

ACC 10000 1432702

266.02/03

SECRET, ROBB SPERNI

(PROSECUTION REPORT OF

alias Rona S

Ap. - OCT. 1945

SECRET. ROBB SPERNI

(PROSECUTION REPORT OF Rhanagh Maureen ROBB -
alias Rona SPERNI . BRITISH RENEGADE)

Apr. - OCT. 1945

file 266.01/TS)

I, Mrs. Robb Spenni, acknowledge receipt of one sealed parcel of miscellaneous documents which were handed to me today, 2nd OCT 45 by S/Sgt. Chipperton, Security Division, Allied Commission.

Rhona L. Robb Spenni

2nd October, 1945.

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HEADQUARTERS LIGURIA REGION
ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
APO 394
PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION

LVC/lr.

Security
Division
Rec'd... 299.
Book No. 1199
File No. 1199
Action.....

REF : LIC/SAP/643

27 September 1945

SUBJECT : J.C.A. SPERNI and family.

TO : Director, Public Safety Sub-Commission,
H.Q. Allied Commission, C.M.F.
(Attn. Major S.J. HARVEY, Security Division.)

1. Forwarded herewith is a parcel of miscellaneous documents, removed for further examination from Via Belluno 8, Rome, at the time of John SPERNI's arrest.
2. Among the documents is the birth certificate of his child Greenagh SPERNI, for which Mrs. SPERNI has applied. None of the documents is now required for official use and the parcel may be handed intact to Mrs. SPERNI.

Louis V. Gale

LOUIS V. GALE, Captain
Regional Security Officer.

for Lt.Col. B.J. HEFFORD, R.P.S.C.

00002

HEADQUARTERS LIGURIA REGION
ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
APO 394
PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION

LVC/lis.

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LOUIS V. GALE, Captain
Regional Security Officer.
for Lt.Col. B.J. HEFFORD, R.P.S.O.

00001

The tenants of Mrs Robb Sperry's
flat of which she is a sub-tenant
are

Paolo + Bertha COSULICH
at present living at
3940 San Benedetto
Venice

Tel: 22120

Said to be a shipping
magnate.

Owner of the flat in question is
Signora Pellegrini widow of General
PELLEGRINI

00030

Info obtained from Sgt Schofield office of
DPM (W. R. Johnson) 11.15 hrs 12/6/45 The Sgt
RAAC.

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
CIVIL AFFAIRS SECTION

Ref 4/29.1/CA

1 May 45

SUBJECT : War Crimes

TO : AMHQ G-5 Section

Files (3) in regard to Rhonagh Mourcen ROBE alias Rena SHERMI
are forwarded for action.

FOR THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER

C.R. URJOHN Brig,
VP CA Section

Copy to Security Branch.

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1095

Minute 1.

To Director - Public Safety Sub-Commission.

This appears to be a clear case upon which no further comment is necessary. Three copies of the report are attached for transmission to Office of A.C. of S. G-2. Allied Forces Headquarters.

per [signature]

L. J. Gaa Capt.
for Major S. J. Hervey
Security Division.

Forward to V. P. C.A. Section.

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SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.P.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

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Louis V. Galt

LOUIS V. GALT, Captain,
Headquarters, Allied Commission,
Security Division.

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SECRET

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

C.M.F.

PUBLIC SAFETY SUB COMMISSION

SECURITY DIVISION

30 April 1945

A.F.H.Q. Ref : B-339.450/a-25
S.D. Ref : 266.02

Subject : British Renegades - Prosecution Report
Rhonagh Maureen ROBB alias Rona SPERNI,
born 29 October 1914 at Brighton, Sussex.

TO : A.C. of S. G-2, A.F.H.Q.
(Copy to A.C. of S., G-2, R.A.A.G.)

1. With further reference to Rhonagh Maureen ROBB, also known as Mrs. Rona ROBB-SPERNI, mentioned in previous correspondence between A.F.H.Q. and Security Division, as above, in connection with John Charles Anthony SPERNI, subject of prosecution report SD/266.02 of 14 April, 1945:-

2. Investigation of the activities of this woman, who is a British subject, has now been completed and there seems to be ample evidence upon which to base charges of (1) adhering to the King's enemies and (2) doing acts with intent to assist the enemy, contrary to the Treason Acts and Defence Regulation 2A, Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, respectively.

3. The facts of evidence available to the Prosecution show that she has been co-habiting with John Charles Anthony SPERNI, (known also as Giovanni SPERNI) since 1937, and has two children by him, but have not been married. Therefore, even should the question be in doubt as to the man's nationality, the woman, in any case, remains a British subject.

4. In June, 1940, after the Italian declaration of war, together with her "husband" and other members of the SPERNI family, and the two children, she left England, her name (as Mrs. SPERNI) and those of the children having been placed by John SPERNI on a re-patriation list at the Italian Embassy. He had obtained earlier - Italian passport No. 93994/446, issued 11 May 1940 at the Italian Consulate in London, the granting of the passport apparently being based upon the fact of his paternal grandfather having been born in Parma, N. Italy. The circumstances of the issue of the passport are the subject of some suspicion, dealt with more fully in the report upon John Charles Anthony SPERNI. The passport, in any case, genuine or otherwise, was quite obviously issued only to the latter and it is apparent from the passport, which is now in my possession, that the particulars of "Mrs. SPERNI" and the children were added "unofficially" at a subsequent date.

On the authority of the approved re-patriation list they succeeded in obtaining entry into Italy, arriving June 1940 where they

To

: A.C. of S. G-2, A.P.H.Q.
(Copy to A.C. of S., G-2, R.A.A.C.)

1. With further reference to Rhonagh Maureen ROSE, also known as Mrs. Rosa ROSE-SPERNI, mentioned in previous correspondence between A.P.H.Q. and Security Division, as above, in connection with John Charles Anthony SPERNI, subject of prosecution report SD/266.02 of 14 April, 1945:-

2. Investigation of the activities of this woman, who is a British subject, has now been completed and there seems to be ample evidence upon which to base charges of (1) adhering to the King's enemies and (2) doing acts with intent to assist the enemy, contrary to the Treason Acts and Defence Regulation 24, Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, respectively.

3. The facts of evidence available to the Prosecution show that she has been co-habiting with John Charles Anthony SPERNI, (known also as Giovanni SPERNI) since 1937, and has two children by him, but have not been married. Therefore, even should the question be in doubt as to the man's nationality, the woman, in any case, remains a British subject.

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5. On the authority of the approved repatriation list they succeeded in leaving England for Italy, and arrived in Rome during June 1940 where they stayed at the Hotel SERRATO.

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6. Within the space of a few weeks, John SPERNI, using the Italian version of his name - Giovanni SPERNI - had commenced activities in favour of the Italian Fascist Government, both by giving certain information to Italian Intelligence and by becoming employed as a broadcaster of Fascist radio propaganda combatting Radio London. These activities have already been dealt with in detail, in Security Division report 266.02, dated 14 April 1945, regarding him.

7. About a month after their arrival in Rome, "Mrs. SPERNI" was introduced by John SPERNI to Marchese Bariero di SORRELLA, Chief of the English Section of Rome Radio, and, after a further brief acquaintance,

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learned that her "husband" was to read news in English over the Italian Radio.

8. According to her own story, Marchese SORRELLIO, in about September 1940, suggested that she too should give talks in English on the Italian radio. This, he said, would make good "cover" for his "anti-fascist" activities (He was Chief of the English propaganda section of the Fascist Inspectorate of Radio and Television for a very long period and the suggestion that he was able to act in this capacity as an "anti-fascist", seems ludicrous).

9. "Mrs. SPERNI" has claimed in a statement under caution (see later) that she only made about eight or nine broadcasts, which were a series entitled "From Me to You", between September 1940 and January 1941. Documentary evidence which has, however, been found during searches of the records at the Ministry of Popular Culture in Rome, show that during the period of her activities (as above) she actually made 14 separate broadcasts in the said series for payment of 220 lire per broadcast. Also it is shown that she took part in a Radio propaganda sketch in August 1940 for payment of 94 lire.

10. (It will be seen from the report on J.O.A. SPERNI, already submitted, that he collaborated in five propaganda sketches in August 1940. There is evidence as indicated in the above that his "wife" collaborated in at least one of them - but it is also likely that she took part in the other four, although no actual evidence is available to prove that she took part in all of them).

11. The evidence mentioned in paragraph (9) above consists of documents found in three files among records at the Ministry of Popular Culture. These contain applications for payment of fees for broadcasts, signed "Rona SPERNI" and manuscripts (headed "Signora SPERNI") of thirteen broadcasts are attached to the appropriate application slips. (A list of the documents found as above, is attached marked "G". True copies (including errors in English) of the manuscripts are attached marked "P" to "R"). Comparison of the signatures "Rona SPERNI" on all of the application slips, with the signatures of John SPERNI show that they were all made by him and not by the woman. The manuscript of her broadcast No. 11 series shows that it was "written and read by Sig.ra SPERNI". 12. Examination of the manuscripts of her broadcasts leaves no doubt as to their treasonable nature, and of the intention of "Mrs. SPERNI", in broadcasting them, to assist the enemy. No further comment need be made in this connection. The evidence of witnesses in this case will be as follows :-

13. Mr. Dante GUUDI, American citizen, Allied Forces Headquarters, Psychological Warfare Branch, Unit No. 12, (statement attached marked "A") will say that towards the end of July 1944, whilst searching records of the Ministry of Popular Culture regarding "Giovanni SPERNI" he located a white file marked 1-38/39-668 relating to "Rona SPERNI", the contents of which he examined, and which he has agreed conform with the list of documents produced to him by Captain L.V. GALL (list attached marked "B"). The file was kept in safe custody and was handed to Captain Gale on 7th March, 1945.

14. Miss Margaret Primrose KING, a British subject (statement attached marked "B"), personal secretary to Mr. D. GUUDI, will say that, on 6th March 1945, at the request of Captain L.V. GALL, she made a search of index cards at the Ministry of Popular Culture, and thereby succeeded in locating volumes

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13. Mr. Dante GUDDI, American citizen, Allied Forces Headquarters, Psychological Warfare Branch, Unit No. 12, (statement attached-marked "A") will say that towards the end of July 1944, whilst searching records of the Ministry of Popular Culture regarding "Giovanni SPERNI" he located a white file marked 4-38/39-668 relating to "Rosa SPERNI", the contents of which he examined, and which he has agreed conform with the list of documents produced to him by Captain L.V. GALE (list attached-marked "B"). The file was kept in safe custody and was handed to Captain Gale on 7th March, 1945.

