses" had been built by subscriptions from most classes, but mainly by the accumulated pennies of hard-working peasants and town-workers. After so many centuries under repressive Austrian rule, the Yugoslavs of these lands found themselves on their own soil against their will living in a state of masked Civil War forced upon them by their new, Italian, alien rulers.

Here it is necessary to underline that all these acts of repression, and the imperialist seizure of Fiume, took place *before* the establishment of Fascism in Italy.

From the Italian end, the toleration of such a constant stream of public crimes, could only have one interpretation. This was the beginning of a deliberate policy of de-nationalisation and extermination. It has been characterised by the Yugoslav State Commission as official Italian practice for the mass terrorist executions which were later, after open war against Yugoslavia had been begun, to follow from Gorica in the north, down the whole length of the Adriatic coast to the Gulf of Kotor and Montenegro in the south.

What these *rastrellamenti* or mass "purgings" meant, we shall see in the fourth chapter of this account. Let us first finish the story of Italian misrule and terrorisation in the first period.

It was at this point that Fascism came to power in Italy. The Fascist "March on Rome" took place on October 28, 1922. But though terrorisation of the South Slavs left under Italian rule preceded the advent of Fascism to full power, it is far from being unconnected with it. Italian Fascism grew out of this Italian imperialism directed against the South Slavs. The Italian Fascists have been conscious and proud of this. A history of the rise of Fascism could even appear with a cover design based on the burning of South Slav institutions in Trieste. (Frontispiece*). It was by this work, first of sporadic terrorist acts, later of more organised repression,

*Il Fascismo nella Venezia Giulia dalle origini alla Marcia su Roma; M. Risolo; Trieste, Casa Editrice "La Vedetta Italiana", 1932; 8°; pp.xviii 200; L. 10.

This book was printed in an edition of 650 copies "numerate su carta a mano con legatura di lusso e di gran lusso".

that Italian fascism trained for the domination of Italy and for the further development of wholesale crime reviewed in this record.

The next stage of the terror came in 1924, when elections were carried out in Italy. During these elections throughout the area, men were waylaid and beaten up, and made the targets of assassins. In the mountain district of Brda, a certain doctor of medicine, named Ottone, stands out as the leader of the terror. In the lowland Kanal district, it was a man named Tapoli who was the leader. At Ajdovscina, the first Slovene martyr, Anton Stancar, was killed. Age was no protection. For example, for his obstinacy in voting according to his own impulses, 76-year-old Piculin, of Golo Brdo, near Kozbana, was beaten to the point of loss of consciousness. Many electors fled across the Yugoslav frontier, leaving everything behind them. At Smilj in Istria, gendarmerie fired on an election meeting, causing 105 casualties.

The culmination was yet to come. On November 12, 1924, the first arrest for the use of the Slovene language took place. Thirteen men were singing Slovene songs in their mother tongue, among them three who were over 60 years of age. They disappeared from the world into an Italian prison.

Less than three weeks later, at the beginning of December, 1924, followed a special order prohibiting any public meeting, concert or other arrangement in which the Slovene language was used. Catholic printing presses which used the Slovene language were broken up, and the Slovene writer, Franc Bevk, was arrested for a humorous sketch in a popular paper. The terror was increasing in intensity.

The elections, false elections carried out under terror, passed, but still the Yugoslavs of these districts, Slovene or Croat, remained conscious of being Yugoslavs and not Italians. No doubt the Italian Fascists had expected their display of mailed fist to have direct results. Yet the Yugoslav population continued stubbornly to think and dream as Yugoslavs.

On July 14, 1927, the Fascist leaders of Gorica, Trieste, Istria, and also of Fiume and the Port of Zadar further down the coast, left by the Peace Treaty in Italian hands (ad-

ministratively part of Istria) held a conference and decided on the following steps:

1. Slovene teachers were to be removed from their native districts and sent away into the interior of Italy.
2. Religion was to be taught in the schools in Italian and not a Yugoslav language.
3. All Slovene societies were to be dissolved.
4. All school children were to join the Balilla.
5. Sermons and Church Services were to be conducted in Slovene Churches in the Italian language.
6. All Slovene papers were to be suppressed.
7. All Slovene co-operative organisations were to be dissolved.

Outrageous as were all of these proposals, especially directed by a State which purported to be civilised against a compact, non-national population of well over 500,000 persons, two of the proposals stand out among all others in their monstrosity. These are the second and the fifth. For, it must be repeated, it was for the Slavs of this area, once contiguous with the Pannonian Slavs, that the Slav Apostles Cyril and Methodius, with the approval and support of the Pope, created the first Slav alphabet, the so-called Glagolithic, and gave the Slavonic world its first liturgy and translation of the Bible.

It was in the confines of the Istrian portion of the north-western corner of Yugoslav-peopled territory, that this ancient Glagolithic alphabet was still to be found in use in the monasteries within living memory. The Catholics of this part of the world, in common with the Croat Catholics, had through the centuries stood out in the Catholic world, and particularly after the Reformation period in maintaining or striving for use of their own national language in their Church services. Now, at the bidding of Italian Fascists, this fundamental right was to be suppressed.

Indeed, not only were children to be christened henceforth with Italian names, but even inscriptions on tombstones were to be desecrated, and ancient Slav family names transformed into bastard and hybrid "Italian" equivalents. (See Appendix, pp. 77-81).

It seems perhaps impossible that so monstrous a plan was to be carried out, yet this was the case. From 1927, the Italian repression took a harsher form and the acts of terrorism which hitherto had come in waves, began to be constant and systematic occurrences.

It began to be impossible for leading intellectual Slovenes to live. For example, Professor Rado Bednarzik published an "*Adriatic Almanack*." This was not merely prohibited, but Bednarzik was brought to trial for compiling this work in his own language. He was not tried before a Civil Court, but before a Court Martial held in Videm (Udine). He was sentenced to degradation to the ranks and loss of all civil rights.

The following year an avalanche of repressive orders followed. One by one the clauses of the proposals drawn up by the Fascist leaders were carried out. Yugoslav teachers were removed to Italy, and before 1928 was out all Yugoslav Societies and Associations, all newspapers and co-operatives were dissolved. Public officials and even railway workers of Yugoslav origin in the State service were removed to distant parts of Italy.

By now, these measures of repression ceased to be tempered by any considerations of justice or humanity. Not merely were organisations prohibited and dissolved, but the funds of these, often assembled from tens of years of thrifty contributions by members of small means, were seized by the Italian State. Only a very few publishing houses and the free use of the two Slav languages of this area (Slovene and Croat) in the Church still remained largely untouched. Now Slav Cultural Societies, however, were dissolved, including the venerable Croat and Slovene "Society of Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius"—cultural organisations founded in the name of the first two great Slav Apostles, whose work as we see, was done precisely for this part of the world. The light of Yugoslav life was now barely allowed to flicker.

The following year, the field of oppressive action was widened. There occurred the first of the repressive political trials of Yugoslavs by Italian courts. In districts where during the political elections revolver shots and tear-gas

bombs had been freely used by the gendarmerie to disperse Slav political gatherings, it was not surprising that there were occasional disorderly scenes. Now these murders were to be given a form of legality. As ill-luck would have it, in one of these a Croat peasant was fatally injured. This was immediately seized upon by the local Italian authorities, and a number of young men were arrested. After some months in custody, they were brought to trial. The authorised counsel for the defence was a Croat lawyer. But three days before the Court sat, he was waylaid by a group of Fascists, dragged to the office of the local House of Fascist Culture, intimidated, and eventually compelled to leave the defence of the accused to an Italian lawyer appointed by the Fascist Court.

The trial was held in Pola before one of the new Fascist "Special Tribunals." The only evidence produced was that given by two letters of introduction issued by the cultural organisation "Edinost" in Trieste, to one of the accused named Vladimir Gortan, and found in his possession.

There is really no question but that Gortan was innocent of murdering a fellow Yugoslav, though, of course, he was not innocent of supporting the proper liberties of the South Slavs of Italy. But at this stage those liberties were still not completely proscribed by the Italian State. For this reason, and further in order to suggest that any support of proper South Slav liberties was "Slav terrorism," it was necessary for Italian Fascism to suggest that Gortan was guilty of common crime. He was sentenced to death, an "exemplary" punishment, and executed within 24 hours. His remains were buried at a place unknown even to his parents.

This trial was followed by a monster political trial before a Fascist Special Tribunal in Trieste, in the following year, September, 1930. The setting for this trial was arranged on a grand scale. The 58th Fascist Legion was mobilised, strong forces of the Italian Army were assembled, and Italian warships were brought to anchor in the harbour.

The trial was a demonstration, and open threat of arms, against the Yugoslav population of the Julian Region and against the Yugoslav State itself. The victims of the trial

were accused of a motley of acts against the Italian State. The entire Corps of Generals of the Garrison in Trieste were present in Court in full dress uniform, and representatives of all other authorities were present in gala uniform. The Consuls of foreign powers were specially asked to attend, while hundreds of Slovenes and Croats in Trieste, Istria and Gorica were arrested by way of "precaution."

It was a political trial far removed from the usual concepts of justice. One of the defending counsel, who had quite happily accepted 30,000 lire from the parents of each of his two clients, declared that in his opinion sentence of death was inevitable. A Belgian lawyer present felt obliged to expostulate, but this Italian Counsel for the Defence replied: "Such are my orders."

On September 6, 1930, four of the accused were executed at Bazovica, near Trieste. The others were sentenced to many years' penal servitude. This mass trial was a new attempt to terrorise the Slavs of this territory by pseudo-legal methods. A new wave of free-lance terror began with an isolated and arbitrary incident, to be followed later by mass terrorism.

On October 20, 1930, a band of Fascists destroyed the offices and printing works of the only Yugoslav paper left, the "Novi List." On December 18 following, the Italians showed that even religion could not be left untouched if it was the religion of the Yugoslavs. A band of Fascists broke into the Church of Trevnik during the service of a Mass. The electric cables were cut, and the Church plunged into darkness. In the ensuing melee a number of people were seriously injured.

The "final" attack on the Yugoslavs of the Julian March was beginning. Cautious as the Italian authorities had to be in any matter affecting the Church, the free Catholic practice of religion was thenceforth under a cloud. On December 31, 1934, the Catholic Printing Press at Gorica was sealed by the Italian authorities. From now onwards the Slavonic Bible and Prayer-book were to be superseded by a Bible and Prayer-book in Italian.

CHAPTER III

THE PRELIMINARY "PRE-WAR" WORK OF ITALO SAURO

In 1934, what might be ironically called the normal forms of repression had reached their height. Not only was the use of Yugoslav speech in any public office prohibited; it had been prohibited in every school and even in all religious activities. But this was not sufficient. It is a notorious fact that the intellectual repression of a people merely drives national thought into underground channels. This is especially the case if the people whose nationality is being attacked are genuinely autochthonous inhabitants. It is easier to transform an urban population, detached from its mother soil, than a population which has been linked with the soil for many centuries.

In the introduction to this account of Italian crimes against the Yugoslavs of the Adriatic, we pointed out that in earlier centuries the Venetians had set up trading centres on the Adriatic shores which, particularly in the north of the Adriatic, had developed into small Italian cities, Italian-speaking islands on the edge of a large South-Slav sea. This situation is nowhere better illustrated than in the statistics of land ownership in the Istrian Peninsula. An ethnic map of the Peninsula shows the towns in which the majority of the inhabitants are Italian, joined by a narrow belt of territory in which the population is mixed to the major part of the Peninsula in

which there are no Italians. In this minute mixed area, where the old Austrian census of 1910 showed the Slav population to be only between 40% and 50%, it is noteworthy that—by the same statistics—only 18.20% of the land was owned by the Italians, the remaining 81.80% being owned by Yugoslavs. Where the proportion of Yugoslavs was higher—i.e., in the greater part of the territory—practically no land was Italian-owned.

But why go back to the 1910 Austrian statistics? We go back to these because since the Austrian census of 1910, less than four years before the outbreak of the 1914-1918 war, there has been no census whatever of this area which give any indication at all of nationality. No Italian census has recognised nationality. Even the Austrian census did not do that. But it did recognise differences of language. It was based—as were German statistics in such areas as East Prussia—on the “*Umgangssprache*,” or language of everyday life. It quite naturally happened in many cases that the census official, questioning a not very interested bi-lingual or tri-lingual citizen of his town and naturally making his enquiries in his own language, often wrote down as “*Umgangssprache*,” a language which was not really the “national” language of the individual concerned.

Nevertheless, the Austrian statistics do give some indication, and in default of better figures, must be taken as the only statistical indication of the nature of this part of the Yugoslav lands.

Another indication is certainly provided by some of the proposals of Mussolini's personal adviser on the South Slav question. A considerable portion of the personal archives of Italo Sauro have fallen into Yugoslav hands, and it is significant that in a new proposal on how to eliminate the Yugoslavs from the proposed field of Italian expansion, made on 29 January, 1942, Sauro observed that much caution was still to be observed in the work of dispossessing the Slavs of their lands.

Some of the facts which have come to light from Sauro's files are the subject of the 46th Report of the Yugoslav State

Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes of the Invaders and Their Assistants. This, in itself, is of key importance concerning Italian crime against the Yugoslav people and State.

Report No. 46 shows clearly that one of the principal concerns of the Italian State before the war has been the physical dispossession of the South Slavs, who as we see, in this north-western corner of Yugoslav National territory, were not merely the principal inhabitants, but were since time immemorial the principal owners of the land. But first some details of Italo Sauro himself.

Italo Sauro (Figure 2) was an Italian Counsellor of State, and Mussolini's Personal Adviser on the work of eliminating the Slav population of the whole Adriatic coast, from Trieste in the north down to the Gulf of Kotor. We reproduce a copy of Sauro's official biography taken from Italian State Records (Figure 3). The most significant point in this curriculum vitae is the last line: “*Lavoro: A disposizione del Duce per gli slavi*”—or—“*Occupation: At the disposition of the Duce concerning the Slavs.*”

This explains how it was that after having specially asked to be included in a regiment fighting the British (who to Sauro were “*Enemy No. 2*”), Sauro obtained special permission from Mussolini to be transferred to a regiment fighting the Yugoslav people. Indeed, he seems to have taken this step as soon as plans were set for the attack on Yugoslavia. On 1 July, 1940, he wrote to Mussolini's private secretary, Oswaldo Sebastiani: “*Vi prego di dire al Duce di concedermi un altro privilegio; essere in prima linea contro il nemico del mio sangue, lo slavo.*” (Figure 4)—“*Would you kindly ask the Duce to grant me another privilege; to be in the first line against my blood enemies, the Slavs.*”

On 6 April, 1941—the XIXth year of the Fascist era, as he proudly puts at the top of his letter—we find Sauro writing “*from Klana on the Eastern Frontier*” (near Fiume) two letters. To Mussolini's secretary Sebastiani, he writes a covering letter, saying he asks “*vivamente*” (i.e., urges) to have “*this short communication of mine*” passed to the Duce,

"at this moment in which the whole people of the Adriatic turns its eyes towards him as to a beacon." (Figure 5).

