

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and the situation in that district made the subject of a special study, and the bill was also to be temporarily withdrawn in so far as it concerned Dalmatia until the "normalisation of conditions" in that province.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 The bill was withdrawn.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 Maccarata 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 " *Ezercito 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 Kocevaska 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 S O S 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