14. Miss Margaret Primrose KING, a British subject (statement attached-marked "B"), personal secretary to Mr. D. GUDDI, will say that, on 6th March 1945, at the request of Captain L.V. GALE, she made a search of index cards at the Ministry of Popular Culture, and thereby succeeded in locating Volumes 1 and 2 of an Administrative file relating to "Rosa SPERNI". These files - One blue, marked C.O.(1) and the other green, marked C.O.(2) - she examined and she has agreed that their contents were as described in the list of documents shown to her by Captain GALE (list attached-marked "B"). She handed the files into his custody on 7th March, 1945.

15. Captain Louis Vivian GALE, Headquarters Allied Commission, Security Division, (statement attached-marked "D"), will say that in January 1945 at the Ministry of Popular Culture, Rome, Mr. D. GUDDI produced to him a white file marked "Rosa SPERNI" - "4-38/39-668" - the contents of which Captain GALE examined and of which he prepared a list (copy attached-marked "E"). Subsequently, on 2 March 1945 Volumes 1 and 2 of an Administrative file - one blue marked "C.O.(1)" and the other green marked "C.O.(2)" - were handed to him by Miss M.P. KING, and the contents were added to the aforementioned list.

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He will also say that on the day upon which he arrested John Charles Anthony (or Giovanni) SPENZI, 5th February 1945, "Mrs. SPENZI" was present at the flat - Via Belluno 8 (int. 6), Rome. She was acquainted (in the presence of Capt. R.A. ARCHER, 76 S.I.B. Section, G.M.P. and Lieut. Claude J. DOVA, American officer G-2, R.A.A.C.) with the fact that charges similar to those contemplated against her husband (as indicated in opening paragraphs of this report) were also under consideration in her own case. Both she and her "husband" were properly cautioned at the time that they were not obliged to say anything and that anything said by them might be given in evidence. She replied, "Oh! This will easily be cleared up. We've nothing to fear and we have had a terrible time both from the Germans and Italians".

16. A search of the premises was made, with results as described in Security Division report reference 266.02 of 14th April 1945. So far as "Mrs. SPENZI" is concerned the only relevant papers seized during that search are certain letters written by J.C.A. SPENZI which indicate that no marriage has ever taken place between them and that the woman is undoubtedly a British subject. There is also ample proof from the documents that John SPENZI has retained British nationality.

17. Captain L.V. GALE will also say that in company with Captain R.A. ARCHER and Lieut. C.J. DOVE, he again saw Mrs. SPENZI on 14th February 1945 at Headquarters, Allied Commission. She was again cautioned that she was not under any obligation to say anything, but expressed a wish to make a statement. The statement was committed to writing and after it had been read over to her, and she had been permitted to make certain alterations, she signed the statement.

18. In her statement (copy attached-marked "G") she has given her name as Rhonagh Maureen SPENZI nee ROSE, born on 9 October 1914 at Brighton, Sussex, of British parents. From early childhood, however, she lived with a family in Brighton named HATUP, and although, as far as she knows, there was no legal form of adoption, she used the latter name until she left school, afterwards using her correct name - ROSE.

19. She at first said in her statement that she married in 1937, but when asked for particulars said that, in actual fact, she commenced to co-habit with John Charles Anthony SPENZI in 1937, but that they were not married until about the end of June 1940, when a ceremony was performed by a priest on board the Italian re-patriate ship - S/S "Conte Rosso". She could not remember the actual date but said that she was issued with a marriage certificate, which was, however, later seized by Fascist Police. (There seems little doubt that the story of this marriage is fiction. There is no official record of the marriage; John SPENZI made no mention of it in his statement; Nancy SPENZI, his sister, who travelled on the same boat knew nothing of such a ceremony. It would seem that the man is basing a defence on a claim that he is an Italian, and the woman wishes to make a similar defence. It is felt likely that a search of records at Somerset-House, London, might reveal that one (or both) is married to another person.)

20. The woman has stated that it was due to the persuasion of her "husband's" father who had consulted a Mr. "CHAMBER" or "CALZADAR" of British Foreign Office that they left for Italy in June 1940, after J.C.A. SPENZI had been arrested.

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her husband (an Italian) were properly cautioned consideration in her own case. Both she and her "husband" were properly cautioned at the time that they were not obliged to say anything and that anything said by them might be given in evidence. She replied, "Oh! This will easily be cleared up. We've nothing to fear and we have had a terrible time both from the Germans and Italians".

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19. She at first said in her statement that she married in 1937, but when asked for particulars said that, in actual fact, she commenced to co-habit with John Charles Anthony SPERMI in 1937, but that they were not married until about the end of June 1940, when a ceremony was performed by a priest on board the Italian re-patriate ship - S/S "Conte Rosso". She could not remember the actual date but said that she was issued with a marriage certificate, which was, however, later seized by Fascist Police. (There seems little doubt that the story of this marriage is fiction. There is no official record of the marriage; John SPERMI made no mention of it in his statement; Nancy SPERMI, his sister, who travelled on the same boat knew nothing of such a ceremony. It would seem that the man is basing a defence on a claim that he is an Italian, and the woman wishes to make a similar defence. It is felt likely that a search of records at Somerset-House, London, might reveal that one (or both) is married to another person.)

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20. The woman has stated that it was due to the persuasion of her "husband's" father who had consulted a Mr. "CHANDLER" or "CALCHIER" of British Foreign Office that they left for Italy in June 1940, after J.C.A. SPERMI had obtained an Italian passport. "Mrs. SPERMI" has said that her name and those of their children were added to the passport on board S/S "Conte Rosso", but she did not know by whom.

21. They arrived in Rome late in June 1940 and stayed for about a month at the Hotel SERRAIO. She remembered that whilst there, her husband told her that he had been accosted by two men who had asked him questions about England's coastal defences and to whom he said he had told a "big bluff".

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22. In her statement she went on to say that about a month or so later, she was introduced by her "husband" to Marchese SORABELLO; she learned that he was her husband's employer, and later that her husband was engaged in translating general news and that he proposed to read news over the Radio.

23. In about September 1940, Marchese SORABELLO suggested that she, too, should give talks over the Italian Radio, as a "cover" for his anti-fascist activities to "throw off the scent" people who suspected him, as he was "playing down" Fascist propaganda in English. (This, it seems, is intended to mean that he wished to show his Fascist superiors that he was earnestly seeking English collaborators. He was Head of the English Section of the Inspectorate of Radio and Television and although it seems obviously ludicrous that he could in any way carry out anti-fascist activities, his personal file at the Ministry of Popular Culture has been examined but there is no indication that he was even in anything but extremely good favour and not in any way suspected.)

24. "Mrs. SPERNI" has stated that her broadcasts started in September 1940 and finished in January 1941 during which time she gave 8 or 9 broadcasts in a series entitled, "From Me to You". She gave up broadcasting when she learned that SORABELLO was no longer under suspicion, and because she was disturbed at what people listening in England might think about her, not knowing she was "making" them to cover SORABELLO's anti-fascist activities". (An examination of the manuscripts of the broadcasts will show that they were far from being "played down" by SORABELLO, but, on the contrary, constituted violent propaganda against England).

25. Continuing her statement, she said that after January, 1941, she had nothing whatsoever to do with the Ministry of Popular Culture or any other Italian Government Department. The remainder of her statement conforms substantially to the story of their subsequent movements, internment etc. as told by J.C.A. SPERNI in his statement.

26. It can only be said that this is a clean case of a British woman having betrayed her country by deliberately adhering to the King's enemies and assisting them by engaging in the most insidious propaganda against England. The only thing which can be said in her favour is that she is deeply infatuated with John C.A. SPERNI and that she may have acted largely under his influence. This report should be read in conjunction with the report of 14 April 1945 recommending prosecution of John C.A. SPERNI. It is suggested that consideration be given to the desirability of their being tried together, as the woman's actions seem to have been prompted largely by the man. This is borne out by the fact that it was through his introduction that she became a broadcaster and it is certain that the various applications for payment of fees (which appear among exhibits) were signed by him in the name "Rena SPERNI". They are certainly not man and wife and the evidence given by one in regard to the other would be admissible although it could only be given the usual valuation of the evidence of accomplices.

27. It is pointed out that this woman is in an advanced stage of pregnancy, and expects the birth of a child at about the end of May. She has two small children of school age under her care, and in accordance with A.P.H. instructions has not been arrested but has been told that she must not leave her address without

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23. In about September 1940, Marchese SCIBELLO suggested that she, too, should give talks over the Italian Radio, as a "cover" for his anti-fascist activities to "throw off the scent" people who suspected him, as he was "playing down" Fascist propaganda in English. (This, it seems, is intended to mean that he wished to show his Fascist superiors that he was earnestly seeking English collaborators. He was Head of the English Section of the Inspectorate of Radio and Television and although it seems obviously ludicrous that he could in any way carry out anti-fascist activities, his personal file at the Ministry of Popular Culture has been examined but there is no indication that he was even in anything but extremely good favour and not in any way suspected.)

24. "Mrs. SPENNI" has stated that her broadcasts started in September 1940 and finished in January 1941 during which time she gave 8 or 9 broadcasts in a series entitled, "From Me to You". She gave up broadcasting when she learned that SCIBELLO was no longer under suspicion, and because she was disturbed at what people listening in England might think about her, not knowing she was "making" them to cover SCIBELLO's anti-fascist activities". (An examination of the manuscripts of the broadcasts will show that they were far from being "played down" by SCIBELLO, but, on the contrary, constituted violent propaganda against England).

25. Continuing her statement, she said that after January, 1941, she had nothing whatsoever to do with the Ministry of Popular Culture or any other Italian Government Department. The remainder of her statement conforms substantially to the story of their subsequent movements, internment etc. as told by J.G.A. SPENNI in his statement.