If one asks how it is that Sauro assumed that the Yugoslavs of the Adriatic regarded Mussolini as a beacon, the explanation is to be found in Sauro's letter to Mussolini himself, for in this he says quite simply:

"Duce—Now that the campaign against Yugoslavia, by which a decision is to be forced, has begun, I am prepared, arms in hand, to fight the ancient enemy of my people. That has always been my sincere desire. You, to whom I have always been faithful and loyal, are my first thought . . . The return of Dalmatia to Italy will, for all time, sweep the foreigner from the Adriatic . . ." (Figure 6).

In fact, the whole of Sauro's activity was that of finding ways and means to sweep the Yugoslavs away for ever from the areas marked out for Italian colonisation—areas defined differently from time to time, but in Italian eyes basically corresponding to the area dominated in the Balkan Peninsula by the Roman Empire in one period or another.

The records of Italo Sauro which the State Commission possesses, make it possible to follow his correspondence with Mussolini on this subject from as far back as 1935.

We have traced the growth of Italian crime against the Yugoslav population of Istria, Trieste and the County of Gorica, up to the events of 1934. The years of the Abyssinian war (1935-37) understandably distracted some attention from the South Slav problem, but by 1939 we find Sauro developing his proposals with full energy.

On July 31, he wrote to Mussolini, from Koper in Istria, to outline his proposals for dealing with the problem at its root. The simple method of terrorism so far used had failed to produce any permanent effect on a peasant people. Sauro saw the problem as one of actual expropriation. He, therefore, suggested to Mussolini the following points:

1. That any person of South Slav origin should be debarred from purchase of land. A special Committee of Enquiry should be set up to examine the credentials of any person acquiring land, and a certificate from that Commission should

be required before deeds could be legally transferred.

2. A thorough enquiry should be made and statistics drawn up to show what land was still actually owned by Slavs. When that was done it would be possible to direct local Fascist officials to assist in the work of depriving the Slavs of their holdings.

3. Statistics should also be prepared to show what properties owned by Italians were actually cultivated by Slav tenants, so that steps could be taken to effect the deportation of these Slavs to other parts of Italy.

4. Steps should be taken to transfer land owned by absentee Italian owners to new ownership capable of ensuring that the Slav peasantry did not encroach.

Sauro offered to direct this plan himself, asking for a minimum of one or two assistants. He also proposed a number of accessory measures, such as:

1. To prohibit even the temporary visit of any other person of Slav origin to the districts to be wrested from the Slavs.

2. To effect the transfer of a number of intractable Slav priests to the interior of Italy.

3. To order all Italian school teachers (i.e., those Italian school teachers who had already been appointed to take the place of the original Slovene or Croat teachers) to remain in their villages throughout the school holidays, the reason for this being that it had been found that even if they were absent on holiday for only a few weeks, all the work they had done in getting the younger generation to speak Italian and not Slovene or Croat, was undone.

Sauro did proceed to investigate the basic land problem of Istria, Trieste and the County of Gorica. When he did so, he was dismayed to discover how large a proportion of the land was still owned by the Slavs. It was a greater proportion than he had even feared. This is the more remarkable when we bear in mind what had taken place, particularly in the Gorica area during the 1914-18 war. It is in this district that the famous town of Caporetto is situated, Kobarid in the original Slovene. The movement of battling armies through the villages of the County of Gorica resulted in great destruction

of the homesteads and farm buildings of the South Slav farmers of this county. After the war, compensation for damaged property was granted by the Italian State. But this war damage was issued in State Bonds, later to be cleared through the banks. Eventually, money was only payable against these Bonds through authorised banks, and these Italian banks issued loans for rehabilitation of property against the Bonds up to only 50% of their nominal value.

In addition, the banks themselves appointed the building contractors who were to carry out the rehabilitation. Thus, though South Slav farmers may have received new buildings, it was at the cost of loss of effective economic liberty to banks controlled by the Italian State.

After about ten years, many farmers, deep in debt, were forced to sell their farms at a loss. There were, for example, 634 enforced sales of property in the County of Gorica in 1929 alone, and 630 in 1930, when the world economic crisis struck at farmers already in difficulties. Within a single year in this period, a large part of territory which for centuries had been in the hands of the South Slavs passed to Italian hands.

Even so, the process was too slow for Italo Sauro and Italian Imperialism in this district and elsewhere. The ancient roots of the South Slavs were too old and deep to be easily torn up by mere financial methods to such an extent that the country might really become Italian and not South Slav. As we have already observed in the first paragraph of this chapter, the South Slavs represented the autochthonous and land-owning population, comparable with the yeomanry of Great Britain, in the whole of the country of Istria, Trieste and the County of Gorica.

Sauro, therefore, produced a new and more extensive plan of 16 points, which in the same year, 1939, he presented to Mussolini. The points of his new plan were:

1. To collect accurate data concerning all South Slav holdings in land, and their financial standing.
2. To take over for Italians all land either owned by credit institutions (banks, etc.) or mortgaged to these.

3. To make it impossible for Slavs to buy or take over any property or land.

4. To give land to those Friulian or other Italian families who seemed likely to be resistant to the Slavs.

5. To prevent any visit by foreign Slav families.

6. To remove Slavs from their own land in all possible ways, primarily by the refusal of credits, and secondarily by propaganda likely to attract them to urban centres.

7. To set up in Pola a powerful industrial centre likely to attract Slavs, and at the same time to develop more active propaganda for the purpose of attracting Slav workers from the neighbourhood of Trieste to distant industrial centres, thus fostering dispersion.

8. To facilitate in every way possible Slavs selling up their land.

9. To undermine Slav ownership of land by all possible credit and fiscal operations. Banks were to be ordered to charge Slavs higher interest, and tax payers were to be mulcted of excessive contributions.

10. To carry out a persistent policy for the removal of Slav workmen and professional miners to distant centres, and to the colonies by the bait of higher wages, etc.

11. To remove families of Slav workers and peasants in large groups to Eastern Africa, and there to disperse them over a large area.

12. To set up numerous elementary schools and kindergartens, and particularly in the kindergartens to keep the children all day under Italian influence.

13. In elementary schools and kindergartens to appoint Italian priests, monks and nuns as teachers.

14. To set up a dense network of espionage against Slav leaders and agitators likely to have some connection in Yugoslavia, and against all those possessing kinsfolk in Yugoslavia, or educated there, as well as against all persons of the liberal professions, and as far as possible to refuse or limit the issue or renewal of passports valid for Yugoslavia.

15. To remove all Slavs who had been sentenced by the Courts.

16. To keep a check on the work of Slav priests and set up a special fund for the maintenance of Italian theological students in the Trieste seminary.

These 16 points appear in more than one form in Sauro's archives. For example (Figures 7, 8), we find him on September 15, in the XVth year of the so-called Fascist era, that is to say, in September, 1938, submitting a set of 15 points (which are partly the same as the 16, partly the same as those sent to Mussolini in 1939) to Gianni Apollonio, then Governor of Istria, "Per una soluzione problema slavo nella V.G." ("For the solution of the Slav problem in the Julian Region.") A further note made on 19 September, at the bottom of the sheet, records Gianni's suggestions have been adopted.

In October, 1939, Sauro also wrote a special study on the position of the Slavs in the province of Trieste. He was himself in this in no doubts about the connection, which we here emphasise, between the early pre-1941 and pre-Fascist Italian acts of violence and the later Italian programme of total expropriation. In the preamble to his study he wrote triumphantly of "a glow which for Italians has begun to lighten the sky, a glow caused by the flames of these Slav strong-points, the premises of the Balkan Company, of the People's Houses, and of the office of the paper 'Edinost.'"

Proudly starting with these events of officially tolerated violence of December, 1918, of 1919 and 1920, he concluded with the following remarks: "If we follow all preceding periods step by step, what stands out is the fact that the economic prosperity of the Slavs and their yearning for their fatherland, constitute a menace . . . Immediately after the war (i.e., after 1918) as a result of profuse propaganda and our negation of their rights (i.e., after terrorism and violence) we saw them rapidly weakening. Yet in the period of assumption of authority by the Fascists, which can be called the elimination of the Slavs (*cacciata degli Slavi*) we see the Slavs resorting to methods of force and terror.

"When we come to the present, we have to admit that the Slavs have remained Slavs, that benevolent propaganda does not affect them, and that in any situation which is at all strained,

they show signs of intransigence. For these reasons, we can without fear of contradiction assert that a Slav problem exists and must be thoroughly studied both in its material and psychological aspects, if we are not either in the near or distant future to find ourselves at the eleventh hour confronted with the painful need of undertaking a purge of our frontiers just when we need to use all our forces to break down these frontiers and extend them."

This is a striking indication of the attitude of mind of Mussolini's personal adviser on the Slav question. Resistance to what he calls "benevolent propaganda" (examples of which, since 1918, we have examined) is in his eyes "resorting to methods of force and terror" by the Slavs. This is reminiscent of the attitude of Mussolini's brother, Arnaldo Mussolini. He was the editor of "Il Popolo de Trieste," and on the day after the shooting of the Bazovica victims (7 September, 1930), in his paper commented on the Slavs as follows: "But do vermin which have effected entry into your house possess nationality?"

Selecting further documents from Sauro's archives, we see that on 5 June, 1940, he again wrote to Gianni Apollonio, the Governor of Istria, to tell him what he thought the South Slavs were capable of doing both inside Italy and on the Yugoslav side of the frontier.

Gianni's reply was to suggest the establishment of concentration camps at Verona and Trento, for all "suspicious aliens." Gianni also suggested that all alien soldiers, i.e., Italian subjects of Yugoslav origin, should be removed from regiments on the frontier of Yugoslavia and immediately despatched to units either in Libya or Germany. Italo Sauro accepted Gianni Apollonio's observations, and without delay, on 10 June, 1940, submitted a concrete proposal to Guido Buddarini Ghendi, Under Secretary of the Italian Ministry of the Interior.

Less than a year later, the Axis attack on Yugoslavia began, and as we have seen, Sauro was ready "on the Eastern frontier." Hitherto he had been engaged on the suppression of the South Slavs within the territory annexed to Italy after 1918. Now

the vastly superior Axis forces over-ran the whole of Yugoslavia. Large portions were annexed to Italy, and other districts placed under the Italian Army of Occupation. The field of action of Italo Sauro and his confederates was vastly enlarged. Whereas before the war he had been obliged to elaborate complex plans to give at least a cloak of legality to the Italian attempt to exterminate the South Slavs as a people, the conditions of Nazi-Fascist rule in an occupied country made it possible for Mussolini and the Italian Government to work by entirely different methods.

The period of what must seem to the outside world pre-war crime in Yugoslav-peopled districts of Italy, was at an end. The subsequent annexation of still larger areas of Yugoslavia and the establishment of puppet administrations in still other districts, in actual fact broke down the distinction between those Yugoslavs who had for over 20 years enjoyed Yugoslav sovereignty and those who had been under Italian sovereignty. By these acts the Italian State had annulled the unjust frontier made between Yugoslavia and Italy after the last war, and the whole area, whether acquired in 1918 or only after 1941, where Italian forces moved in Yugoslavia, became a single, common area of planned and unlimited crime. This is the subject of the following chapter.



Fig. 2 (p. 20)

Italo Sauro

ITALO SAURO FU NAZARIO

classe 1910

Dottore in Scienze Politiche e Diplomatiche

Partito N.F. 23 marzo 1928 (11 leva, proveniente organizzazioni giovanili 12 aprile 1922)

Milizia V.S.N. 23 marzo 1928 - sempre nei reparti Universitari C.N. sino 1932

All. Uff. 1932-34 (corsi per universitari - periodo applicativo a Moncalieri)

C.M. nov. 1934 istruttore preilitare

Sottotenente di Fanteria 1934 - Servizio di prime nomine nel 71° Regg.to F. "Puglia" (mesi sette) mitragliere

Volontario in A.O. in seguito a Domanda al Ministero delle Guerre e da questo assegnato ad una Compagnia Mtg della Divisione Tevere in Somalia (21 ott. 20 dic. 1935, Italia - Sbercato e Mogadiscio 4 gennaio 1935, sino al 5 maggio 35 dal 5 maggio al 15 giugno 35 al quartiere Generale dell'Ecc. Graziani e Giggige, Harar, Diredawa. del 15 giugno al 24 ottobre alla 220 legione CC2NM a Addis Abeba, Les Addes, Duken (operazioni Grande polizia coloniale) Sbercato in Italia il 9 nov. 36.

Tenente di Fanteria 1 luglio 1937

Volontariamente (domanda al Duce 10 giugno 1940) richiamato alle e assegnato ad un Big. C.I.L. sul fronte occ. dal 1 luglio al 18 agosto 1940;

In seguito a domanda trasferito al 74° Regg. F. "Lombardia" sul fronte orientale in data 18 agosto

In data 18 settembre e sino al 20 luglio 1941 Comandante di una Compagnia Armi di accompagnamento (B/I) operazioni contro la Jugoslavia ed occupazione del territorio.

Distretto Militare: Trieste

Deposito Palmanova - 74° Regg. F.

Abitazione - ROMA - Viale Gorizia, 24

Lavoro a disposizione del Duce per gli slavi.

Fig. 3 (p. 20).

ROMA, 1 LUGLIO XVIII

All' Ecc.

OSVALDO SEBASTIANI

Segretario Particolare del DUCE

Ho il piacere di comunicarVi che mi è stato concesso l'alto onore di essere chiamato alle armi per servire la Patria fascista e il DUCE. Vi prego di confermare al DUCE tutta la mia fede e la mia assoluta devozione.

Qual'ora gli eventi dovessero volgere fortuna si è finalmente decisi per il vicino oriente e la terra italiana sacra a Muzio Saurio Dalmazio, Vi prego di dire al DUCE di concedermi un altro privilegio essere in prima linea contro il nemico del mio sangue, lo slavo.

VIVA IL DUCE!

I.S.

Tenente di Fanteria
ITALO SAURO
7° Regg. Fanteria

M. Clava sul fronte orientale
6 Aprile XIX

All' Ecc.

Oswaldo Sebastiani

Segretario Particolare del Duce

Fig. 5
(p. 21).

Vi prego vivamente di consegnare al Duce queste mie linee indirizzate nel momento in cui tutta la gente aderisce quando a lui come sempre a Duce.

Vostro I. Saurio

No. eleven, with front on north 6 April XIX

41
Dites, maitre si jamais la partie avec la
jugadora, par partida elle forte, et une
blanche, un trois un ami, com trois un
expres un cont trois un trois un
qui trois trois trois trois trois trois
par trois, trois trois trois trois trois
et trois.