26. It can only be said that this is a clear case of a British woman having betrayed her country by deliberately adhering to the King's enemies and assisting them by engaging in the most insidious propaganda against England. The only thing which can be said in her favour is that she is deeply infatuated with John G.A. SPENNI and that she may have acted largely under his influence. This report should be read in conjunction with the report of 14 April 1945 recommending prosecution of John G.A. SPENNI. It is suggested that consideration be given to the desirability of their being tried together, as the woman's actions seem to have been prompted largely by the man. This is borne out by the fact that it was through his introduction that she became a broadcaster and it is certain that the various applications for payment of fees (which appear among exhibits) were signed by him in the name "Rona SPENNI". They are certainly not man and wife and the evidence given by one in regard to the other would be admissible although it could only be given the usual valuation of the evidence of accomplices.

27. It is pointed out that this woman is in an advanced stage of pregnancy, and expects the birth of a child at about the end of May. She has two small children of school age under her care, and in accordance with A.P.H.I. instructions has not been arrested but has been told that she must not leave her address without authority.

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28. It is suggested that, as the full facts of evidence are given in this report and true copies of original documents are herewith submitted, this report and attachments used as the basis for deciding the question of prosecution - the original documentary exhibits remaining in the meantime in the custody of Captain L. V. Galt.

Louis V. Galt

Louis V. GALT, Captain,
Investigating Officer,
H.Q. Allied Commission
Security Division.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

18th April, 1945.

Statement of Mr. Dante GNUDI, American citizen, Allied Forces Headquarters, Psychological Warfare Branch, Unit No. 12, who says:

Since 23th June, 1944 I have been in charge of the re-organization and re-assembly of the records of the Ministry of Popular Culture, Rome.

Towards the end of July 1944, I received a request from Mr. Harry J. Murphy, Special Agent 426th American C.I.C. Detachment - for a search of the Ministry records to trace any available documents regarding a "Giovanni SPERINI" and during the course of this search I located a file relating to "RONA SPERINI", a white file Ministry of Popular Culture marked 1 - 38/91 - 668, the contents of which I examined and which are in conformity with the list of documents presented to me by Capt. L.V. Gale. Since that time I have kept them under lock and key, no person other than myself and my secretary Miss Margaret Primrose KING having access to them.

I handed this file to Capt. L.V. Gale on
7th March, 1945.

This statement has been read to me and it is true.


Dan Gnudi,
Chief Italian Documents, Italy.

Statement taken down, read over and signature
witnessed by me.


L. V. Gale

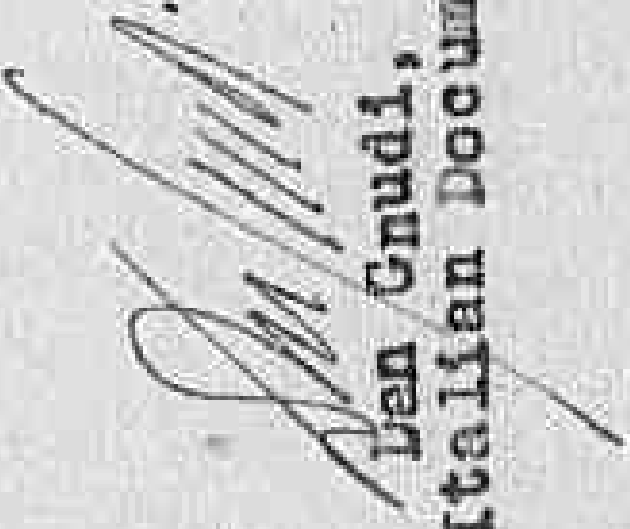
Statement of Mr. Dante CAUDI, American citizen, Allied Forces Headquarters, Psychological Warfare Branch, Unit No. 12, who says:

Since 28th June, 1944 I have been in charge of the re-organization and re-assembly of the records of the Ministry of Popular Culture, Rome.

Towards the end of July 1944, I received a request from Mr. Harry J. Murphy, Special Agent 426th American C.I.C. Detachment - for a search of the Ministry records to trace any available documents regarding a "Giovanni SPERMI" and during the course of this search I located a file relating to "Kona SPERMI", a white file Ministry of Popular Culture marked 1 - 33/91 - 668, the contents of which I examined and which are in conformity with the list of documents presented to me by Capt. L.V. Gale. Since that time I have kept them under lock and key, no person other than myself and my secretary Miss Margaret Primrose KING having access to them.

I handed this file to Capt. L.V. Gale on 7th March, 1945.

This statement has been read to me and it is true.


Dante Caudi,
Chief Italian Documents, Italy.

Statement taken down, read over and signature
witnessed by me.


Louis V. Gale, Capt.
H.Q. Allied Commission,
Security Division.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

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18th April, 1945.

Statement of Miss Margaret Primrose KING, Personal Secretary to Chief of Italian Documents, Allied Force Headquarters, Psychological Warfare Branch, Unit No. 12, who says:-

On the morning of 6th March, 1945 in the absence of Mr. Dante GNUDI, Chief Italian Documents, I searched through index cards at the request of Capt. L.V.Gale, Allied Commission, in an endeavour to trace papers relating to members of the SPERMI family, and located in the administrative card index particulars of volumes 1 & 2 of an administrative file related to "RONA SPERMI". Subsequently on the same day I extracted these volumes from a file room in the Ministry of Popular Culture. One is blue and marked C.O.(1) and the other is green marked C.O.(2). I examined the contents and they agree with the list shown to me by Capt. L.V.Gale, into whose custody I handed the files on the 7th March, 1945 having kept them under lock and key in the interim.

This statement has been read to me and it is true.

Margaret P. King
Margaret P. King.

Statement taken down, read over and signature
witnessed by me.

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Louis V. Gale, Capt.
Allied Commission.

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Statement of Miss Margaret Primrose KING, Personal Secretary to Chief of Italian Documents, Allied Force Headquarters, Psychological Warfare Branch, Unit No. 12, who says:-

On the morning of 6th March, 1945 in the absence of Mr. Dante GNUDI, Chief Italian Documents, I searched through index cards at the request of Capt. L.V. Gale, Allied Commission, in an endeavour to trace papers relating to members of the SPERNI family, and located in the administrative card index particulars of volumes 1 & 2 of an administrative file related to "RONA SPERNI". Subsequently on the same day I extracted these volumes from a file room in the Ministry of Popular Culture. One is blue and marked C.O.(1) and the other is green marked C.O.(2). I examined the contents and they agree with the list shown to me by Capt. L.V. Gale, 1945 whose custody I handed the files on the 7th March, 1945 having kept them under lock and key in the interim.

This statement has been read to me and it is true.

Margaret P. King
Margaret P. King.

Statement taken down, read over and signature
witnessed by me.

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Louis V. Gale, Capt.
H.Q. Allied Commission,
Security Division.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION

C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

14 February 1945

Statement of Mrs. Rhonagh Maureen SPERNI nee ROEB, housewife, residing at
Via Belluno 6 (Flat 6), Rome, who says: -

I have been cautioned by Captain L. V. GALT that I am not obliged to say
anything unless I wish to do so and that anything I may say will be committed
to writing and may be used in evidence. I hereby certify that I fully under-
stand the implication of the said caution.

(Signed) RHONAGH M. ROEB SPERNI

My correct name is Rhonagh Maureen SPERNI nee ROEB. I was born on 9th
October 1914 at Brighton, Sussex, my parents being Andrew ROEB, a mine contrac-
tor, and Mathilda ROEB nee WILLIAMS, both born and bred in Northern Ireland. I
was educated at County Elementary Schools in Brighton and Hove.

I must explain that at the age of nine months I was adopted, by mutual
agreement with my mother (my father having died) by Mr. and Mrs. BATEUP, 6 Robert
Street, Brighton (present address) British subjects by birth and parentage. So
far as I know there was no legal form of adoption carried out, and I have never
used this name (BATEUP) since leaving school.

Throughout my life I have kept in touch regularly with my mother and sisters,
by letter and by visits from them. My mother, at the time when I left England,
was still residing at Cragtown Fort-Stuart, Northern Ireland.

My whole upbringing has been entirely English - I have never visited Ireland
and I have never had any connection whatsoever with Irish associations or organ-
isations of any kind. I have never engaged in any form of political activity.

I started training as a nurse, after leaving school in about 1929, at Brook
Hospital, Shooters Hill Kent, where my sisters had trained before me, but after
a few months I returned to Brighton and obtained employment as a cashier in various
local shops. From 1933 to 1937 when I married, I was cashier at S.S. (Sports
stadium) Brighton, Sussex.

In 1937 I commenced to co-habit with John Charles Anthony SPERNI, but we
were not married by any ceremony until about the end of June, 1940 (I do not
remember the exact date) on board the Italian S/S "Cante Rosso", when a Catholic
priest on board performed the ceremony and I was issued with a form of marriage
certificate. This was removed with other papers in February, 1942, by Fascist
Police who raided my house, then at Viale Carlo 44, Rome.

Sometime during the Summer of 1939, my husband

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Statement of Mrs. Rhonagh Maureen SPERNI nee ROBB, housewife, residing at Via Belluno 3 (Flat 6), Rome, who says: -

I have been cautioned by Captain L. V. GALE that I am not obliged to say anything unless I wish to do so and that anything I may say will be committed to writing and may be used in evidence. I hereby certify that I fully understand the implication of the said caution.

(Signed) RHONAGH M. ROBB SPERNI

My correct name is Rhonagh Maureen SPERNI nee ROBB. I was born on 9th October 1914 at Brighton, Sussex, my parents being Andrew ROBB, a milk contractor, and Mathilda ROBB nee MILLIKEN, both born and bred in Northern Ireland. I was educated at County Elementary Schools in Brighton and Hove.

I must explain that at the age of nine months I was adopted, by mutual agreement with my mother (my father having died) by Mr. and Mrs. BATEUP, 6 Robert Street, Brighton (present address) British subjects by birth and parentage. So far as I know there was no legal form of adoption carried out, and I have never used this name (BATEUP) since leaving school.

Throughout my life I have kept in touch regularly with my mother and sisters, by letter and by visits from them. My mother, at the time when I left England, was still residing at Oraigtown Port-Stuart, Northern Ireland.

My whole upbringing has been entirely English - I have never visited Ireland and I have never had any connection whatsoever with Irish associations or organisations of any kind. I have never engaged in any form of political activity.

I started training as a nurse, after leaving school in about 1929, at Brook Hospital, Shooters Hill Kent, where my sisters had trained before me, but after a few months I returned to Brighton and obtained employment as a cashier in various local shops. From 1933 to 1937 when I married, I was cashier at S.S. (Sports stadium) Brighton, Sussex.

In 1937 I commenced to co-habit with John Charles Anthony SPERNI, but we were not married by any ceremony until about the end of June, 1940 (I do not remember the exact date) on board the Italian S/S "Cante Rosso", when a Catholic priest on board performed the ceremony and I was issued with a form of marriage certificate. This was removed with other papers in February, 1942, by Fascist Police who raided my house, then at Viale Carso 44, Rome.

Sometime during the Summer of 1939, my husband and I, even before the war with Germany commenced, discussed the question of whether it was worth trying to go to Italy to make a living, as his motor car business was finishing. We had in mind the possibility of finding Italian relatives of my husband in the Province of Parma, N. Italy, who might have been able to help him. At that time I was expecting a baby and did not want to go to a foreign country. Therefore, we temporarily abandoned the idea.

In about March, 1940, not long before the baby was born, after some considerable persuasion by his father, Giovanni Celeste Geraldino (generally known as John Charles Gerald) SPERNI, who had apparently been having difficulties with his fellow members of the St. Pancras Borough Council, owing to his Italian origin, my husband asked me again whether I would be willing to go with him to Italy. I was not very keen to go but told my husband that if he was really very keen on going I would go with him.

During the same month, my husband, after several visits to the Italian Consulate in London, was granted an Italian passport, after searching of registers

in Parma, N. Italy, and after signing an "Act of Submission" (To the Italian King); he told me that it was due to his paternal grandparents' having been born in Italy, that he had been able to obtain the passport. I do not know whether the granting of the passport also gave him Italian nationality, as I was not present at any of his visits to the Italian Consulate.

My husband did not say at that time or any other time that the granting of the passport gave him Italian nationality. He has always said that he remained dual British-Italian nationality.

My name was not included in the passport at that time, nor when I left England on 13th June, 1940, but was added to the passport (I do not know by whom) on board the Italian S/S "Conte Rosso". I saw the passport with the addition of my name and the names of our two children, but I was not present when the additions were made. I cannot remember whether the additions were made in the passport before or after the marriage ceremony. My husband told me that the cost of the search fees, cables etc. for issue of his passport in London had cost him twenty pounds.

A short time before we left England, my husband's father, went to the British Foreign Office in London, and interviewed a certain Mr. "CHANDLER" or "CALENDAR", to obtain advice as to the position with regard to his three sons (John Charles Anthony, Hubert and Gerald SPERNI) leaving England for Italy. My husband told me of this and said that his father had been advised that it would be quite in order for them to leave England for Italy.

On 12-13th June, 1940 I, my husband and our two children left London by train, travelling alone, and early the next morning we boarded the S/S "Monarch of Bermuda", where, after three or four days anchored off North Scotland, we were joined by my husband's brothers - Hubert SPERNI and Gerald SPERNI, and the former's wife Margaret Scott SPERNI nee WRAY and their child Elizabeth, also by my husband's sister - Nancy SPERNI. My husband and his two brothers were travelling with Italian passports, whilst Nancy SPERNI had with her no documents to my knowledge. I had no documents but my name was included in Re-impatriation Lists which had been passed by the British Foreign Office.

After about 12 days, the ship left N. Scotland and went to Lisbon where we left the "Monarch of Bermuda" and boarded the Italian ship S/S "Conte Rosso". From there we went on to Messina, Sicily, and then straight on to Naples and Rome, where we arrived on about 2nd July, 1940, afterwards staying for about a month at the Albergo SERRATO.

Whilst we were there nothing of special interest happened, except that my husband mentioned having been approached by two men who had asked him numerous questions about England's defences on the coasts, and to whom he said he had told a big story, a "bluff" as he termed it.

Whilst living at the hotel, my husband told me that through persons he had met on the boats, he had been put into touch with people at the Ministry of Popular Culture, who had offered him work as a translator. At that time we did not go into any details of the work and he did not then say who were the people who personally offered him the work.

Later, about three or four weeks later, I was introduced by my husband to

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my name was not included in the passport (I do not know by England on 13th June, 1940, but was added to the passport with the whom) on board the Italian S/S "Conte Rosso". I saw the passport with the addition of my name and the names of our two children, but I was not present when the additions were made. I cannot remember whether the additions were made in the passport before or after the marriage ceremony. My husband told me that the cost of the search fees, cables etc. for issue of his passport in London had cost him twenty pounds.

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Whilst we were there nothing of special interest happened, except that my husband mentioned having been approached by two men who had asked him numerous questions about England's defences on the coasts, and to whom he said he had told a big story, a "bluff" as he termed it.

Whilst living at the hotel, my husband told me that through persons he had met on the boats, he had been put into touch with people at the Ministry of Popular Culture, who had offered him work as a translator. At that time we did not go into any details of the work and he did not then say who were the people who personally offered him the work.

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Later, about three or four weeks later, I was introduced by my husband to Marchese SABBALLO, who I was informed was the man who had offered my husband the work as a translator. After several further meetings with Marchese SABBALLO, he told me outright that he was a monarchist, a fervent one, and an anti-fascist, and at great length described to us the faults of the Fascist regime and really opened both the eyes of myself and my husband, who had not previously realised the tyranny that Fascism really was.

By that time I learned that my husband was engaged in translating general news and that he proposed to read news over the radio.

In about September 1940, Marchese SABBALLO suggested that I should give talks on the Italian radio, saying that my presence there would be a good cover for his anti-fascist activities, as he felt he was under suspicion and wanted to throw the people who suspected him off the scent. He said that one of his principal

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activities was to "play down" propaganda in English given to him for radio broadcast. I took him to mean that he was making this propaganda less unfavorable to England. I agreed to do so and gave about 8 or 9 broadcasts in English over Rome Radio, which consisted of a series, entitled, "From Me to You".

I have no recollection of the amount which I was paid for these broadcasts. The fees were not paid in a "lump sum" but each broadcast was paid individually through Banca d'Italia, Via Nazionale, or at most three or four broadcasts at a time were paid in this way.

My broadcasts started in September 1940 and finished in January, 1941, being given irregularly. None of the talks I read over the Rome Radio was compiled by me and I do not know who compiled them.

Sometime in January, 1941, I spoke to my husband and told him that I did not like to go on with the broadcasts, because I had not been keen in the first place, but that I had merely wished to do something to repay SORBELLO for his kindness earlier when our baby had been ill. Further I felt that these broadcasts were more or less useless since I understood that the suspicions against SORBELLO had passed away. Also, I was disturbed at what might be thought by people in England, hearing my broadcasts and not knowing that I was making them to aid SORBELLO in "covering" his anti-fascist activities. I may say that I felt sure of SORBELLO's being a genuine anti-fascist because he was the son of an American mother, had been for some years a professor at Yale University, and his expression of views in general.

I went with my husband to see SORBELLO and after I had explained all this he agreed that I could stop giving the broadcasts. Since that time I have had nothing whatsoever to do with the Ministry of Popular Culture or any other department of any Italian Government.

I tried at various times to persuade my husband to give up his work at the Ministry of Popular Culture as working for SORBELLO seemed to me to be very dangerous and we had been plagued a lot by the Fascist Police, by constant interrogations and the detention on one occasion of my husband for several hours, sometime in March 1941. Shortly afterwards he was suspended from broadcasting and was without work for several weeks. Afterwards, he was re-instated at the Ministry of Popular Culture but told me that this was merely for translating in general.

In about July 1941 he was dismissed from this post, but I do not know why. A few weeks afterwards he obtained work with Associated Press in Rome and was with them until America entered the war, after which, by arrangements previously made, he continued this work in the name of "Andi Press" a neutral news agency in Buenos Aires.

He was, however, arrested and interned on 27th February 1942, being sent to a concentration camp at Ariano Irpino, Southern Italy, accused of having anti-fascist sentiments and writing letters of an anti-fascist character, some of which he had written to me when I was in Parma for a couple of months.

In May, 1942, after many applications by me through the Italian Home Office, he was sent to a "Comune Libero" (an internment area) where I was able to join

My broadcasts started in September 1940 and finished in January, 1941, being given irregularly. None of the talks I read over the Rome Radio was compiled by me and I do not know who compiled them.

Sometime in January, 1941, I spoke to my husband and told him that I did not like to go on with the broadcasts, because I had not been keen in the first place, but that I had merely wished to do something to repay SERBELLO for his kindness earlier when our baby had been ill. Further I felt that these broadcasts were more or less useless since I understood that the suspicions against SERBELLO had passed away. Also, I was disturbed at what might be thought by people in England, hearing my broadcasts and not knowing that I was making them to aid SERBELLO in "covering" his anti-fascist activities. I may say that I felt sure of SERBELLO's being a genuine anti-fascist because he was the son of an American mother, had been for some years a professor at Yale University, and his expression of views in general.

I went with my husband to see SERBELLO and after I had explained all this he agreed that I could stop giving the broadcasts. Since that time I have had nothing whatsoever to do with the Ministry of Popular Culture or any other department of any Italian Government.

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In about July 1941 he was dismissed from this post, but I do not know why. A few weeks afterwards he obtained work with Associated Press in Rome and was with them until America entered the war, after which, by arrangements previously made, he continued this work in the name of "Ardi Press" a neutral news agency in Buenos Aires.

He was, however, arrested and interned on 27th February 1942, being sent to a concentration camp at Ariano Irpino, Southern Italy, accused of having anti-fascist sentiments and writing letters of an anti-fascist character, some of which he had written to me when I was in Parma for a couple of months.

In May, 1942, after many applications by me through the Italian Home Office, he was sent to a "Comune Libero" (an internment area) where I was able to join him shortly afterwards. That was at S. Angelo in Vado, Pesaro Province. After about 13 months there we were transferred to a similar area - CANTILARO - on account of my husband's anti-fascist sentiments and connections, and reprisals which were tried by Fascists.

We received a telegram in August, 1943, just after Mussolini's fall, from the Italian Home Office, saying that my husband's release had been authorized. After two or three attempts by my husband and myself to find accommodation in Rome - two visits there by him and one by me in his company - getting no success we finally, in the beginning of October, 1943, after the Armistice brought the children from CANTILARO to ROMA, with the intention of making our way south to Naples. The German occupation of Rome and south of Rome, however, made this impossible.

From that time until the Allied Occupation of Rome, we lived on an allowance of 2,000 lire per month from a Vatican Refugee Fund paid through the Swiss Embassy,

Also, we obtained money through the sale of household effects, jewelry, etc.