The great benefit in excavating
the loose conglomerate with great results 1887-88.
Produce the same in two years A. V. G.
e attende P. P. P. P. P.

It is in all Volume of the
Cassini for June 1811. Amsterdam
Strassburg, Wien, Frankfurt and Leipzig
for the Volume of the Amsterdam; Leipzig and Frankfurt

Fig. 6 (p. 21).

PER UNA SOLUZIONE DEL PROBLEMA SLAVO NELLA V.O.

39

le Statistiche delle proprietà in mano agli slavi. Queste statistiche dovrebbe essere fatte in forma molto riservata ed accurata da un ufficio speciale dell'I.R.A., con la collaborazione dei agrateri comunisti. Per l'altro questo lavoro potrebbe essere disimpegnato del cogliere per la trasformazione fondiaria dell'istituzione che concessa a favore della provincia e i suoi problemi agricoli.

2° Silecchio dalle vendite e deferimento ad una commissione, unica per tutte le regioni, del nulla-oste per le vendite alle scorte di lunedì, e con acquisto da parte di slevi.

3° Acquisto di tutti i terreni appartenenti ai istituti di credito e
destinati a essere venduti a prezzo di costo da privati italiani.

46. Acquisizione e assegnazione dei terreni a famiglie italiane del Veneto dal Friuli e dall'Austria (che sono le più adatte a resistere agli slavi).

5° Allenare in tutte le maniere gli slavi dei propri terreni e dei paesi dell'interno.

6^a Costituzione in Pella di un forte centro industriale per attirare gli allevatori dello stesso tempo fare una intensa propaganda e regalarli i ranghi di corallo alari dell'interne per trarre una soprattutto per centri industriali lenti, con l'obbligo di stabilire in la propria residenza. A parte questo, il governo ha una buona azione operante in Pella.

70 favorire le alienazioni di terreni da parte di sivi.

Se minare le proprietà si deve attraverso tutte le operazioni del credito e del fisco.

Se trasferire continuamente operai e minatori specializzati (con la prospettiva di miglioramento) in altri centri lontani del Regno e della Calabria.

99 ~~Costituzione di un villaggio~~ Istria in A. dove convogliare nu-
merose famiglie di comunisti scelti in prevalenza tra gli slovi.

10° Aumento delle scuole elementari e degli asili. Più asili nati colui con l'obbligo di residenza non inferiore a 1 anno e 1/2.

lavorare con insegnanti elementari e maestri di asilo anche molti religiosi e religiose italiani che potranno arginare e sostituire

La Costituzione di una stretta rete di sorveglianze e informazioni sul coloro che operano come mestatori e agitatori slovi, su coloro che hanno contatti con la Jugoslavia, limitare e costantemente tenere il rilascio dei passaporti per la Jugoslavia.

Fig. 7 (p. 25).

- 13° Allontanamento dei pregiudicati slavi da tutte le V.G.
- 14° Sorveglianza sulla attività dei Preti. Costituzione di un fondo sociale per il mantenimento di seminaristi presso il seminario italiano di Trieste la cui costituzione deve essere favorita ed accorciata.
- 15° Favorire e rovesciare le migrazioni di slavi nelle Colonie.

U. Pisanelli Apollonio il
15.10.20 per l'ordine
me ne occupo con l'ipotesi S

15.10.20

bruttato in ipotesi di morte
N. A. S. 19.10.20

Fig. 8 (p. 25).

siri, autorità locali, tutti i figlioli insomma dovrebbero essere considerati collaboratori nella grande opera.

La lotta dovrà essere anzitutto decisa onde, ad esempio, ad un prete slavo se dovrà sostituire un prete italiano che parli slavo e ciò perché in un primo tempo a bene agire lentamente per non provocare troppe opposizioni e andare facilmente in profondità. Il prete slavo dovrà in ogni caso essere sufficiente affiancato a un italiano e poi eliminato.

Nella decisione nell'eliminare gli elementi contrari sta il primo successo. Forze e giustizia sono gli elementi sui quali gli slavi, come i popoli primitivi, fanno reggere i troni, le forze, soprattutto, dovrà essere sempre presente per reprimere con la massima severità con gli slavi la clemenza e debolezza.

Il problema della nazionalizzazione dei territori giuliani slavi e delleati impone per queste province un coordinamento di tutte le sezioni di governo tendente ad un solo scopo: l'eliminazione dello slavo.

I singoli Ufficiali, le varie amministrazioni dello stato e gli enti dispendenti, agiscono ognuno nel proprio campo con propri metodi per un fine generale e devono spesso trascurare il particolare e il

Nelle provincie giulie le scuole sono molto frequentate e i bimbi che ne escono parlano un bel armonioso italiano. Ma ciò è poco, perché nelle case di questi bimbi entra il prete che parla slavo ed è slavo, egli predica e fa cantare in slavo, e quelle poche notizie che arrivano sono di bocca slava.

Fig. 9 (pp. 29, 30, 51).

Dipendenze della Presidenza del Consiglio e del Ministero del
Interno.

che provocano le infestazioni e le controllano. Uno a due per pre-
visite, stipendiati e con indennità. Ad ogni esodo del problema
A Rete alcuni centesimi. Ad ogni esodo del problema
delle nazionalizzazioni in base alle informazioni e agli studi
che pervengono dalla periferia. Prestazione gratuita eventuale
riberbo spese. Somma se
Ministero di coordinamento provvede alla raccolta
dei dati e degli studi e alla redazione delle relazioni funzionali.

FUNZIONI: 1° Pone i problemi all'esame dell'attenzione del Ministero, che li risolvono con le topie giuridiche che ritenga opportune.

2° Controllante applicazione dei provvedimenti amministrativi, delle disposizioni particolari, dei benefici e riferisce proponendo le necessarie modifiche.

Funzioni specifiche dell'Ufficio di Coordinamento per le Nazionalizzazioni dell'Adriatico dovranno essere le eliose:

a) Suggerire e favorire la rinascita dei centri urbani, che, per i territori da nazionalizzare, vanno continuamente potenziati allo scopo di costituire in essi potenti centri di irradiazione della civiltà italiana e di assimilazione delle masse slave.

b) Dove non sia possibile agire con la sola penetrazione pacifica, andare profondamente la proprietà slave, specialmente quella terriera. Provocare delle commossioni terriere e creare dei centri coloniali italiani nei villaggi rurali slavi. Terze e case da donare ai combattenti, le maggiori si saranno distinte, come a Roma. (Questa funzione particolare potrebbe essere esplicata attraverso l'Ente Nazionale per la Tre Venezia).

Rosen, 8 Nov 46 XX.

L.S.

Fig. 10 (p. 30).



Fig. II.

Executions in Slovenia.

Ianus in Giacen — Iacovuch in
Giannini — Iacus in Giannuzzi —
Iarus in Giannucci — Iadrenschien
in Giadrenchi — Iagodie in Giagodi
Iatomin in *G. adriatica* — Ian in
Gianni — Iappi in Giappelli —
Iechik in Iochio Ieonic in Iocini
— Ioderlinich in Ederini — Le-
dinas in Ghedina — Iedreioich in
Giadruni — Iekic in Guechi —
Iekisch in Gekai — Iellin in Gek-
le — Ielenovich in Galeno —
Ielenich in Gellani — Ielenovich

[illegible]

Albano, li 19 aprile 1927. Anno V.



MUNICIPIO
DELLA
CITTÀ DI ALBONA

Prot. N 1678.

Risposta al foglio N 59 Gmb.

as 11/14 1987
On Feb 5

000ETTO

Situazione in forma italiana
dei cognomi originari ita-
liani.

In questo Comune i cognomi slavizzati, praticamente furono in gran parte convertiti per disposizione del Comissario straordinario il 11. al dicembre 1941 Nro 5672; le conversioni moderne però abbisognano della legalizzazione dell'illustrissimo signor Prefetto in quantochè, essendo già entrate nelle abitudini delle rispettive persone, probiermi sarebbero coloro che ne farebbero domanda. Gli stante si partecipa che i cognomi italiani già slavizzati e praticamente ritornati all'origine italiana da legalizzarsi sono 226, a questi sono 14, a gueneral forse altri 76 cognomi ritornati di famiglie immigrate, o di cognomi sfuggiti alla conversione per svista o per resistenza, etc.

- 1) a) I cognomi originali italiani o latini da
restituire in forma italiana sarebbero
circa 300
che vengono portati da anni 1800 fin qui
b) I cognomi nobiliari tradotti o deformati
sarebbero:
c) I nomi toponomastici da correggersi o tra-
dursi circa 700
d) Richieste di riduzione in forma italiana di
cognomi stranieri o di origine straniera
ne saranno pochi, forse 50.

Col mazzetto ~~in~~ ^{per} ~~ore~~ ^{qui}.
IL POSTA!

IL POINTE

Fig. 12.

Fig. 13.

R. PREFETTURA PER LA PROVINCIA DEL CARNARO

N. 4697/1927

.....

P. u. m. e. 3 maggio 1927 Anno V

OGGETTO: Intenzione alla Venezia Giulia degli articoli 1° e 2°

del R. Decreto Legge 10 gennaio 1926, N. 17 sull'ave-

nuzione in forma italiana dei cognomi.

Ai Signori Podestà e Commissari Prefettizi
dei Comuni della ProvinciaFaccio seguito alla mia circolare N. 2150 del 27 cor-
rente.

1) L'articolo 1 del R. Decreto Legge 10 gennaio 1926, N. 17, sta-
bilisce che la Provincia di Pavia, stabilisce che la Provincia
che portano un cognome originario italiano e latino tradotto in
tre lingue o deformato con grafia straniera o con l'aggiunta di
so straniero, riasumeranno il cognome originario nelle forme
italiane e disporrà che saranno egualmente conosciuti alla forma
cognomi di origine etimologica, derivanti da luoghi, di cui
stati tradotti in altre lingue o deformati con grafia straniera e al-
tre i predetti nobilitati tratti o ridotti in forma straniera. La
restituzione in forma italiana prevede il Prefetto mediante de-
creto.

Per poter dar pronta esecuzione al citato articolo 1 co-
corre che, oltre quei nomi i cognomi e predetti nobilitati delle fami-
glie di questa Provincia che cadono sotto le disposizioni dell'arti-
colo stesso. Ecco perché la S.V. di praticare accurate indagini nel
Comune e di comunicare sulla base delle medesime un elenco dei cognomi
e i nobiliti nobilitati che a suo avviso sarebbero da restituire in
forma italiana. Il questo lavoro converrà tenere ben presente che si
tratta solamente di restituire nelle forme originarie, cognomi di ori-
gine italiana o latina, che sono stati deformati, e non più di
biare cognomi di origine non italiana o latina. L'elenco in questione
sarà indicata, i motivi per i quali si propone la restituzione in
forma italiana e possibilmente i documenti o altre prove, da cui
desumere che i predetti cognomi avevano origine italiana.

Fig. 14 (i).

Mera o latina.

Va da sé che il lavoro della S.V. si riferirà soltan-
te a famiglie che parlino la lingua italiana.Confido che la S.V. vorrà dedicare la massima cura al
lavoro di cui si tratta consultando al caso persone esperte della
storia del Comune e delle sue famiglie ed esaminando attenta-
mente tutte le documentazioni che potrà procurarsi.Gradirò ricevere un cenno d'assuefazione a quanto
prima possibile i chiesti elenchi.

II) L'articolo 2 del R.D. L. sopra citato prevede che
anche all'interno dei casi di cui all'articolo 1), possono
essere ridotti in forma italiana con decreto prefettizio i
cognomi stranieri o di origine straniera, quando vi sia la richie-
sta dell'interessato. A differenza dell'art. 1 si tratta
di cognomi stranieri e non si procede d'ufficio, ma su
te sulla domanda dell'interessato osservando tutte le condi-
zioni della S.V. si limiterà perciò in questi casi a prepa-
rare un solo elenco per tutti gli interessati siano
casi di questa facoltà consentita dalla legge di chiedere la
riduzione in forma italiana del loro cognome.

Or dirò anche in questo riguardo un'assuefazione.

Il Prefetto

F.to Vivorio

Per copia conforme all'originale

P. u. m. e. 17 maggio 1927 Anno V



Fig. 14 (ii).

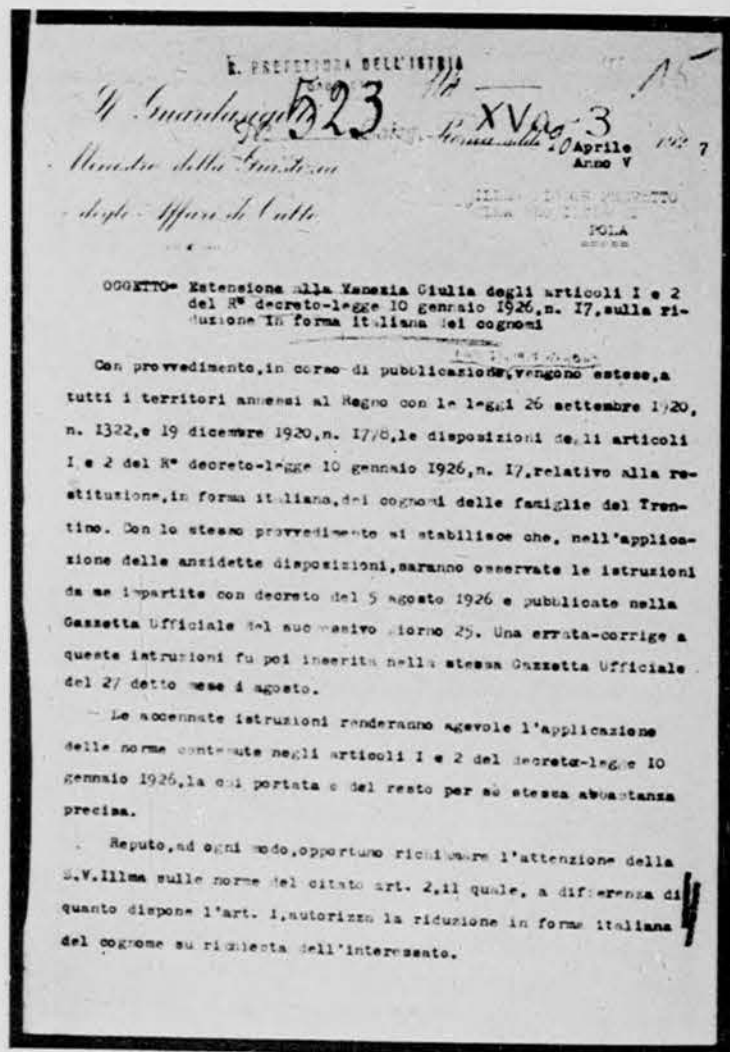


Fig. 15 (i)