In the meantime, my husband got into touch with Irish priests, who had been helping escaped prisoners-of-war and started to help in this work, bringing some of the escaped prisoners (Donald LE SEUR, African - Private Frank SAMPSTEAD, British) to our house - Via Euna 39, Flat 19, Rome. Later, in about February, 1944, we felt that our house was being watched and therefore moved clandestinely to our present address Via Belluno 8, Flat 6, Rome.

On 19th April 1944, at about 10:30 PM this flat was raided by German S.S. who found two escaped prisoners there (L/Cpl. Leslie MANDY, of Ispango Beach, Natal, S. Africa and Private Nicholas REMANDEZ, of U. S. Army). As a result, my husband was arrested and I subsequently was allowed to see him once at Via Tasso, Rome. Later, he was sent to Regina Coeli Gaol and through a contact in the prison (Captain Giovanni SOLINAS) I learned that my husband had been sentenced to death by a German Military Tribunal, but that this had later been commuted to 15 years in a German Military Prison.

I visited my husband once in Regina Coeli, pretending to be the sister of Captain SOLINAS to gain entry, a few days before the Allied Occupation of Rome. The next time I saw him was 5-6th June, 1944 after he had managed to escape and where he was in hiding - the house of a friend - Captain Arturo FERRI - Piazza Bologna 6, Rome. On about 7th June 1944, we went home together to Via Belluno 8, Flat 6.

Subsequent to Allied Occupation of Rome, my husband worked for Psychological Warfare Branch, for about a month, but received no pay. This was at the invitation of Captain PASSAGLIA, an American Officer at P.W.B. After that he did some welfare work for 450 Squadron R.A.A.F. but this also was without payment. We have been living up to date, on our resources and on the sale of our effects.

This statement has been read to me by Captain L. V. GALE, Security Division, Allied Commission, in the presence of Captain R. A. ARCHER and Lieutenant BOWE, and it is a true statement.

/s/ RICHARD M. ROSE STEFANI

Statement read over by me and signature witnessed by me in presence of Captain R. A. ARCHER, 76 S.I.B Section C.M.P. and Lieutenant C. J. BOWE, U.S. Army, G-2, R.A.A.C. Statement taken down by me in their presence.

/s/ LUIS V. GALE, Captain.

Countersigned: -

R. A. ARCHER, Capt, D.A.P.M.

CLAUDE J. BOWE, 1st Lt, G-2, R.A.A.C.

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HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

April 1945

STATEMENT of Captain Louis Vivian GALE, Investigating Officer, Headquarters Allied Commission, Security Division, who says :-

In January, 1945, at the Ministry of Popular Culture, Rome, occupied by a Unit of Psychological Warfare Branch, Mr. Dante GRUDI, American citizen, Chief of Italian documents, A.P.H.Q., P.M.B. Unit No. 12, handed to me a white file, marked "Roma SPERMI" - "1-38/39-668" - the contents of which I examined and of which I prepared a list, in accordance with the List of Documents submitted with this statement.

On 7th March, 1945, two volumes of an Administration File - a blue one, marked "C.O. (1)" - and a green one, marked "C.O. (2)" were handed to me by Miss Margaret P. KING, Personal Secretary to Mr. D. GRUDI.

Between the above dates, that is on 5th February, 1945, I went to Flat 6, Via Belluno 8, Rome, where I arrested John Charles Anthony SPERMI, at 1530 hours. Present at the time was a woman who I was informed by the man was his wife "Mrs. Rhonagh Maureen SPERMI". I introduced myself and the officers who accompanied me (Captain R.A. ARCHER, British, D.A.P.M. 76 Section S.I.B. and Lt. Claude J. BOVE, American, G-2, R.A.A.C.) to them and told John SPERMI that I was going to take him into custody on charges that he, as a British subject (1) had adhered to the King's enemies (2) had done acts with intent to assist the enemy, contrary to the Treason Acts and Regulation 2A, Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, respectively.

I informed the woman that similar charges were also contemplated against her but that for the time being she was not going to be arrested. I cautioned both of them that they were not obliged to say anything unless they wished to do so and that anything said by them might be used in evidence. The woman replied, "Oh! This will easily be cleared up. We've nothing to fear and we have had a terrible time both from the Germans and Italians".

I conducted a search of the premises and a quantity of documents was seized as evidence regarding the man. The only papers referring to the woman were letters which indicated that she was not his legal wife and that she was undoubtedly a British subject.

On 14th February 1945, at Headquarters, Allied Commission, in company with Captain R.A. ARCHER and Lieut. C.J. BOVE, I again saw "Mrs. SPERMI" and she was further cautioned that she was not under any obligation to say anything. She expressed a wish to make a full statement. This was committed to writing and was signed by her after it had been read over to her and she had been permitted to make certain alterations.

This statement, prepared and read over by me, is a true statement.

00044

In January, 1945, at the Ministry of Popular Culture, Rome, occupied by a Unit of Psychological Warfare Branch, Mr. Dante GRUDI, American citizen, Chief of Italian documents, A.F.H.Q., P.W.B. Unit No. 12, handed to me a white file, marked "Rona SPERNI" - "1-38/39-668" - the contents of which I examined and of which I prepared a list, in accordance with the List of Documents submitted with this statement.

On 7th March, 1945, two volumes of an Administration File - a blue one, marked "C.O.(1)" - and a green one, marked "C.O.(2)" were handed to me by Miss Margaret P. KING, Personal Secretary to Mr. D. GRUDI.

Between the above dates, that is on 5th February, 1945, I went to Flat 6, Via Belluno 8, Rome, where I arrested John Charles Anthony SPERNI, at 1530 hours. Present at the time was a woman who I was informed by the man was his wife "Mrs. Rhonagh Maureen SPERNI". I introduced myself and the officers who accompanied me (Captain R.A. ARDIER, British, D.A.P.M. 76 Section S.I.B. and Lt. Claude J. BOVE, American, G-2, R.A.A.G.) to them and told John SPERNI that I was going to take him into custody on charges that he, as a British subject (1) had adhered to the King's enemies (2) had done acts with intent to assist the enemy, contrary to the Treason Acts and Regulation 2A, Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, respectively.

I informed the woman that similar charges were also contemplated against her but that for the time being she was not going to be arrested. I cautioned both of them that they were not obliged to say anything unless they wished to do so and that anything said by them might be used in evidence. The woman replied, "Oh! This will easily be cleared up. We've nothing to fear and we have had a terrible time both from the Germans and Italians".

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This statement, prepared and read over by me, is a true statement.

LWG/bd

Louis V. Gale

Louis V. Gale, Captain,
Investigating Officer,
H.Q. Allied Commission,
Security Division

0004

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Found during search of

MINISTRY OF POPULAR CULTURE, ROMA

relative to "Roma SPENNI"

Blue File - marked "C.C. - 1" Contents :-

1. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 400) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 604 lire to "Roma SPENNI" for radio broadcasts.
(b) Enclosed in above are applications signed "Roma SPENNI" for payment of 224 lire in respect of each of three broadcasts - Nos 12 - 13 - 14 in series "From Me to You", transmitted on 19/11/40, 26/11/40 and 10/12/40.
2. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 281) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 400 lire to "Roma SPENNI" for radio broadcasts.
(b) Enclosed in above are applications signed "Roma SPENNI" for payment of each of two broadcasts - No. 10 - 11 in series "From Me to You" transmitted 5/11/40 and 12/11/40.
3. (a) Form of authority (No. 3768) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 400 lire to "Roma SPENNI" for radio broadcasts.
(b) Attached to above are applications signed "Roma SPENNI" for payment of 224 lire in respect of each of two broadcasts - Nos 7 - 8 in series "From Me to You" transmitted 15/10/40 and 22/10/40.
4. (a) Form of authority (No. 3678) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 199 lire to "Roma SPENNI" for one broadcast.
(b) Attached to above is an application signed "Roma SPENNI" for payment of 220 lire in respect of a broadcast - No. 6 in series "From Me to You", transmitted 8/10/40. 00043
5. (a) Form of authority (No. 3664) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 200 lire to "Roma SPENNI" for a broadcast.
(b) Attached to above is an application signed "Roma SPENNI" for payment of 220 lire for a broadcast - No. 5 in series "From Me to You", transmitted 1/10/40.
6. (a) Form of authority (No. 3329) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 190 lire to "Roma SPENNI" for two broadcasts.

"E"

(13)

Blue File - marked "C.O. - 1" Contents :-

1. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 450) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 604 lire to "ROMA SPERMI" for radio broadcasts.
- (b) Enclosed in above are applications signed "ROMA SPERMI" for payment of 224 lire in respect of each of three broadcasts - No. 12 - 13 - 14 in series "From Me to You", transmitted on 19/11/40, 26/11/40 and 10/12/40.
2. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 231) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 400 lire to "ROMA SPERMI" for radio broadcasts.
- (b) Enclosed in above are applications signed "ROMA SPERMI" for payment of each of two broadcasts - No. 10 - 11 in series "From Me to You" transmitted 5/11/40 and 12/11/40.
3. (a) Form of authority (No. 3763) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 400 lire to "ROMA SPERMI" for radio broadcasts.
- (b) Attached to above are applications signed "ROMA SPERMI" for payment of 224 lire in respect of each of two broadcasts - No. 7 - 8 in series "From Me to You" transmitted 15/10/40 and 22/10/40.
4. (a) Form of authority (No. 3678) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 199 lire to "ROMA SPERMI" for one broadcast.
- (b) Attached to above is an application signed "ROMA SPERMI" for payment of 220 lire in respect of a broadcast - No. 6 in series "From Me to You", transmitted 8/10/40.
5. (a) Form of authority (No. 3684) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 220 lire to "ROMA SPERMI" for a broadcast.
- (b) Attached to above is an application signed "ROMA SPERMI" for payment of 220 lire for a broadcast - No. 5 in series "From Me to You", transmitted 1/10/40.
6. (a) Form of authority (No. 3329) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 399 lire to "ROMA SPERMI" for two broadcasts.
- (b) Attached to above are applications signed "ROMA SPERMI" for payment of 220 lire in respect of each of two broadcasts - No. 2 and 3 of series "From Me to You" transmitted 10/9/40 and 17/9/40.
7. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 3245) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 199 lire to "ROMA SPERMI" for a broadcast.
- (b) Enclosed in above is an application signed "ROMA SPERMI" for payment of 220 lire for broadcast - No. 1 in series "From Me to You" transmitted 3/9/40.