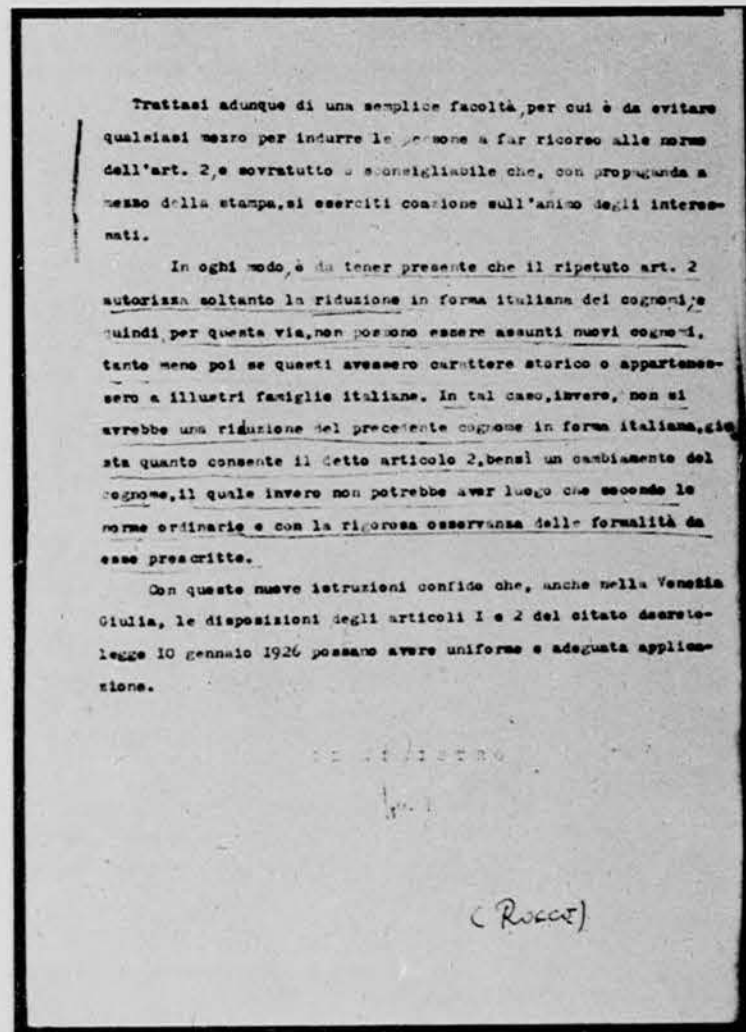


Fig. 15 (ii)

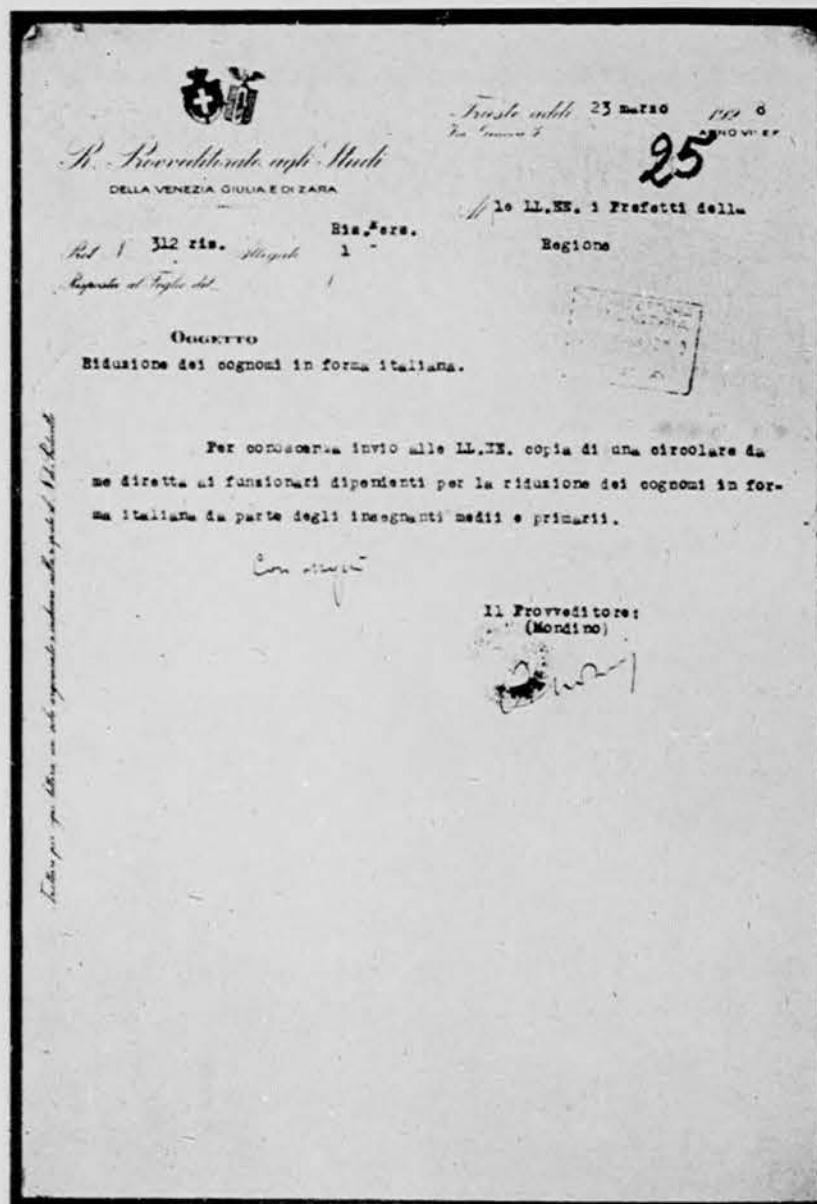


Fig. 17

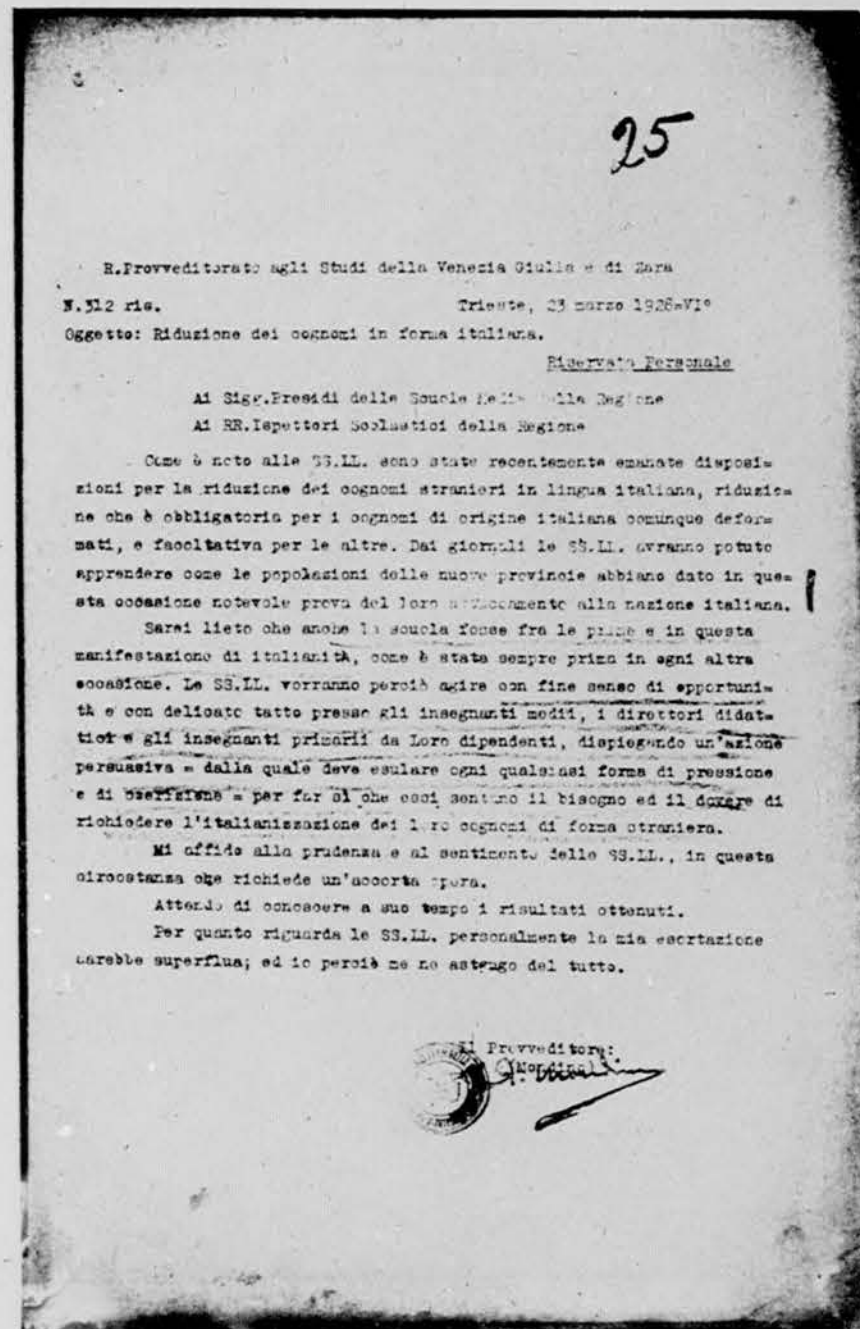


Fig. 18.

R. PREFETTURA
 DELL'ISTRIA
 23071937
 POLA

10 3/4 90
 28 10 32

XV Q. 5.
 28 32

PROVINCIA DELL'ISTRIA
 28 ottobre 1922. A. X.

Oggetto: Italianizzazione dei nomi di illegittimi.

A tutti i Comitati di Patronato dell'Opera Nazionale
 Maternità Infanzia
 e per conoscenza
 Alla Regia Prefettura dell'Istria
 Alla Federazione provinciale dell'U.N.M.I.

P o l a

A seguito ed a chiarimento della mia circolare dd. 4
 mo. 1120, relativa all'italianizzazione dei nomi degli il-
 legittimi assistiti dalla Provincia, informo i Comitati di
 patronato che la circolare stessa deve trovare applicazione col-
 l'immediato invio ai Municipi di un elenco degli illegittimi
 aventi nome straniero, dell'invito ai Municipi stessi di av-
 viare al più presto le pratiche necessarie per provocare da
 parte della Regia Prefettura l'emanazione dei decreti di cam-
 biamento dei cognomi.

Avviso che moltissimi dei nomi in parola sono stati
 già restituiti a forma italiana con regolare decreto prefetti-
 cio e basta applicarlo.

IL PREFETTO
 L. S. G. R. I. N. I.

Fig. 19.

R. Prefettura
 Catania
 27/1/22

26

Ministero dell'Interno
 UFFICIO DEL PERSONALE

A. S. E. IL PREFETTO
 C. I.
 P. C. L. A.

Oggetto: Riduzione di cognomi in forma italiana.

S. E. il Ministro delle Finanze ha fatto presente quanto
 segue:
 "I RR. Decreti 10 gennaio 1926, N. 17 e 7 aprile 1927, N. 494,
 dispongono il ripristino in lingua italiana dei cognomi tradotti
 o deformati in lingua straniera e di quelli derivanti da località
 in cui nomi erano stati perimenti tradotti o deformati.
 "Compte, peraltro, alla Finanza che molti beneficiari di
 pensioni dirette e di reversibilità, già funzionari civili e mili-
 tati ed ex operai del cessato regime, i quali riscuotono, in
 un'epoca tarda, gli assegni presso le Tesorerie della Venezia
 Giulia e della Venezia Tridentina, risultano ancora iscritti col
 loro cognome originario; ciò induce a ritenere che le suddette
 disposizioni non siano state applicate nei loro confronti."
 Si ritiene, pertanto, opportuno segnalare la cosa all'E. V.
 per le disposizioni che nella sua competenza ritenga di adot-
 tare al riguardo.

PER IL MINISTRO
 [Signature]

Fig. 20.

N° 52

Pola, 11-1-1933

Oggetto: Riduzione cognomi in forma italiana.

Risposta 21- N° 5000/33 Div. 1 Sp. III

Tomini

On. Ye. Ministero dell'Interno
Ufficio del Personale

ROMA

In merito a quanto il Ministero delle Finanze ha fatto presente ~~al Ministero~~ circa la applicazione delle disposizioni sulla restituzione dei cognomi in forma italiana nei confronti di molti beneficiari di pensioni, dirette o di riveribilità, già funzionari civili o militari ed ex operai del cessato regime, prego riferire quanto appreso.

Dalla data dell'estensione a tutti i territori delle nuove Province della Legge 10 gennaio 1926 N° 17 a tutt'oggi questa Prefettura, a mezzo di personale espressamente incaricato ha ~~emesso~~ ~~emesso~~ ~~emesso~~ 14.000 decreti circa, dei quali oltre 3000 su richiesta degli interessati, mentre i rimanenti costituiscono provvedimenti di autorità in conformità alle norme previste dalle succitate disposizioni.

Regato conto che le famiglie istriane, sono tutte numerose e che ogni famiglia è costituita, in media, da quattro persone, ne deriva che ben 56.000 persone residenti in Istria di fronte ad una popolazione complessiva ~~di 219.800~~ - hanno avuto finora il cognome ridotto in forma italiana.

Da queste sommarie cifre e dal fatto poi che di ogni Decreto devono essere compilate ~~due~~ copie da inviarsi ad Uffici diversi, ossiè On. Ministero potrà agevolmente rilevare quale sia stata la mole del lavoro finora eseguito.

Che ad alcuni dei predetti pensionati statali non sia stato ancora restituito il cognome nella forma italiana ~~non è da considerarsi~~, ma è d'uopo far presente che questa Prefettura anche volendo non avrebbe potuto provvedere all'applicazione dei loro riguardi delle sopranotate disposizioni legislative non risultando dagli stati di famiglia inviati dai Comuni

e che servono di base al provvedimento di riduzione, tale loro qualità.

Non è da escludersi poi che non pochi dei detti beneficiari abbiano avuto già ridotto il cognome in forma italiana, ma ciò nonostante continuano ad essere iscritti agli Uffici di Tesoreria col loro vecchio cognome o perché le amministrazioni comunali abbiano omesso di darne comunicazione all'ufficio predetto, o perché gli interessati non si siano fatti parte diligente nel rendere edotti l'ufficio stesso ~~del provvedimento~~ del provvedimento di riduzione.

Devo aggiungere infine che molti cognomi stranieri non sono suscettibili di riduzione alcuna e ~~non~~ quindi ~~non~~ anche fra i beneficiari di cui trattasi ~~trovansi~~ in tali condizioni.

Comunque a togliere il lamentato inconveniente ho oggi stesso richiamato la particolare ~~attenzione~~ dei Podestà e dei Commissari Prefettizi dei Comuni della Provincia sull'obbligo che loro incombe di notificare copia dei Decreti di riduzione di cognomi in forma italiana dei pensionati ~~quali sono~~ dello Stato, anche alla Tesoreria Provinciale.

Alla Tesoreria di Pola poi ho richiesto un elenco completo di tutti i pensionati residenti in Istria ed assicuro coll. On. Ministero che appena in possesso di ~~tale elenco~~ provvederò con la dovuta urgenza alla riduzione di cui trattasi nei confronti di coloro ai quali deve ancora essere ridotto il cognome nella forma italiana.

IL PREFETTO

(P. Alf. Avv. Ithalo Foschi)

Fig. 21 (i).

Fig. 21 (ii).



Fig. 22. General Robotti (smoking cigarette) reviews his victims.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAR PERIOD 1941-45

(a) GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

With the collapse of the old Yugoslav Army and the occupation of Yugoslavia, the field was open for more wholesale and ruthless measures of de-nationalisation of the western South Slav lands by and on behalf of the Italian State. This work of de-nationalisation included both an attempt to enforce wholesale conversion from Yugoslav to Italian and also the simple physical extermination of the population of some districts. The work divided naturally into two main parts: the measures proposed and carried into operation for the turning of Yugoslavs into Italians, and the measures adopted for the complete elimination of the more resistant Yugoslav population of certain districts in order to make way for full Italian colonisation.

Italo Sauro was principally concerned with the first of the two methods of Italian expansion into Yugoslav territory. The other measures were carried out, though largely under the guidance he had previously given to Mussolini, by the Italian Military and Civil Governors appointed in the annexed and occupied Yugoslav lands.

Though Sauro was up to a certain point subtle in his methods, in an important memorandum to Mussolini on this subject, he emphasises that: "Force and justice are the elements on which the Yugoslavs as primitive peoples form their resistance. Force

above all else must always be present to suppress with the maximum of severity: in dealing with the Slavs, clemency means debility." (See Figure 9 (i) (p. 34).

It was to put forward the document from which we quote these revealing words, that Sauro applied for a special audience with Mussolini on 28 September, 1941. He was received by Mussolini on 8 and 10 December, 1941, to discuss both his earlier 16 points and his new proposal.

Once again, in the opening words of his memorandum, he made clear the purpose of his suggestions, saying: (Figure 9 (ii) (p. 34). "The problem of the nationalisation of the Julian, Slovene and Dalmatian territories, demands for these provinces a co-ordination of all governmental action aimed at a single purpose: the elimination of the Slav peoples." It is precisely at this crucial point, at which to the annexations made following the first World War were to be added the annexations of the second World War, that Sauro emphasises how in Italian eyes there is no difference between the problem before Italian Imperialism in Dalmatia, and the problem before Italian Imperialism in the Julian Region, (Istria, Trieste and the Slovene Littoral) in the years before the war.

What did Sauro propose? He put before Mussolini a new suggestion, the document reproduced in Figure 10 (p. 35). This was an outline of the constitution and functions of a new office, named, quite simply, for "Co-ordination of the Nationalisation of the Adriatic." This proposed office was to be a department directly dependent on either Mussolini's office or that of the Minister of the Interior. Apart from its general terms revealed in the title, its main proposals were two, both inter-connected and of great interest, especially when the position of Trieste is considered. They were: (a) to promote urban centres, which in the territories to be nationalised are throughout most capable of forming and serving as powerful centres of irradiation of Italian civilisation and of the assimilation of the Slav masses, and (b) "thoroughly to undermine Slav property, especially inland."

There is no need to comment on the significance of these proposals, except to refer again to the accompanying

memorandum in order to throw one further ray of light on what is meant by "irradiation of Italian civilisation"—of course, quite apart from the methods of irradiation of this civilisation which came under the heading not of "justice," but of that "force" which, as we have seen, Sauro maintained must always "stand behind" the pretty coating of legality which he was always careful as far as possible to adopt.

After a long tirade, in which he emphasises that the common people do not hate the radio, cinema, theatre, books and newspapers (of which there was really no doubt) Sauro goes on to state: "In the Julian Province the schools are well attended and those children which do not play truant speak a beautiful and harmonious Italian, but this is little enough, because priests who speak Slav and are Slav go to the homes of these children, they preach and have them sing in Slav, and the little news which reaches them comes from Slav lips." (Figure 9 (iii) (p. 34). This is stated in order to justify a preceding demand that everywhere "an Italian priest who speaks Slav must be put in place of the Slav priest," though here too, Sauro, fully aware of the opposition which this interference with freedom of religion might cause, is ready to be cautious, and says: "First it would be well to act slowly in order not to provoke too much opposition and to penetrate more deeply with greater ease. In each case the Slav priests should first each have an Italian priest added to them. Later they should be eliminated."

In February 1943 a bill was submitted to the Italian Parliament concerning those new Yugoslav territories annexed on 3 May (the Slovene territory) and 18 May, 1941 (Croat Littoral and Dalmatian territory). Under this bill, all persons either born in these districts or domiciled there for at least 15 years were to obtain citizenship. Concerning Slovenia, as we see from the proposals submitted to the Duce in September, 1941, the provision for the use of Slovene in the newly annexed Slav territory (a Law passed on 3 May, 1941, "guaranteed" the Slovenes the use of their own tongue) was to be made null and void as soon as possible, first with the appearance of legality, but if necessary by force. Now, seeing this new bill

which would have granted the Yugoslav population of the newly annexed territories full Italian citizenship, Sauro hastened again to apply specially to Mussolini. In an application to him dated 18 February 1943 Sauro asked two things. The Ljubljana area was to be struck out of the bill altogether and the situation in that district made the subject of a special study, and the bill was also to be temporarily withdrawn in so far as it concerned Dalmatia until the "normalisation of conditions" in that province.

Sauro's protest was successful; his advice was followed. The bill was withdrawn. New areas of Yugoslavia had been annexed to Italy, but the citizens, both those born there and those domiciled there for a decisive period of years, were deprived of all rights of citizenship. The reason for this was that it would be easier for Italo Sauro's special "Office for the Co-ordination of the Nationalisation of the Adriatic" to dispossess the Slav people of their land if they were first deprived of rights of citizenship. They would be unable to obtain fair and due protection of the Italian courts whether Italian individuals or the State sought to sell up their property, or in any other way expropriate them.

The second form of Italian action in annexed parts of Yugoslavia was that of consistent military terrorisation, reaching the lengths of the actual extermination of the population of some districts.

Here it must be observed that, quite apart from the question of whether and where the international laws and conventions governing the conduct of occupation troops were exceeded, this military repression even in its mildest form, *i.e.*, in a legally justifiable form, had been denuded of even a basis of legality by the above mentioned "enactment" of the annexation of new areas of Yugoslavia. For by such annexation, international laws and customs were at the very outset infringed. It is a recognised principle that conquered territory may be "occupied," but that annexation must be postponed until the final peace settlement following the cessation of hostilities.

In other words, extant law and custom presuppose a commencement and an end to a state of war. But just as the

Axis did not declare war on Yugoslavia, presumably it did not intend to declare a restored state of peace. Thus indeed fascist aggressor states, being essentially predatory, place themselves outside the law. Italy, in fact, by its very acts, declared and acknowledged a state of permanent warfare, which began in the extreme north-western part of Yugoslav territory in 1918 between Italy and the Yugoslav peoples, and was merely extended in 1941.

A further aggravating factor was the novel act of mass persecution to which allusion has already been made. By this, in the areas of Yugoslavia newly annexed to Italy, the inhabitants were deprived of all or any citizenship. They ceased in Axis eyes to be Yugoslav citizens, without becoming Italian citizens.

Therefore it is not surprising that it is impossible in a general statement to draw a clear dividing line between the crimes committed in Yugoslav national territory annexed to Italy after the 1914-1918 war, and those committed commencing from April 1941 in areas newly annexed by Italy which for 20 years had been Yugoslav state territory.

Thus Report No. 4 deals mainly with Italian crimes committed on Yugoslav state territory, yet inevitably also touches on crimes committed by the same Italian units against Yugoslav civilians on what had been by international treaty Italian territory. Covering Orders were indeed issued by Mussolini and his Commanding Officers, which (quite apart from the evidence of the continuity of Italo Sauro's work) made no distinction between the newly annexed Yugoslav territory and the earlier annexed areas.

It is, in fact, possible to say that this or that minor criminal committed this or that particular act in one zone or the other. But in drawing up the acts of indictment against the leading criminals it is impossible to make this distinction, since they themselves did not make it.

Nor should it be surprising that the major Italian criminals have themselves destroyed that temporary dividing line between one and the other annexation, since the major official study by Tamaro of the Italian Imperialist plan in the Adriatic

published in 1918 by the Italian Senate, by its very title "La Venetie Julienne et la Dalmatie," with the sub-title "Histoire de la nation italienne sur les frontieres orientales"—broke down this borderline, treating the subject as if there were only one area in question. Not for nothing either, did Italo Sauro, writing on the old "frontiere orientale," when on 6 April the unheralded Axis attack was begun on "the enemy of Mussolini's people," declare that the Adriatic was at last "to be swept clear of the foreigner."

Not for nothing either did Mussolini, speaking to 60,000 crack Italian troops on the eve of a major offensive, intended to be both punitive and destructive, against the National Liberation Army in the Slovene lands, choose as his rostrum Gorica itself—of which ancient records of 1101 A.D. say: "que Sclavorum lingua vocatur Gorizia."*

*This was the occasion: July 31, 1942, when Mussolini received General Roatta's special report on the situation in what Rome Radio called "Slovenia and the bordering territories." At this point, General Ambrosio was about to hand over command of the Italian armed forces for Slovenia and Dalmatia to General Roatta. The report of Rome Radio (Italian Home Stations in Italian for Italy and Empire) at 20.00 hours, said: "The Duce painted the future possibilities and programmes, particularly insisting on those problems directly interesting the frontier zone, Slovenia and Dalmatia, but especially Slovenia. The meeting lasted some two hours and meantime the Prefect of Gorizia and the Party's Commissioners of Gorizia, Trieste, Udine, Pola and Ljubljana arrived."

It will be noted that these were the Party Commissioners in the Yugoslav territory annexed after the 1914-18 war, together with the "Party Commissioner for the contiguous newly-annexed territory."

Rome Radio continued to say that at the end of the meeting the Duce appeared on the balcony, and after prolonged applause, spoke on the epic deeds (no doubt including in these "epic deeds" the Italian rout at the Slovene town of Kobarid, or Caporetto, in the first World War) which had "made sacred the banks of the Isonzo and the hills of the Carso". "Against those who on this side or beyond the old frontier, still cherish impossible dreams, the inexorable law of Rome will be applied."

But these were the greatest days of Axis illusions, for Mussolini went on to say: "The second front will be opened neither here nor in any other part of the world. The Axis and the Tripartite Powers have the means to achieve victory." (Extracted from BBC Monitoring Digest).

(b) THE NORTHERN AREA

The attack on Yugoslavia began on 6 April 1941. General Ambrosio was then in command of the Italian II-nd Army (succeeded in 1942 by General Mario Roatta). The area of his command exactly corresponded to that of Tamaro's study of 1918—"Commando Superiore FF.AA. (Forze Armate) Slovenia-Dalmacia." In the portmanteau form "Supersloda" it became the symbol of Italian Imperialism in Yugoslavia. For the term "Slovenia" was merely an alternative for the earlier term "La Venetie Julienne" used by Tamaro. Disregarding the Croats of the Istrian Peninsula, the area to be conquered at the head of the Adriatic (the eastern shore of which in Italian imperialist eyes=Dalmatia) was precisely the Slovene country.

On 11 April 1941 General Grazioli was appointed Supreme Commissar of the division of Slavs of what the Italians dubbed the "provincia de Lublana," or Ljubljana province* (i.e., the hinterland of the Julian Region) to work in close conjunction with the armed Italian forces, as the "civil" occupation authority.

We shall first consider Italian crimes in this northern area, remembering that by Article 43 of the Hague Convention of 29 July 1899 it was Grazioli's task and his duty, to preserve law and order, and, utilising to the best of his ability the laws of the territory occupied, to protect the civilian population.

On 21 September, 1941, Ettore Messana, the *questore*, or police authority in Ljubljana, on Grazioli's orders issued instructions to the men of the "Royal Italian Army" by which they were to use all methods necessary to ensure the subjugation.

*The Slovene territory of pre-1941 Yugoslavia (i.e., the Slovene territory apart from the Carinthian and Julian Slovene lands) was arbitrarily partitioned between Germany and Italy. The northern part was "annexed" to Germany, and declared essential German territory; this will be dealt with in the account of German War Crimes. The southern part, under the name "Provincia di Lubliana," was "annexed" to Italy, and declared essential Italian territory.

tion of the Slovene people. The following methods were particularly specified: to bribe individuals to betray others, to resort to physical intimidation to obtain secrets regarding resistance movements, to imprison, intern, pillage and kill.

The reign of terror thus instituted against the civilian population nevertheless proved inadequate. The Slovene people was not subjugated. During the winter 1941-42 Yugoslav resistance grew everywhere. In the Slovene lands, a powerful branch of the National Liberation Movement (national in two senses, being a movement for the liberation of Slovenia, but as a constituent part of Yugoslavia) was built up. This came into full action before the close of the winter. Against it, in March, a wave of terror of a new order was instigated under Mussolini's direct orders.

Roatta's headquarters were at Susak, on the southern edge of the Slovene area and Istria. Under him, in the II-nd Army, Roatta had the XI-th Army Corps, which operated in the northern portion of this Italian-annexed territory. This, until 15 December 1942 was under the direct command of General Mario Robotti. From that date until the first Italian collapse on 9 September 1943, the command was transferred to General Gastone Gambara.

The XI-th Army Corps comprised the following divisions:

The Infantry Division "Isonzo" with headquarters at Novo Mesto, under the command of General Frederico Romero from 11 May 1941 to February 1942, General Emilio Coronati until 20 July 1942, and General A. Maccario until the capitulation.

The Granatieri di Sardegna Division, with headquarters at Ljubljana, under the command of General Taddeo Orlando.

The Cacciatori delle Alpi Division, with headquarters at Ljubljana, under the command of General Vittorio Ruggiero.

The Lombardia Division, with headquarters at Karlovac, in Croatia, under the command of General Biddau.

The Maccera Division, with headquarters at Ribnica.

The Guardia alla Frontiera Group, with headquarters at Kocevje.