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- 2 -

8. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 3078) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 85 lire to "Roma SPENMI" for taking part in a radio sketch.
 (b) Enclosed in same is an application signed "Roma SPENMI" for payment of 94 lire for collaboration in a radio sketch in August 1940.

Green File - marked "C.O. - 2".

9. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 2025) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 400 lire for radio broadcasts.
 (b) Enclosed in above are applications signed "Roma SPENMI" for payment of 224 lire for each of two broadcasts - Nos 4 and 5 in series "From Me to You", transmitted 24/9/40 and 29/10/40.

White File - marked "1 - 38/91 - 668".

10. Copy of application, signed "Roma SPENMI", for payment of 94 lire for collaboration in a radio sketch during August 1940.
11. Copy of application, signed "Roma SPENMI", for payment of 220 lire for a broadcast on 3/9/40 - No. 1 of the series "From Me to You".
12. Copy of application, signed "Roma SPENMI", for payment of 220 lire for broadcast on 10/9/40 - No. 2 of series "From Me to You". Manuscript of text of broadcast in English attached to above.
13. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of the broadcast on 17/9/40 - No. 3 of series "From Me to You".
14. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of broadcast on 24/9/40 - No. 4 of series "From Me to You".
15. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of broadcast on 1/10/40 - No. 5 of series "From Me to You".
16. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of broadcast on 8/10/40 - No. 6 of series "From Me to You".
17. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 15/10/40 - No. 7 of series "From Me to You".
18. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 22/10/40 - No. 8 of series "From Me to You".

00042

9. (a) Folded form of authority (No. 2025) for payment by Ministry Accounts Dept. of 400 lire for radio broadcasts.
 (b) Enclosed in above are applications signed "Roma SPESHI" for payment of 224 lire for each of two broadcasts - Nos 4 and 9 in series "From Me to You", transmitted 24/3/40 and 29/10/40.

White File - marked "1 - 38/91 - 662"

10. Copy of application, signed "Roma SPESHI", for payment of 94 lire for collaboration in a radio sketch during August 1940.
11. Copy of application, signed "Roma SPESHI", for payment of 220 lire for a broadcast on 3/9/40 - No. 1 of the series "From Me to You".
12. Copy of application, signed "Roma SPESHI", for payment of 220 lire for broadcast on 10/9/40 - No. 2 of series "From Me to You". Manuscript of text of broadcast in English attached to above.
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14. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of broadcast on 24/3/40 - No. 4 of series "From Me to You".
15. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of broadcast on 1/10/40 - No. 5 of series "From Me to You".
16. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of broadcast on 8/10/40 - No. 6 of series "From Me to You".
17. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 15/10/40 - No. 7 of series "From Me to You".
18. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 22/10/40 - No. 8 of series "From Me to You".
19. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 29/10/40 - No. 9 of series "From Me to You".
20. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 5/11/40 - No. 10 of series "From Me to You".
21. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 12/11/40 - No. 11 of series "From Me to You". (This manuscript shows that the broadcast was written and read by her).

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- 3 -

22. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of a broadcast on 19/11/40 - No. 12 of series "From Me to You".
23. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached in respect of broadcast on 26/11/40 - No. 13 of series "From Me to You".
24. Copy of application, as above, with manuscript of text attached, in respect of broadcast on 10/12/40 - No. 14 of series "From Me to You".

Louis V. Gall

Louis V. Gall, Captain
Investigating Officer,
H.Q. Allied Commission,
Security Division.

LVC/bd

17000

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

24 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 2 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rona SPERNI" on 10 September 1940 for L'Ispektorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

This is Italy calling, we have great pleasure this evening in presenting Mrs Villa who will give you the second of her talks in the series "From Me to You". Mrs Villa is an English woman married to an Italian. She, her husband and two children are now living in Rome. Mrs Villa will endeavour to give you a picture of Italian domestic life. Knowing both England and Italy very well she is well qualified to do this.

That was Mrs Villa in the second of her talks entitled "From Me to You". Mrs Villa is the English wife of an Italian living in Rome. Her next talk will be broadcast in one week's time, next Tuesday, at 10.15 p.m. C.E.T. corresponding to B.S.T. You will be able to pick it up on the following wave lengths; 41 31 25 19 16 metres in the S.W.B.

TALK NO 2 IN THE SERIES "FROM ME TO YOU" GIVEN BY SIGNORA SPERNI.

During my first talk to you I covered a good deal of the ground in describing Italian domestic life; I believe I finished by talking you about vegetables and fruit.

This time I should like to start by giving you some idea of some of the groceries that are sold in Italy. Grocery shops here differ a great deal from those in England. We do not have the general stores ~~xxxx~~ here that can be found in England. Here there are no shops that sell all kinds of groceries, these are divided up amongst various shops which specialise in certain articles. Butter is bought only from dairies and it is very good and cheap. As I ~~xxxxxx~~ mentioned before it is not rationed and is ~~xx~~ always fresh being entirely ~~xxxxxx~~ home produced. It now costs about 10d per pound which is slightly more than it cost before the war started. Milk cost about 2¹/₂ a pint and is the most rich and creamy milk I have ever had. The Italians have the custom of charging 3d on each milk bottle which is returnable, unlike England where there is no charge. Eggs are exceptionally cheap being only 1¹/₂ each at this time of the year. At Easter time fresh new laid eggs are as cheap as 1d each. ~~xxxxxxxx~~ There are no preserved eggs sold at all in Italy and believe me one does notice

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The Italians have a very good system of collecting eggs from the farms which avoids any delay in reaching the consumer. They are laid sold and gathered all in one day here. This is partly because there is special district which produces eggs. There are chicken farms practically everywhere so that there is no delay due to transport. Cheese is very so cheap; Gorgonzola, Gruyere and the famous Italian cream cheeses cost as little as eightpence a pound. We do ~~xxxx~~ not have cheddar cheese or cheshire cheese of course but with all due respect to English cheeses I must admit that the cheese sold here are far superior and richer in vitamins.

When dealing with other groceries we have the cooked meat shops which sell hams both cooked and smoked. Have any of you tasted the famous Parma

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Ham? I used to be able to buy it in London but the cost was prohibitive. It was about 6/- per pound, here it costs 2/3 a pound. Boiled ham on the bone which corresponds to York Ham, but which is no quite so tasty, is sold at 2/- a pound. After all there is no ham in the world like York Ham. There are of course the numerous meat sausages for which Italy is famous. Perhaps the best known of these in England is Bologna sausage. In addition there is salami which is sold in no less than twenty varieties, and so on. Pressed beef and other tinned meats are hardly ever sold here and this may be due the fact that there is an abundance of fresh meat, which is never really dear. Another strange thing I noticed was that butchers sell very little raw pork, it is nearly always sold in the form of ham or the sausages I have just mentioned. The rice sold in the Grocers is very good and clean and is all home grown. The other forms of cereals such as Semolina and so on are sold in the same form as they are in England.

Now I think I have talked enough about food, and in describing it do not want to give you the impression that life in Italy is all honey because this is not so. Life in Italy has always been a little hard on account of certain raw materials, and it is to gain access to these raw materials, which should be shared equally by all mankind and not controlled by the Plutocrats xxxxxxxxxxxx of certain privileged nations, that Italy is fighting this war. The lack of raw materials however does not affect us Housewives whose first concern is to be able to feed our children and our husbands so that they shall not be deprived in any way. I think you will all agree with me that this is the biggest problem a woman has to face. Italy is engaged in a very hard struggle and the population are aware of this but it has had very little or no effect on the population. Petrol has been severely restricted and there is no pleasure motoring allowed during the war. I do notice that gas for domestic purposes is not used so much as in London. However we have an abundance of electricity which is supplied to every home large or small. In fact in some of the isolated mountain villages where people still rely on wells for their water supply we find that the little cottages have electric light and electric cookers. If it were not for the news one would hardly know that there was a war on. We have hardly ever been disturbed by air raids and there are none of the other war signs such as we had in England. None of the country roads are barricaded and there are no forbidden areas. There are no armed troops patrolling the streets with machine guns such as we had in London at the entrance to Black Wall Tunnel and other points. Even British people are allowed to go at large just where they please. I have met several of them in Rome and they have nothing but the greatest respect for the kind way in which they have been treated by the authorities.

But my talk is not political so I will leave these questions alone.

What I do very much admire in Italy is the Ante-Natal and Post-Natal service. This service is absolutely free in every way and centres can be found in every town and borough throughout the country. There are certain laws in Italy which favour these centres which have children. For instance

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What I do very much admire in Italy is the Auto-Ratal and Post-Ratal service. This service is absolutely free in every way and centres can be found in every town and Borough throughout the country. There are certain laws in Italy which favour those couples which have children. For instance a man with a certain number of children does not pay income tax. He also gets many other privileges which a single man would not be able to get. On the other hand if a couple who are xxxxx engaged wish to get married but they have not or cannot save up the necessary money, they can borrow enough money from the state to set up a home on. They can pay this amount off over a very long period of time but should they be blessed with children then the amount is reduced, so much for the first child, another amount for the second child and so on. This is a very great concession because it avoids all those years of waiting before marriage which is so often the case in England and certain other countries. It also means that one does not have to live in fear of having children, because if they come, well xxxxx you do not have to scrape and scrounge to look after them. If a mother wishes to go out to work she has no trouble in getting her children looked after. There are numerous Kindergarten schools and Creches which are run by the Nuns. Those people who can afford to pay do so but those who are not so well off put their children there free of charge. The State provides for the maintenance and the Nuns give their services free. To sum up everything is done here to help those

people who have children and this only right and proper. There are many holiday camps run by the Government where mothers can go for a rest every year for as long as one, two or three weeks. There are State maintained schools for instructing mothers in hygiene and cookery. You would be surprised at the large attendance these schools have. None of these services have been curtailed in any way by the war. What is perhaps the most important thing is there has been no compulsory evacuation. We have had none of those heartrending sights we had in London when the young children were separated from their mothers.

I think evacuation is one of the cruelest things to inflict on women and children. I should hate to feel that my children had been taken away from me and were miles away where I could not get to them. I have only pity for you English Mother who have had to suffer this. Whenever I have told my Italian friends they have been absolutely horrified and would not believe that people had submitted themselves to this. Women in Italy have suffered in so far that their sons have been called up, but this is different these fellows are already grown up and men.

What I think is the most striking thing about Italy in War Time is that one never sees shops empty or closed down. I remember walking along xxx Shaftsbury Avenue just after the war started. Practically four out of every five shops were empty or were being emptied. I thought to myself then what a pity, after years of work building up a business these poor people have to stand by and see it closed down in a few weeks. We have had none of this here in fact there appears to be a lack of sufficient business premises in Rome.

In Rome there are no gown shops such as can be found in the West End of London but this is because everybody here has the custom of having their clothes made individually. I have found this to be a very good system and very cheap. One can get a dress made up to any style for about 10/- and it is really beautifully tailored. The Italian dress makers work wonderfully in fact. In one of my later talks I will describe the fashions here and so on. The idea of having ones clothes made to suit one's figure and style is very good and as a result the first thing one notices about women, when arriving in Italy, is their individual style. There seems to be no current fashion as we get in London except in shoes and these are really excellent in every way. Now coming back to the home I should like to tell you something about the blocks of flats that are going up all over the country. These flats are state aided and can be rented very cheap. The rents in fact seem ridiculously cheap after London and other places I have lived in, in England. The kitchens are perhaps the best features of these flats; they are all tiled round the walls and have Terrazo floor which are similar to the tiled floors we have in England and only much nicer. When one wants to clean out the kitchen all one has to do is to scrub the walls down and wash the floor with running water and let it run into the drain which takes it away. The drains are provided in the floor for this purpose. In fact all the floors of the flats are in Terrazo and women here do not wash them with our method they scrub the floors with water and scrub them with deck brooms. This saves a lot of back aching and appears to be just as efficient as getting down on your knees. In addition the blocks of flats are almost all equipped with lifts, and the flats are on the upper floors and are raised higher than the lower floors. This is because the upper flats are

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Now I can see that I have very little time to go and that I shall have to bring this talk to a close. In my next talk I hope to describe the average day of an Italian woman. I shall explain to you how she goes about her problem as compared with English methods.

Now as I said before I greatly welcomed the opportunity the Italian Broadcasting company gave me of speaking to English women and I do hope you have received this talk well.

So good bye every body until next time, Good bye.

(19)

00037

A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bove
Claude J. Bove,
1st Lt. F.A.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
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PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

25 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 3 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rona SPERRI" on 17 September 1940 for L'Ispettorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Maj. Scifello

Signora Sperrì 17 Settembre 1940

La terza nella serie di conversazioni dal titolo "From Me to You"

Good evening everybody. In this talk, as I promised last week, I am going to try to give you a picture of the average day of a housewife in Rome. For identification purposes we shall call her Mrs. Cinelli. The lady I am going to speak to you about has three children. The eldest is six years old, the second three years old, and the baby is six months old.

Her husband is an employee of one of the large public service companies here in Rome. His salary is about equivalent to that of a bus conductor in London. Mrs. Cinelli lives on the outskirts of the city in a four roomed flat for which she pays two pounds a month. Her flat is one of a large block of Co-operative or state aided apartments. It comprises two living rooms, two bedrooms, a kitchen and a bathroom. Her flat is on the third floor.

Her first duty of the day is to prepare coffee, rolls, and butter and jam for the family. She does not have to prepare a large breakfast because it is not the custom in Italy to eat a big meal in the morning. Her husband goes off to work about eight o'clock and then her days work begins.

The summer holidays are not over yet so that the children do not have to be made ready for school, so that Mrs. Cinelli is free to go to the market early. Before going out to do her shopping she decides what she will buy for the day's meals. What shall it be? Steak, veal cutlets or lamb chops? She remembers that she made a veal stew yesterday so she decides to have steak for lunch. Now what shall she make for the evening meal? She makes up her mind on leg of beef broth as this is very nourishing for the children. Having decided what meat she will buy she goes to the market where she will decide on the vegetables later. She hasn't very far to go to the market as there are plenty of large covered markets in Italy in all towns. She does not have to go to one market for one thing and to another for something else in order to save money because she knows that all food stuffs are strictly controlled in Italy and that no profiteering is allowed. In the market she buys one pound of Rump steak for which she pays a shilling. She also buys a

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On the way to the Gardens she may stop to buy the children some ice cream. As you know ice cream originated in Italy and the ice cream sold here is made entirely from pure milk and cream unlike that sold in England by the larger

concerns such as Walls Lyons and Eldorado, which is made from either nut oils or pork fat mixed with some flavouring matter and colour. When ice cream is made from milk and cream it is very nutritious and has a lot of food value.

In the Villa Borghese there are many beautiful lawns which the children can play on and they have not been cut up as the lawns in England have. There are none of these ugly trenches in Italy that can be seen in London and which have absolutely ruined the beauty of Hyde Park and so on. Life in Rome and Italy in General is much the same as it was before the War except for the blackout. All the street lights are lit at night but of course they are painted blue so that the light is very much like twilight.

Now coming back to the lady we have been talking about she takes the children home about half five so as to start preparing the evening meal. She takes the vegetables out of the broth which she had put on to simmer before going out and strains them through a fine sieve so that only the nutritious part of them goes into the stew. This is the Italian custom and it leaves the soup wonderful and clear. Into the soup she also squeezes about a pound of cooking tomatoes through the sieve. Then she adds three or four rosemary leaves and a bay leaf or two. These give the soup a wonderful flavour. When her husband comes home all she has to do is to put some small macaroni and boil it for ten minutes. She does not put potatoes in the broth but serves these cold with a dressing made from olive oil, lemon juice a little sugar and some mustard. She adds some tomato to this and it makes a really tasty salad. Have you ever tried this type of salad I think you will be very surprised how nice it is. It also makes plain vegetables tasty for the children. I suppose you as well as I have found that children very often will not eat potatoes because they are unappetising when served just boiled.

Now that she has all the ingredients necessary for the main part of the meal she has to think about a sweet. She remembers that she has a lot of washing to do so she thinks she will give the family fresh fruit and save herself time. She buys a pound of muscat grapes for which she pays two pence and also two pounds of eating apples which cost two pence.

On her way home she remembers that she has run out of wine so she goes to the wine cellars and buys a bottle of wine for which she pays three pence halfpenny. She knows that she is being extravagant and that she can get quite good wine for as little as two pence a bottle but she thinks her husband will appreciate the better wine.

Mrs Cimelli prepares her steak in the following manner. She takes a deep frying pan into which she pours about three tablespoons of olive oil. Into this when it has been heated to a high temperature she puts two or three sections of garlic which have been cut into small pieces. When the garlic has been cooked for about three minutes it goes golden brown, then she takes it out. In this way the flavour remains in the oil but there is no smell which is usually equated with garlic. She puts the steak and some dried mushrooms into the pan and fries it slowly, adding a little tomato. She cooks the steak for about ten minutes or until it is properly cooked and then

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When lunch is over she starts on her washing which she has previously put to soak in a bath full of water, without any soap as this is not necessary on account of the very soft water which loosens all the dirt. She used olive oil soap and just plain water she rinses the clothes through in cold water as the olive oil soap does not leave clothes hard. When her washing is done she goes to the drying ground xxxxx which is provided in all blocks of flats and hangs her clothes in the sun to bleach and dry. There is a law in Italy which forbids people from hanging clothes up at the windows as this is considered unsightly. Any infringement of this law is punishable by fine. Mrs. Cimelli then prepares to take her children to the Villa Borghese Gardens

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or the Janiculum Park for the afternoon seeing that she has finished her work.

She takes a bus to the Villa Borghese and pays the fixed fare which is 2d. for any length of journey. This is a very good way in fixing time and taxi bus fares because it favours the workmen who have to travel long distances in going to and from work, while people who use the buses and trams for short journeys on pleasure pay more pro rata. This is another example of the way in which the working classes are looked after and protected in Italy, as much as possible. In England in contrast the further one lives from ones work the greater is the fare.

When the dinner is over and she has cleared up and put the children to bed she and her husband go out for a stroll. They will most likely go into a bar to have a drink or sit out in the open and take it. There is another difference between Italy and England which I should like to talk to you about and this is in respect of the licensing laws. In Italy there are no public houses in the sense of the word but instead there are literally hundreds of beautiful equi ped bars which can be found in all parts of the country. These bars sell all kinds of drinks and one can buy alcoholic drinks at any hour of the day. This custom seems to work very well in Italy because one does not see the crowds of drunks that one sees in London after the public houses close. In fact I was surprised at the great orderliness of the people in general.

When Mrs Cinelli and her husband go home she most likely prepares a snack which they take with a glass of wine before going to bed.

When Mrs Cinelli works out the expenses of the day she finds that she has spent a little more than she intended to. Her expenses for the meals for the day have worked out at 3/6. She remembers however that she still has some wine left and some of the vegetables which will do for another time.

Now in giving you this review of the life of the average woman in Rome I hope I have been able to show you that the average person in Italy eats really well when compared to the working man in England. Especially in war time. For instance very few British families can afford to have wine with their meals and in fact right now they cannot for the most part afford beer owing to the increase in taxation. I know for a fact that much simpler and plainer food than this could not be bought for the same money in England. As I said before the most essential things in life are good food, a comfortable place to live in and freedom from irritating restrictions such as are placed on the people in England. An Italian would feel grossly insulted if a law were passed forbidding him from having a drink whenever he wanted it. He feels that he can be relieved upon and I think this is quite right. Maybe if there were no silly restrictions on drinking hours in England there would be far less cases of drunkenness than there are. Soberness is no so much a question of laws as of education.

I see that my time is nearly up and that I will soon have to say good bye. Now I do hope that third talk of mine has been interesting to you and I do hope hope you will listen in to me next week as I shall try to give you another

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I see that my time is nearly up and that I will soon have to say good bye. Now I do hope that third talk of mine has been interesting to you and I do hope you will listen in to me next week as I shall try to give you another aspect of life in Italy during the war. Before I close however I should like express my deep sympathy for those of you who have to leave your beds at night to go the air raid shelters. It must be terrible for those women with children. We have never experienced this here in Italy but I can imagine what it must be like. All because of a senseless war which none of you benefits from or wants to see continued.