On 1 March 1942, Roatta issued a comprehensive Order, by Circular 3C, which introduced a totally new principle into the

Italian repression of the Yugoslavs of occupied or "annexed" areas. Grazioli's order was directed against the *civilian* population. Roatta's order was directed against the civilian population as potential supporters of the National Liberation Army, but also against the National Liberation Army itself. It was to expel the fascist invaders and to subdue their quisling assistants that the Yugoslav peoples, following the collapse of the old Yugoslav Army, took up arms to create a new Yugoslav Army. Against this Yugoslav resistance the Italian command now proposed a vast and systematic extension of the recognised means of warfare in excess of existing usages.

Here it is important to emphasise that from the outset of its organisation the Yugoslav National Liberation Army bore in mind the provisions of the Hague Conventions of 29 July, 1899 and 18 October 1907 respecting belligerents. In these the distinction between *francs-tireurs* and regular soldiers is laid down, namely, that a regular army is organised, under the command of properly appointed officers, and wears a sufficiently distinguishing uniform which has been made known to the enemy.

British readers will remember this point in connection with the L.D.V. Detachments, later the Home Guard of Britain. At the German suggestion that L.D.V. men would be treated as *francs-tireurs*, the British Government took the proper steps to make as certain as feasible that the enemy recognized the regular insignia of the L.D.V.'s.

That the Italian Commands were fully informed concerning the Yugoslav Liberation Army, there can be no doubt. By Report No. 1/3211S of February 4, and Report No. J/5120/8 of February 23, 1943, official copies of both of which reports are in Yugoslav hands, Roatta communicated further details concerning the organisation of what he refers to as the "Esercito Nazionale Liberatore Jugoslavo"—or "Yugoslav National Liberation Army." On 16 March 1943 under No. 08/1825, the headquarters of the Isonzo Division sent in a special memorandum on the tactics employed by this Yugoslav Army.

Moreover, on a number of occasions, upon Italian suggestion,

local truces were arranged between Italian and Yugoslav units for negotiations concerning exchange of prisoners. By these negotiations the Italian command gave full recognition to the Yugoslav forces as to a properly constituted army.

Despite these facts, a whole series of Orders and Circulars issued by the various Italian Commands, all based on the original circular issued by Roatta, repeated that all prisoners-of-war except women and men wounded, or of under 18 years of age, were to be shot out of hand. For example, in an order issued by General Taddeo Orlando, No. 02/3104, of 28 April 1942 stands:

"Soltanto i feriti, le donne ed i maschi minori de anni 18, devono essere denunciati ai predetti tribunali. Tutti gli altri devono essere immediatamente fucilati sui posto."

Accordingly,

"Wounded, women, and men of less than 18, must be handed over to the prescribed tribunals. All the others must be immediately shot on the spot."

This order was repeated for all divisions and other units under Roatta's commands. In addition, General Maccario, on 23 March 1942 by Order No. 02/1537—issued on direct instructions from General Mario Robotti, Commander of the XI-th Army Corps—ordered that all members of partisan families and their immediate neighbours were to be shot.

On 6 May 1942 Grazioli and Robotti issued a joint proclamation providing for the shooting of groups of hostages, if the guilty were not found within 48 hours of any incident caused by "communist brigands."

On 20 May 1942 Grazioli ordered the clearance of all vegetation or any buildings on a belt of 40 metres wide on either side of any railway, road or other communication line.

These and numerous other similar orders were of no avail. On 29 July Mussolini resorted to a further intensification of the terror. At the great rally of troops at Gorica, to which reference has already been made, he strove to inflame the new force of 60,000 picked troops prepared for a major punitive offensive against the Slovene people, "Against those who, on this side or beyond the old frontier, are still cherishing

impossible dreams, the inexorable law of Rome" was to be applied.

In preparation for this punitive offensive, on 9 July General Coronati ordered the internment of whole families, or even villages if considered suspicious, and on 15 July Grazioli and Robotti jointly ordered the cessation of all public traffic and threatened that *any hostile bearing* towards the Italian forces was to be punished by death. When the offensive had begun Robotti, under direct instructions from Grazioli, made it punishable by death for any person to be found in possession of any National Liberation Army literature.

Thus not merely legally in civilian life, but *de facto*, under Italian martial rule, spreading the "civilisation of Rome," life became impossibly difficult for the Slovenes. Crime was piled upon crime by the Italian invader. Whereas earlier in 1942 some degree of mercy was shown to wounded prisoners-of-war, to women and young prisoners too, in effect this degree of consideration for the rules of war and the customary laws of human decency in warfare was annulled by the orders providing for the shooting out of hand of "suspicious" persons, or any persons bearing National Liberation Army propaganda material. Not merely were wounded prisoners-of-war not spared; Yugoslav military hospitals were deliberately bombed.

Exemplary Italian records for such acts are in the hands of the State Commission. To give one instance, in July 1943 Colonel Sordi sent a telegram, No. 3232, requesting the bombing of the small village of Sopot, though it was well-known that a Yugoslav military hospital was situated in the village. On 12 July 1943 General Maccario responded by ordering the destruction by bombing of the village, including the hospital.

Finally, guilt for these flagrant violations of military law and custom is clearly admitted by the attempt made by the Italian commands to conceal what was being done. Various orders (e.g., Maccario's Order No. 05/1063 of 3 March 1943 Maccario's second Order No. 02/303 of 5 June 1943 and Rossi's Order No. 08/1063 of 3 March 1943) were issued giving instructions that wherever Yugoslav soldiers or civilians

were shot out of hand, they were to be cited in army returns as "killed in armed conflict."

It remains to place on record some of the sacrifices which this policy of Italian conquest by arms caused the Yugoslav population of the affected districts.

Report No. 4 of the "State Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes of the Invaders and Their Assistants," states: "During the period of Italian occupation, from 11 March 1941 to 8 September 1943 in the Ljubljana district alone, the Italian forces shot 1,000 persons as hostages, did to death with great brutality over 8,000 persons (even many who had already been acquitted by the infamous Ljubljana Italian Military Court), burned down 3,000 homes, completely razed and pillaged 800 villages and despatched 3,500 persons to various concentration camps in Italy. (Total population of this area 300,000). Tens of thousands of Slovenes passed through the hands of the Ljubljana Questura (Police Headquarters), where they were subjected to most terrible tortures, and women were raped and brutally used to death. The Military Court in Ljubljana sentenced thousands of persons to imprisonment for long periods or for life, and of these it is known that on the Island of Rab, over 4,500* persons were later done to death by starvation."

A second quotation from Report No. 4 will illustrate the conditions which at this time prevailed in Slovenia:

"By Report No. 350 of 27 July 1942 Emilio Casanogo, Civil Commissar at Cernomelj, informed Grazioli that he had razed 120 homes in the neighbouring villages, and that 280 persons were under arrest in Cernomelj and Metlika ready for internment. By Report No. 317 of 1 August 1942 he stated that the number of prisoners had risen to 500, that homes were burning all round him, and that General Maccario was taking part personally in the 'operations.' One week later, on 8 August 1942 he informed Grazioli that by orders of Colonel F. Ciancabilla, Commander of the 23rd 'Como' Infantry Regiment, a number of houses in the neighbourhood of

*Report No. 12, based on additional evidence, showed the number to have been as high as 4,700 persons. Italian secret reports stated the mortality in their own camps to reach 25%!

Crmosnjica had been razed, and 200 men had been arrested, bringing the number of men of between 18 and 55 years of age under arrest in Cernomelj up to 900 persons."

Significant of the atmosphere in which all this was accomplished, are Casanogo's following observations: "I will not try to tell you of the despair of the families of the interned persons—but, in conformity with your orders, have withheld from any interference . . . Although I admit that innocent persons were in question, I was obliged to remove them."

As another example, the following quotation from Report No. 4 may serve:

"As example, we will quote the case of one of many hundreds of villages destroyed in the ill-famed Fascist offensive which was begun on 16 July 1942 against the Slovene people, that of Babno-Polje in the Cabar district. The first wave of the occupational armed forces in its passage through this village, took nine peasants who were hay-making to be guides—a few days later their corpses were found at Jermen-dol. The second wave of the Italian armed forces arrested 98 male persons in this village, of whom 40, after indecent torture, were machine-gunned on Mount Vrazjo-Vrhov. Four other men were thrown alive into the pit in which these 40 men were buried. Eighty-three persons belonging to this village were interned, of whom 19 died on the Isle of Rab. Houses in this village were razed to the ground on three occasions, two on July 25 and 30, and finally, on orders from Lieutenant Vergno, the village was completely destroyed."

As examples of what was meant by "cross-examination" under the principles of "Roman justice," the following quotation from Report No. 17 may be given:

"Marshal* Madoglio, Captain Giovanni and Carabinieri Spor, tortured Toman Antun, Stane Kovac and Jozica Simoncic. For some hours they were kept hanging by chains on a wall, they were beaten in the region of the kidneys until they fainted, needles were driven under their nails, for eleven

*Marshal Madoglio: "marshal" here, Italian "mareschallo", is a gendarmery rank roughly corresponding to Quarter-master, and not to be confused with "Marshal" = "Fieldmarshal."

days they were given no food, and finally they were stood against a wall, while a farce of pretended shooting was played before them. General Gambaro was directly concerned in this."

Finally, in this matter of organised cruelty, the following passage from Report No. 17 may be given in order to illustrate the universality of the crimes from village to village in the Slovene lands.

"Colonel di Negro, Commander of the 1st Regiment of the Granatieri de Sardegna and Lieutenant Guiseppe Tomo, at the end of August in the village of Travnik shot five peaceful civilians whom they had taken with them as guides, while at Loski Potok they killed four school-teachers and eleven peasants, burning down 87 houses and 138 other buildings in the village. At Srednja Vas, they burned down seven houses, at Hrib four, and at Retje four. Tomo robbed and interned a large number of people, particularly in Segova Vas. Colonel Pausini, on 6 June 1942 burned down three farm properties in the village of Dragi, robbed 16 peasants and shot eight villagers. In June 1942 Lieutenant M. Angelli ordered the burning down of 70 buildings in the village of Ravna, and the flogging and arrest of all the men. At Kocevski Reka seven civilians were shot. At Podgora the property of twelve persons was burned down, and in the village of Golo on 23 July 1942 twelve innocent villagers were shot etc."

In addition, it must be recorded that beside the destruction of human life, enormous material damage was deliberately caused. The situation in this respect is perhaps best characterised by only two extracts from Reports of the State Commission:

Report No. 4 quotes from the report of Colonel F. Cinancabilla, Commander of the 23rd "Como" Infantry Regiment, No. 3576, of 3 August 1942 by which he informed his Divisional Chief of the "mopping-up operations" performed in the Cernomelj district by the Commander of the *Carabinieri*, Captain Fernando di Furia, "who placed 73 families, numbering 251 persons, under arrest, and seized numerous live-stock, and other goods. His personal concern

was to trace and seize property and anything of value, and he achieved brilliant results."

Finally, we may quote from Report No. 12, mainly concerning the work of the Supreme Commissar of Italy for the Ljubljana area, Emilio Grazioli, who "when he left Ljubljana after the fall of Fascism, plundered the Palace of the Ban, removing rugs, candelabra, furniture, about 35 kilogrammes of gold, a number of sacks of coffee, and many other various goods, which had fallen into his hands as a result of the confiscation of the property of 'rebels.'"

(c) "JUDICIAL" CRIMES.

Whereas in Reports Nos. 4, 12, 16 and 17, as we have seen, it was impossible for the State Commission to separate civilian repression from military repression, since from the outset of the occupation by Italy of further Yugoslav territory the civilian authorities worked in closest contact with the military authorities, the crimes reviewed in those reports have primarily a military character reports Nos. 25 and 28 deal more particularly with crimes committed by the Italian State, which though frequently involving or making use of the armed forces of the State, and being moreover crimes resulting from the latent state of war over twenty years in the Julian Region later which with the invasion of more Yugoslav territory, became open warfare, bear a civil or political character.

Both in the material presented in Report No. 25 and in that presented in Report No. 28, the temporary frontier existing for over twenty years between the two areas of annexation, as well as the dividing border of time between that which was done before the invasion of Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941 and that which was done after that date, have been disregarded by the persons committing the crimes, and therefore, with added reason, are here disregarded.

Report No. 25 deals with the activities of the notorious Italian "Tribunale Speciale per la Difesa dello Stato."

(Special Tribunal for the Defence of the State). A considerable part of the activity of this Tribunal was the prosecution and persecution of Yugoslavs, principally Slovenes and Croats, not only those who were Italian subjects in the Julian Region, but together with these, many Yugoslav subjects arrested in the Region, as well as Yugoslav subjects in the area newly occupied in April, 1941.

The trials in the courts established by this Special Tribunal were conducted in disregard of all recognised principles of court procedure, in that persons brought before them were condemned without the accusing authorities being called upon to submit any proofs of their accusations.

These trials form part of the whole machinery of Italian crime against Yugoslav nationals and the Yugoslav State.

Report No. 25 cites as many as 33 different group trials as examples of Italian methods. Three examples will be given here.

On 14 December 1941 a Slovene University lecturer, Dr Lavoslav Cermelj, together with 59 other young Yugoslavs, were tried at Trieste before a Special Tribunal for a motley list of irredentist acts, including an alleged attempted assassination of Mussolini. Five of the accused were executed; the remainder were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

The second great trial was staged in Rome on 25 June 1942 against 22 accused, seven of whom had escaped. Nine were executed, the seven others in captivity being sentenced to 30 years penal servitude each.

The third great trial was staged in Rome on 13 October 1942. Five were executed, the others sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

Altogether, in the course of its activity intended, in Sauro's own words, to effect "l'eliminazione dello Slavismo" (Figure 9 (ii) ("the elimination of the Slav idea")), the Special Tribunal sentenced 20 other persons to death, 31 other persons to 30 years penal servitude, 21 other persons to 24 years penal servitude, and excluding those sentenced to death or life imprisonment, 160 other persons, a total of 2,341 years penal servitude, or an average of $14\frac{1}{2}$ years per person.

It is necessary to present this story of Italian repression of men guilty only of wishing to develop their own Slav way of life, as a sum of years, in order to emphasise the measure of the human suffering, the enforced sterility of mind, to which the "Roman civilisation" was capable of condemning leading men of another people. British public opinion universally condemns Italy as a whole for acquiescing in the deliberate subjugation of African peoples. It should be reminded that in the heart of Europe, fellow Europeans of ancient culture could be sentenced to an average of $14\frac{1}{2}$ years of terrible imprisonment, equivalent to a living death, for also refusing to be thus subjugated. For it must also be recorded that the conditions of imprisonment in Italy were such that a long sentence of imprisonment was equivalent to sentence to death.

In respect of the crimes committed in cold blood under this heading by the Fascist Special Tribunal, the Yugoslav State Commission claims as war criminals a long list of Consul-Generals, Generals and others employed in the Tribunal included in the list of Italian war criminals so far named, at the end of this book.

Report No. 28 is principally concerned with the activity and responsibility of General A. Bergonzi, Commandant of "Civil Defence" in the Julian Region, with headquarters at Videm.

We have already in Chapter 1 dealt with Italian acts of repression committed in this district before the war. The task of General Bergonzi was that of supervising "Civil Defence" during the war in this Yugoslav-populated corner of what was at the outset of the war still by International Law, Italian territory.

Here it is important to record that if there had been any doubt about the state of war existing in this area between the Italian State and the Yugoslav population between 1918 and 1941, there was no question of the state of war following the Axis attack on Yugoslavia. Not merely did the Yugoslav peoples of the Yugoslav State as it then was rise in March 1941 against their own appeasing Government, and take a stand on the side of the United Nations, in the war against Fascism and Nazism. They were joined whole-heartedly by

their Yugoslav kinsfolk in the Julian Region, who also placed themselves on the side of the United Nations.

Italian official papers captured reveal that General Bergonzi sent daily reports to the Supreme Command of the Italian Army in Rome concerning the work of the Yugoslav National Liberation fighters who were in action from Fiume and Pulj in the south of this area, from Trieste and Gorica to the then frontier at Postojna and the Predil Pass near Tarbiz between the Julian Region and Carinthia.

At the time when this work was vital for the Anglo-American armies engaged in the, at one time, desperate struggle with the Afrika Korps in North Africa, the Yugoslavs of the Julian Region were, in the words of Report No. 28, paraphrasing Bergonzi's reports, "incessantly day after day attacking trains and motorised transport on the high roads, mining roads, railways, tracks and viaducts, cutting down electric power pylons, telegraph and telephone posts, destroying aqueducts, warehouses, frontier-posts, strong points and factories." Moreover, these Yugoslav partisans, so Bergonzi complained, were "preventing the German workers in factories and forests from working; making incessant attacks on guards and patrols, disarming soldiers, seizing arms and equipment stores."

As example, Report No. 549 of 20 July 1942 from Bergonzi says that all groups of rebels consist of Italian citizens incited by "allogeno" persons, i.e., by Yugoslavs.

Here, as in all Bergonzi's reports to Rome, and also in the replies to Bergonzi from Rome, the political attitude of the Italian authorities must be observed. For over twenty years they had refused the South Slavs of the Julian Region any rights as a minority, classifying them resolutely as Italian subjects, and treating any refusal to be Italianised as "rebellion." Now we see the attempt to assess as Italians the population of the Julian Region, Slovene or Croat, abandoned as useless. They are no longer referred to as Italian rebels. They have become, by open confession, "allogenos" or "aliens."

Bergonzi's proposals for dealing with the situation, in which "allogenos persons," admitted as such after more than

twenty years of trying to treat them as Italians, were proving a serious fighting element on the United Nations' side, are also interesting. Bergonzi's terms of reference were to ensure the civil defence of an area which had been regarded as Italian for those 23 years of Italian misrule. His was a separate command from that of Grazioli, Supreme Commissar in the immediate hinterland of the Julian Region, the Ljubljana district. That was quite logical, since Grazioli's territory was newly conquered, and merely occupied Yugoslav territory, "annexed" only by the Axis disregard of all existing international laws and customs. But Bergonzi's ultimate proposal for mastering the serious menace to the Axis presented by the Julian Yugoslavs fighting with the United Nations was of extreme simplicity. It was nothing less than to extend to the Julian Region the very measures adopted in the newly invaded territory under the jurisdiction of Grazioli and the military command of Roatta. The same proposal we find repeated less than a month later, on 10 August 1942, in Report No. 1507, made by Bergonzi's Deputy, General Ciccabo. Ciccabo stated that the activity of "rebels," (i.e., Italian anti-fascists) within the frontiers of "old Italy" was growing, and was supported by the "allogeno" (i.e., alien Yugoslav) population. He, too, suggested that the measures already adopted in the Ljubljana province should be extended to the Julian Region.

These significant proposals were a cardinal admission of the continuity of crime against the South Slav peoples for nearly a quarter of a century by the Italian State. For the repressive measures, criminal by all civilised standards of law and custom, which had been applied with increasing rigour in the Julian Region, were not to be applied to the newly occupied areas, but the unheard-of wholesale cruelties introduced in the newly occupied areas were to be extended backwards into the Julian Region.

Thus after the summer of 1942 in the Julian Region followed a sorry series of mass arrests, burning of villages, and shooting of hostages. Two examples may be quoted. On 9 August 1942 a day before Ciccabo made the report we have just quoted, the Carabinieri Officer, Maroni Ciro, had fallen

in a skirmish with Yugoslav resistance forces. Six peasants of the neighbouring village of Ustje were immediately seized and shot, 81 houses were razed to the ground, and some 300 innocent old men, women and children removed to another village, the remaining men being taken to a concentration camp. (Report No. 28).

On 28 May 1944 Italian gendarmerie stationed at Trieste visited the village of Gabrovec. They arrested and shot nine persons, including a five-year-old child, and a man in his sixties, then fired the village, after throwing the dead bodies into one of the houses. (Report No. 4).

Apart from the large numbers shot in village after village from 1941-1945, thousands upon thousands of the citizens of Istria, Trieste and the County of Gorica were in the course of a little over a year rounded up and taken to Italian concentration camps in the Lipari Isles and elsewhere. Large numbers of these, following the capitulation of Italy in October, 1943, were handed over to the Germans, who transferred them to the most notorious of German concentration camps, namely, Dachau, Auschwitz (Oswieczim), Malhausen and others.

Finally, in the last throes of Axis resistance, the north-western corner of Yugoslav populated territory centred on Trieste was the scene of a last desperate stand by Italian Fascists and other fascist and Nazi groups. The innumerable crimes committed in the last stage of alien occupation of Yugoslav national territory by these desperadoes, causing a special SOS to the Yugoslav Army to come to the urgent succour of the local Yugoslav population, will be the subject of a Special Supplementary Report.

We have, so far, reviewed Italian crime in the north-western districts of Yugoslavia, being the subject of Reports of the State Commission for the "Investigation of the Crimes of the Invaders and Their Assistants," Nos. 4, 12, 16, 17, 25, 28, 46 and 49.

(d) CRIMES IN MONTENEGRO AND DALMATIA.

At the other extreme of the Adriatic coast of Yugoslavia, immediately south of Dalmatia, is Montenegro, descending to the sea in the Gulf of Kotor. Here, in the Italian attempt to execute the plan outlined in Tamaro's work "*La Venetie Julienne et la Dalmatie*," the corollary to the seizure of Dalmatia and the Gulf of Kotor was inevitably the seizure of the mountains of Montenegro which command the Gulf.

The crimes committed by the Italian Forces in Montenegro are dealt with in Reports Nos. 2, 3, 11, 13 and 14.

Report No. 2 principally cites Serafino Mazzolini, later Minister of Foreign Affairs in Mussolini's Government, General Alessandro Pirzio-Biroli, General Tucci, Commander of the Messina Division, and General Marotta, who was President of the Court Martial. Mazzolini for some time occupied the post of Supreme Commissar for Montenegro, with full authority over both military and civilian personnel. Under his administration a whole series of crimes of repression and annihilation were committed in Montenegro. At a later date the post of Supreme Commissar was cancelled, and in his place, as Military Governor of Montenegro, was appointed General Alessandro Pirzio-Biroli, who continued the policy of repression. General Tucci made his headquarters in the capital of Montenegro, Cetinje, and in this capacity, apart from issuing orders to the forces under his command for the execution of acts of repression, he also served as President of the Emergency Court Martial in Cetinje.

Apart from this Court there was a regular Court Martial at Cetinje under General Marotta, responsible for the execution of hundreds of Montenegrin civilians.

Report No. 2 contains a grim list of victims both of the shooting squads and of the prisons and concentration camps set up by the Italian forces in Montenegro, in which the conditions of confinement were such that imprisonment was

practically equivalent in many cases to sentence to death by torture.

Apart from the prisons and concentration camps set up in Montenegro itself, it has been so far established that as many as 98,703 Montenegrin men, women and children were interned in Italy, distributed among as many as 195 internment camps. Conditions of confinement in these Italian camps need no detailed description. They can be judged by reference to the already well-known conditions in the German concentration camps. Since the total population of the relative part of Montenegro in 1941 did not exceed 300,000, this means that fully one-third of the population was removed either to die or to suffer permanent ruin of health.

Report No. 3 is principally concerned with the work of Pirzio-Biroli and officers under his command, and is in effect, a continuation of Report No. 2. In the first place, it quotes from the handbook issued by Pirzio-Biroli, as Governor of Montenegro, to the Italian forces fighting in Montenegro. Apart from some dubious Axis propaganda about the "communism of Stalin allied to English gold," this handbook is principally concerned with inciting the Italian soldiery to cast aside all scruples in dealing with the Yugoslav resistance forces. "Hate this people!" it reads. "This is the people against whom we have fought for centuries on the shores of the Adriatic. Kill, shoot, burn and destroy this people! Do not believe the man who shares a glass with you, nor even the man who gives you information. Do not believe the woman who offers you a smile . . ."

Report No. 3 gives a further long list of victims and statement concerning wholesale shooting of hostages.

Reports Nos. 11, 13 and 14 continue to fill in details of the story outlined in Reports Nos. 2 and 3.

The story in each of these reports is the same. As they come to light, details concerning one district after another are being published. The full reckoning has yet to be made.

In considering what has been done here, the economic and social conditions in the highlands of Montenegro must be taken into account. This is notoriously a poor country, with

small and scattered villages and minute towns. Throughout this country under Italian occupation a systematic reign of terror prevailed. In the larger part of Montenegro there is not a single parish which has not suffered in lives and property.

Frequent reference is made in all these reports to the co-operation offered by Yugoslav quislings, notably Chetnik bands under the direct command of General Draza Mihailovic. Report No. 46 (Chapter iii) also records that towards the end of 1941 Sauro obtained a special audience with Mussolini to submit to him an important report on proposals made by "prominent persons" of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who wished to get in touch with the Italian authorities to discuss the Italian future in the Balkans and "subversive movements" on former Yugoslav territory.

Later, on 29 January Sauro sent Mussolini a detailed report on this whole question, which is concerned with his contacts with Dobrosav Jevdjevic and other plenipotentiaries of Draza Mihailovic, who was at that time already in contact with certain Italian generals.

This work of Yugoslav quislings will be the subject of a separate account of quisling war crimes in Yugoslavia. There too will be found the full story of Italian crime in the hinterland of the Adriatic coast, i.e., in Bosnia-Herzegovina, for par excellence in that part of Yugoslavia from the outset of Axis occupation Italian action is inseparable from that of German forces, together with Pavelitch ustasha, Mihailovic chetnik and Neditch forces, though there is no suggestion in this that the guilt of Yugoslav quislings, in Bosnia-Herzegovina (or anywhere else in Yugoslavia) or the co-operation of German forces, in any way exculpates the Italian State from its guilt for long-planned and systematic infringement of fundamental international law and civilised human usages.

Finally, in considering the criminal record of the Italian State and of responsible Italian statesmen and officers in Yugoslavia, we have to return to the first report published by the Yugoslav State Commission for the "Investigation of the Crimes of the Invaders and Their Assistants," which deals with Italian crimes in Dalmatia. This report cites a long list

of Italian high officers and officials, as well as lesser ranks. Foremost among these is Giuseppe Bastianini, first Governor of Dalmatia, one time Ambassador to the Court of St. James and his successor Giunta.

The fundamental document on which Italian war crimes in Dalmatia rest, is the Order promulgated by Giuseppe Bastianini as Governor of Dalmatia on 7 June 1942. This first Order concerned the area of the territory annexed to the administrative district of Zadar, which, though separated from Italian-annexed Yugoslav national territory by many miles of Yugoslav State territory, until the 1941 seizures was included in the Julian Region administrative area. But by subsequent orders of Bastianini and his successor Giunta, this Order was extended to the whole of Dalmatia, including parts of the coast which were at first claimed by the Ustasha puppet state. These orders were of a most drastic nature. They first of all tied down the population to their places of domicile and provided that any persons captured outside the area of their place of domicile should be shot without trial. The basic order further made precise regulations, such as that concerning the area between Obrovac and Zegar, by which no food supplies were to be distributed until at least eight persons of each village presented themselves to the local command to serve as hostages of the district at the disposition of the Italian forces. Any infringement of any order was to be punished by shooting. Yet, lest this should not be a general enough threat of terror, Clause 5 of the basic order also provided that "in every case, on orders of the aforementioned authorities, any persons who give any support or assistance whatsoever to the work of the Partisans should be shot."

In Report No 1, as in other statements made by the Yugoslav State Commission, a long list of mass shooting without trials, destruction of property, acts of torture of individuals and terrorisation of whole districts, as well as of the deliberate annihilation of people and homes in districts regarded by the Italians as key centres for colonisation, has been filed. Altogether this constitutes a devastating indictment of the ruthlessness with which the Italian State was prepared to

endeavour to establish permanent Italian possession of what was proposed as the reward which had actuated Italy in entering the 1914-18 war on the sides of the Allies, yet which in 1917 Italy was prepared to relinquish in order to make peace, had Germany and Austria been ready for this. ("Lloyd George War Memoirs," Volume 2, page 1189.)

(e) CONCLUSION.

To summarise once again the area of these innumerable crimes reviewed here, it consists of :

Firstly—The Yugoslav inhabited portion of the County of Gorica, Trieste (including the Slovene Littoral) and Istria (including Fiume and Zadar), annexed to Italy *de facto* in 1918, later confirmed by the Treaty of Rapallo in 1920, and the Nettuno Convention of 1922 (the "Julian Region") ;

Secondly—The districts annexed immediately after the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia in April, 1941, namely, the eastern hinterland of Trieste and the Julian Alps, being the "Province of Ljubljana," and the Yugoslav littoral with hinterland immediately around the Port of Zadar, and between this and Fiume ;

Thirdly—Montenegro in the south, as the hinterland overlooking the Gulf of Kotor ; and

Fourthly—The whole of the remainder of the Yugoslav littoral, in between the northern area (Julian Region, Istria, Zadar, etc.) and the south (Gulf of Kotor).

Finally, it must be recorded that these Italian crimes, as borne out by the evidence possessed by the Yugoslav "State Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes of the Invaders and Their Assistants," constitute a planned attempt to exterminate the whole South Slav population of the Adriatic and its hinterland, by deportation of population, terrorisation with a view to enforcing renunciation of Yugoslav nationality, and sheer annihilation.

APPENDIX

The compulsory Italianisation of the surnames of innumerable South Slav families of the Julian Region, and the change of others under unbearable pressure, was one of the methods of Italian oppression. It was accompanied by the change of all possible place names.

The history of Italian legislation concerning change of family and place names, of the application of Italian laws concerning these, and of the arbitrary change of names by local authorities without regard for the existing laws, may be of interest.

The provisions of the old Civil Code of the Kingdom of Italy concerning changes of personal names were designed quite naturally not to facilitate such procedure, but to make adequate provision against arbitrary or frivolous changes, and to see that any change was duly registered in all necessary official records.

The provisions are contained in Chapter VIII (Article 119) of a Royal Decree, No. 2602 of 15 November 1865 which is based on Law No. 2215 of 2 April 1865 and Royal Decree No. 2358 of 25 June 1865. This Article of Chapter VIII of the Law lays down that any person wishing either to change his surname or to add some other name to this should make application to the King through the Ministry of Justice, giving reasons for his request and furnishing a certificate and other documents. Clauses 120 to 125 inclusive made further provision for publication in the Official Gazette and other authorised newspapers of the proposal to effect a change of name, and for a period of four months to elapse before any further steps could be taken, during which any objections to a change of name could be lodged.

After the 1914-18 war, two areas of former Austrian territory were acquired by Italy, namely the South Tyrol, known in Italian parlance as the Trentino, and the Julian Region, known in Italian parlance as Venezia Giulia. On 10 January 1926 in the third year of the Fascist regime, Law No. 17 was passed concerning the change of personal and place names in the Trentino. The main provisions of this Law are contained in Article I, and provided that "Families of the province of Trento bearing a surname of Italian or Latin origin translated into other tongues, or deformed by foreign spelling or by the addition of a foreign suffix, should reassume their original surname in its original form."

"Similarly, surnames of place-name origin, the basic place-name of which has been translated into another tongue, or deformed by foreign spelling, or otherwise translated or reduced to a foreign form, shall be similarly restored to the Italian form."

This Law was introduced in the South Tyrol to Italianise names of German origin. In this province, foreign names other than those of German origin, or names to which a foreign termination had been added would be extremely rare. There is little doubt but that this Law speaking of "names translated into *other tongues*" was designed as a basic law to apply to all the territories newly annexed from Austria. And indeed, after various representations from Fascist authorities in the Julian Region, a Royal Decree No. 494 of 7 April 1927 was promulgated, for the "extension to all territories of our new province of the provisions contained in the Royal Decree of 10 January 1926 No. 17, concerning restitution of surnames of the families of the Julian Region to an Italian form."

"The restoration to the Italian form will be declared by a Decree of the Prefect of the province, of which the persons interested will be notified, and which will be published in the Official Gazette of the Kingdom and recorded in the official population registers."

"Any person who following the restoration of his name makes use of a surname in foreign form, will be punished by a fine of from 500 to 5,000 lire."

This Decree was made law by an Act of 24 May 1926 No. 898.

By these Acts a facade of legality was given to the Italianisation of South Slav personal and place names in the Julian Region. The thesis of the Italian State was that a large number of names were of Italian or Latin origin but had been slavified. A dictionary of these names and their Italian equivalents was drawn up by a special commission, and all persons bearing these names were obliged to accept the Italian form. A sample page from this dictionary is given here (Fig 12 p. 37), in which it will be seen that even so obviously slavonic a name as Horvat, i.e., Croat, is to be changed to Crevato while other derivatives are to be changed in a similar way; thus so that Horvat becomes Crevato, Hervatich becomes Crevati, Hervatin, Crevatin, and so on.

Thus a cloak of legality, however spurious, was given. Persons with surnames recognized by the Italian authorities as indubitably not of Latin origin were merely pressed themselves to apply for a new, fully Italian, surname. Wherever the Italian authorities had decided that a name represented a Latin or Italian name "slavified," the change was compulsory, and the legal excuse (i.e., the Fascist authorities method of obtaining at least ostensible regard for the basic Code Civile of 1865) was that it was not matter of a "change," but of a "restoration" of the original form of a name.

That this argument was in itself ridiculous in many cases is obscured for those who are not philologists by the circumstance that in every country a basic stock of names which are the common heritage of European civilisation is drawn upon for many

names. It would therefore only be possible to *prove* that IVANICH is derived from GIOVANNI or "Johnson," or is not so derived, by consultation of family trees, or by circumstantial evidence such as that provided by the fact that derivatives of IVAN (Old Slavonic *ioannu*) are to be found scattered in their tens of thousands, if not millions, throughout the comparatively vast populations of all the Slav countries, while derivatives of JOHN or GIOVANNI are comparatively rarer in Italy.

Take another example, provided by the Italian "restoration of names" dictionary—BOZHICH or BOZIC. This is a fairly common South Slav name, from Adriatic to Black Sea. It is a derivative of *bog* or "God." In the supposed Italian "original form" we see only a comparatively rare Italian name.

One example more: to the uninitiated DEBELLI might seem quite a reasonable Italian name-form, built on the Latin *bellum* or *bellus*. It is offered in this Italian "restoration of name" dictionary as the original of the good South Slav name DEBELJAK or DEBELIAK. How many Italians may not have murmured indignantly, reading this ridiculous dictionary, against the Slav barbarians who added so "bruto" a termination as the Slavonic *ak* to the beautiful word "of Italian or Latin origin."

Unfortunately, DEBELJAK is indubitably of Balkan Slav origin. It is derived from Turkish TEMBEL = lazy. In the South Slav languages, following the common law of migratory words, a special case of the original meaning has taken root, and *debeli* means, not lazy, but "fat." DEBELJAK is a name which par excellence denotes a Balkan Slav origin.

Finally, we may glance again at the initial order of the Commission Extraordinary. This, dealing with only the more striking marks of "foreign deformation," deleted the final *ch* of the South Slav surname of many families. One may imagine the reaction of Scot or Irishman, had Whitehall attempted to turn them all into Sassenachs, by removing the "Mac" from their names. Yet, to the philologist, *Mac* at the beginning of a Gaelic name, or *-ich* at the end of a Slavonic name, are not merely *formally* the same, both being indications of descent, but are also philologically the same, the "M" of *Mac* being merely a phonetic prefix, so that from the philologist's standpoint Gaelic *Mac* or *ac*, Welsh *ap* and Slavonic *-ich* are identical.

It is noteworthy, however, that this fiction of legality by which personal names admitted by the Italian authorities not to have had Italian or Latin origin, are to be changed only on application of the head of the family bearing the name was maintained by legislation after the assumption of power. But a large measure of compulsory Italianisation of names had already been accomplished by the Italian local authorities in the newly annexed Julian Region

considerably before the Fascist March on Rome and assumption of power. A Commission Extraordinary functioned in the Julian Region in the immediate post-war period, and for example, by its Act No. 5672 of 21 December 1921 signed by Pier Dominico Schiavi, determined a list of Croat and Slovene surnames of the district under Schiavi's authority and the new Italian names which were to be applied in place of them.

Thus, here too, in the detailed question of the Italianisation of names, it must be observed that there was continuity of action by the Italian imperialist interests throughout the whole period of occupation of the Julian Region following the first act of forcible annexation of this area by the Italian Liberal Government in the autumn of 1918.

For the interest they offer, we append reproductions (reduced by one-half linearly) of a number of documents from the official Italian archives of the authorities in the Julian Region, which are illustrative of the action pursued by the Italian State.

Figure 13 (p. 38)

Letter from the Podesta of Albona to the Prefect of Istria at Pola, stating that: "In this commune the slavised surnames were largely corrected by measures taken by a Decree of the Commission Extraordinary of 21 December, 1921, No. 5672." The Podesta further reports that 300 personal names covering about 1,900 families in his area have already been changed, and 700 place names. Therefore, there remain only some 50 more names to be changed.

Figure 14 (i) (ii) (pp. 39, 40)

Copy of a circular from the Prefect of the Quarnero, concerning the extension to Venezia Giulia of the articles of the law of 10 January, 1926, giving legal form and camouflage to the work of Italianisation already begun. The circular says: "In this work it should be borne in mind that it is a case solely of *restoring to the original form* surnames of *Italian or Latin origin* which have been deformed, and not of changing names of non-Italian or Latin origin." Since the reasonability of this provision was dependent on the definition of "Italian or Latin origin," and such definition solely on arbitrary and tendentious Italian decision, this instruction is merely guidance how Italianisation is to be cloaked.

Figure 15 (i) (ii) (pp. 41, 42)

Letter from the Ministry of Justice to the Prefect of the Province of Pola (Istria) informing him of the extension to the Julian Region of Articles 1 and 2 of the Law of 10 January, 1926, concerning change of names in the South Tyrol.

Figure 16 (i) (ii) (pp. 43, 44)

Letter from Lazzarini, Podesta of Albona, to the Prefect of Pola, transmitting to him a copy of the "note," i.e., provision of No. 5672 of 21 December 1921 "with which the then Commissar Extraordinary, Pier Dominico Schiavi proceeded to the rectification of slavised surnames . . ." and pointing out that since there was no legal machinery for the registration of such names (i.e., names forcibly changed) the matter was not put in proper order. Nevertheless, " . . . tacitly in the schools, conscription lists and various subsequent registers concerning the population, surnames were inscribed in the correct form, and have thus attained public usage." Lazzarini concludes by observing that as in 1921 only the most obvious marks of slavism (the Commissar Extraordinary had merely laid down that "the termination *ch* is always to be avoided") were removed and "more radical transformations" were not undertaken, it was now necessary "moreover commonsense (*con tatto e buon senso*) to make a general and thorough revision of the whole matter."

Figures 17 (p. 45) and 18 (p. 46)

The Director of Education of the Julian Region transmits to school inspectors and secondary school masters a special circular enjoining them to bring "tactful persuasion" to bear on their charges to obtain the maximum Italianisation "of their surnames of foreign form."

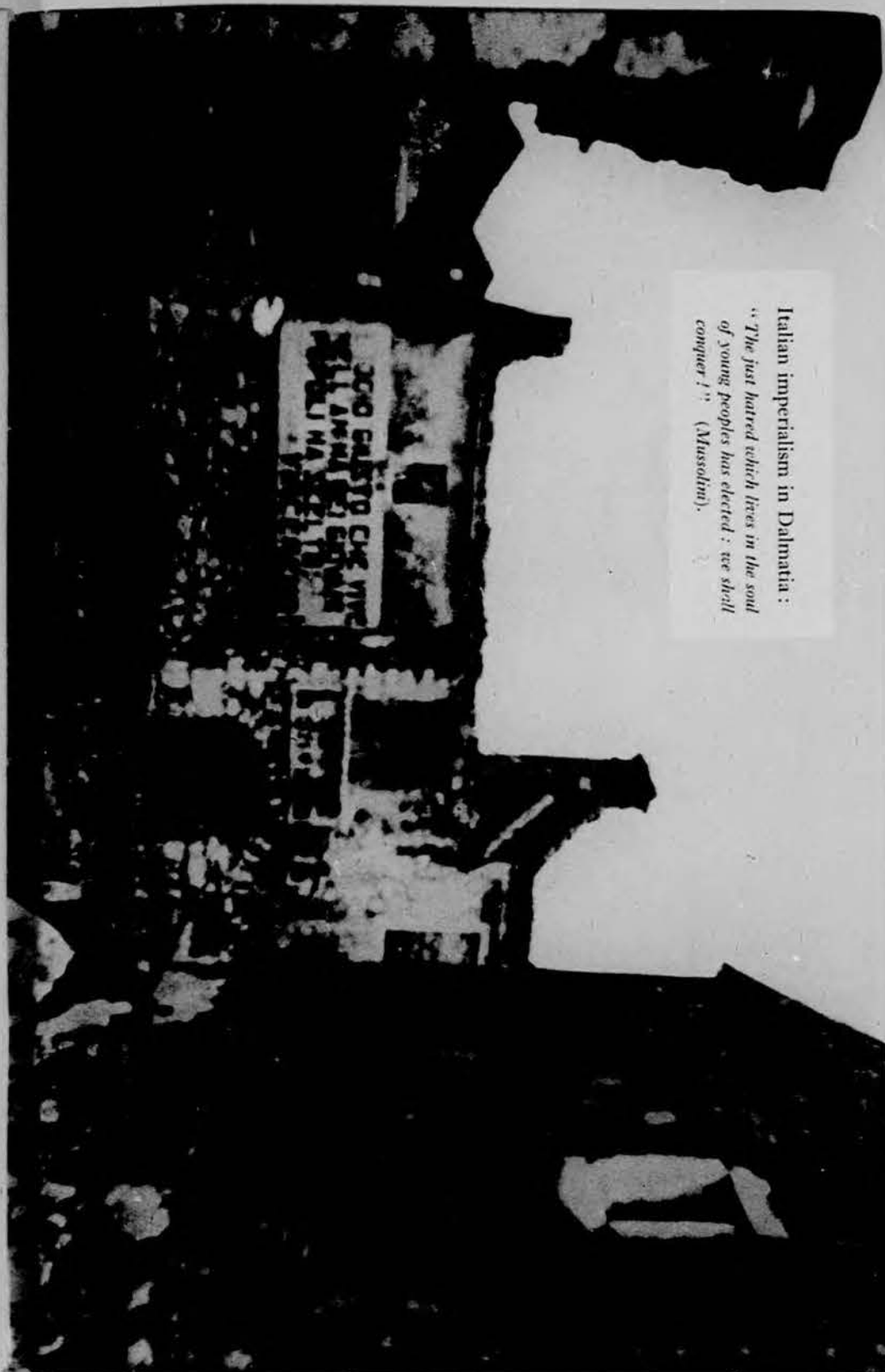
Figure 19 (p. 47)

The Governor of the Province of Istria, Lazzarini, informs all "Committees of Patronage," child welfare organisations, and also the Prefecture of Istria and the Provincial Federation of Child Welfare Organisation of the steps to be taken to Italianise the surnames of illegitimate children.

Figures 20 (p. 48), 21 (i) (ii) (pp. 49, 50), and 22 (p. 51)

Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefect at Pola, pointing out that various pensioners have failed to register the proper changed form of their names. Italo Foschi replies at some length reporting that some 56,000 persons resident in Istria out of a total population of 302,980 have changed their names, and throws part of the blame on local authorities for not duly reporting the changes of names. He concludes by saying that he has requested from the Treasury authorities in Pola a full list of the persons in receipt of pensions in Istria, in order to be able to make a thorough revision of this question of change of surnames.

The arbitrary measures and ostensible legislation in Italy regarding the change of Slav names to Italian forms, is the subject of Report No. 75 of the State Commission for the "Investigation of the Crimes of the Invaders and their Assistants."



Italian imperialism in Dalmatia:
"The just hatred which lives in the soul
of young peoples has elected: we shall
conquer!" (Mussolini).

Printed by C. & E. LAYTON LTD.
Standard House, Farringdon St., E.C.4