Every woman I speak to in Italy has nothing but sympathy for the English women who are made to suffer by their Government for the vested interests of the upper classes. After all it is always the poor working classes that have to bear the brunt of the war and when it finishes they find they have gained nothing out of it. Well everybody my time is up so good bye untill next time; good bye.

A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bone
Claude J. Bone, 1st Lt. P.A.

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13 April 1945

Copy of radio conversation in English, entitled "From Me To You" broadcast by "Sigla. Roma SPYRIA" on 24 September 1940, for the Ispettorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome. (Number 4 in a series).

4 nella serie dal titolo "From Me To You" per l'Inghilterra 24/9/40.

Good evening everybody,
talk

ante-natal clinics

In this week's I'd like to give you all some idea of the ante-natal and child welfare service that is provided by the Italian Government. Before I start to describe it to you I should like to give one or two explanations. In Italy the family is regarded as the greatest asset of the state. That is to say the Italian Government realises that the primary wealth of a nation is in its population. It is obvious that under modern conditions in all countries there has been a great tendency on the part of the poorer classes to avoid having children. The reasons for this are to be found in the lack of state aid and finance generally. The Italian government has long decided that the welfare of the children of the nation and above all the mothers is of primary importance. So it was decided that every mother should have the best possible attention during pregnancy and after it.

As in other countries and especially in England there are many women who work. Now in Italy if one of these women becomes pregnant she does not have to leave her job in fact her employer is bound to give her a month's holiday with pay during the last month of pregnancy. After she has had her child the employer must also provide hours of rest so that the mother can nurse her child. This is in great contrast to England where pregnancy means the immediate loss of one's job and other hardships. I know of a case where a woman was driven to desperation because she was told by her doctor to expect a baby. She was so afraid of losing her job that she caused great harm to herself in trying to stop her pregnancy. The wonderful Fascist ante-natal and child welfare clinics that can be found all over Italy put the English attempt at providing this sort of service to shame. In Italy there are none of the petty restrictions and inquisitions that you have in England. The most wonderful thing about this however is that this service is functioning just as well now as it did in peace time. When I was in London a few months ago, a friend of mine who wanted to attend a maternity clinic was turned away from practically every one of them and was given the excuse that she came under another district. In fact she found it almost impossible to find a clinic which would arrange for a bed for her. Finally she was told that she

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This friend of mine already had three children and could not afford to leave her house as she was unable to pay for somebody to look after her children. Over a period of three months she was sent from one center to another and naturally was not receiving the attention that she should have done. When she applied at the local town hall for free milk she was made to wait for weeks and was subjected to a very strict questioning as to her means and finally she was told that her husband was earning enough to be able to provide her with the necessary milk, although he only earned three pounds a week.

In Italy people do not have to beg for assistance it is provided for them. The English system seems to be give as little as possible whereas here the motto *humana* is give as much as possible.

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Coming back to my friend she finally went to an L.C.C. hospital but before they would accept her she had to pay five pounds for her confinement. She was made to get up out of bed after only four days because she was told that the bed was needed. She afterwards found out that her bed had been taken by a Jewess whose husband had his own business and was well off. They had a maid motor and so on. This shows the corrupt way in which this vital service is run in England. As a result of being made to get up to early she was ill for a long time and when I left England she was expecting to have an operation. I could tell you of many other cases where women have been forced to be confined in their own places although they did not have the facilities. They were told that the hospitals had been evacuated for troops. Surely the health and welfare of the mothers comes before a war and in any case there should have been proper provisions made for Ante-Natal services.

Italy did not want to go to war but when the authorities saw that war would be forced upon them they took every possible measure to see that the women and children would not suffer as a result.

In Italy there has been no interruption of Ante-Natal and post Natal work and if anything it has been improved even still further. Now I would like to speak of the post Natal service and the Child welfare centres. The Italian Government has built these centres all over the country. Women are able to have a week or a fortnight's holiday with their children free of charge every year. These centres are built in the healthiest parts of the countryside and are the last word in comfort and cleanliness. There are sun balconies for the children and crèches so that the mothers are free to enjoy their rest. Everything is provided free even the fares to and from the center.

The women are provided with clean linen and clothes for the children and they do not have to spend or provide one iota. These buildings are specially designed for the purpose and are much larger than some of the largest hospitals in Britain. There has been some attempt at imitating this in England but for the most part the mothers have to rely on charity.

In addition to this service there is one provided for young children who are in need of fresh air and sunshine. Any child who is in need of nourishing food and care can be sent daily from morning till the evening free of charge. This is a great asset to those families living in towns where children do not normally get the chance of an open air life. Now as I mentioned before all these services are functioning normally although the country is making enormous efforts in the war. The Italian Government does not intend to let the population suffer from a war that has been forced upon them by the greed of other countries.

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The Ante natal services in Italy work properly and are efficient and devoid of corruption because they are Government undertakings. In England any benefits that there are to be had in this way are provided by the Borough Councils and this is not a fair way of arranging things. The boroughs that are the poorest class boroughs have the most money to spend. Whereas some of the poorest class boroughs

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I am thoroughly disgusted at the way the British people are being led to believe that they are the best looked after people in the world. This untrue the British people are suffering more from the war which they do not want than any other people. Now you put up with all the privations when you know that you will never gain from them is beyond me. I suppose it is because the average Englishman has never been outside his own country to see the way other people live. Now I can see I have been wandering away from my subject and this is the second time I have done this. My talk is supposed to strictly for women and not political

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in any way. However I can't help feeling incensed at the treatment that you poor people are being made to suffer today, and feel I have to mention some time.

I believe I was talking about the holiday centers for women and children. Well there is/ another very good and helpful service which is run in Italy for both mothers and young children. If a mother has any difficulty in feeding her child through lack of milk all she has to do is to report to one of the Houses of Mother and Child as the Child welfare centers are called here and arrangements are made for her to have special milk making foods so that her child may not be denied the benefits of being fed on its mother's milk. Now this is a very important service because there are many women who have difficulty in feeding the babies and consequently have to put them on artificial food which is not good for the child and makes a lot of extra work for the mother. As you will know from experience ordinary milk does not make milk and other foods are needed besides. Most of the milk making medicines and foods in ~~England~~ England are very dear and almost every woman who finds her milk lacking has to resort to artificial foods.

The state interest in the child does not finish here. When ~~child~~ children have been weaned or while they are still weanlings there is a special diet provided for them free of charge. This is most important time in the life of a child especially in the summer when the weather is really hot. Of course perhaps this is not such a problem in England where the summer is not quite so hot as in Italy, but it goes to show the thoroughness of the organization and care which is taken of the rising generation.

As I said in one of my previous talks motherhood is regarded as one of the blessings of life here in Italy and everything is done and ~~not~~ will be done to make pregnancy as comfortable as possible for the women. Not only this but when the child is born the mother's task will be made as light as possible. She can leave her child in one of the Government run creches while she works or carries out some other duty. The children are kept clean and properly looked after by experts and there is no need for anyone to have fear that they will not be treated properly.

Now this aspect of life is a wide one and I do hope I have been able to give my listeners a clear idea of what the Italian government is doing for the people in spite of the fact that my time is limited. The one big contrast between Italy and England is that you poor people in England have suffered all sorts of inconveniences and have had to do without things which will have a great effect on your kiddies and families in General but here we have in fact been given greater privileges so that this shall not happen. Just think how often one hears the expression "that is due to lack of nourishment during the war." Every-one is determined that whatever happens this shall not be said in Italy. One can sum up Italy's domestic ideals as "Women and Children first." Now dear listeners I have gone as far as I can in this talk and my fifteen minutes is up so I will say good bye to you until the same time next week when I hope you will be at your sets to listen in to me. So with deepest sympathy for all English Women I say good night.

child through lack of milk all she has to do is to report to one of the Houses of Mother and Child as the child welfare centers are called her and arrangements are made for her to have special milk making foods so that her child may not be denied the benefits of being fed on its mother's milk. Now this is a very important service because there are many women who have difficulty in feeding the babies and consequently have to put them on artificial food which is not good for the child and makes a lot of extra work for the mother. As you will know from experience ordinary milk does not make milk and other foods are needed besides. Most of the milk making medicines and foods in ~~England~~ England are very dear and almost every woman who finds her milk lacking has to resort to artificial foods.

The state interest in the child does not finish here. When child children have been weaned or while they are still weanlings there is a special diet provided for them free of charge. This is most important time in the life of a child especially in the Summer when the weather is really hot. Of course perhaps this is not such a problem in England where the summer is not quite so hot as in Italy, but it goes to show the thoroughness of the organization and care which is taken of the rising Generation.

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A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bove
Claude J. Bove,
1st Lt. F.A.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION

C.M.F.

PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

25 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 5 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Roma Supplie" on 1 October 1940 for L'Espresso per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Signora R. Sorni

16. Martedì 1 Ottobre

Il quarto nella serie di conversazioni dal titolo "From Me to You"

Good evening everybody This evening I am going to talk to you about something which were all are normally xxx thinking about at this time of the year. I suppose all you would have already had your summer holidays if it were not for the war. Of course I realise that it has been impossible for English people to have any sort of holiday this year on account of the fact that practically all the coastal regions have been declared a prohibited area. I do remember that just before I left England many London Cockneys were complaining bitterly because they could not go to Southend. One man told me that he and his wife had been going there every year for the past forty years. I dread to think of the plight of the boarding house keepers at Brighton, Hastings and the other South coast towns. These poor people relied upon holiday makers for their living. Conditions there must be dreadful now and it is very hard for me to picture Brighton which is my home town deserted and perhaps partly demolished by bombs. Things in Italy are so peaceful and one sees and hears so little of the war except for the reports in the paper that it is very difficult to imagine what things must be like in England right now. As I said before except for the blackout which is not so strict as in England and the sight of Soldiers coming home on leave one would have no idea that a war was on. Every now and then one sees a cheering and happy band of troops coming out of the stations on their way home. These fellows all look unburned and well fed. The uniforms are made of good quality materials and in fact they look the picture of health and happiness. They all seem to have a devil may care spirit. They do not mind leaving their homes because they know that their families will be looked after properly and that their wives will not be forced to leave their homes if they cannot pay the rent. I know of many cases in England where women with three and four children were taken to court by their landlords because they were unable to pay the normal rent. Many of these poor women were forced on to the streets by court orders. In some cases they were told they would have to pay 17/6 rent out of an allowance of 30/- a week. In Italy if a woman's husband is

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Copy of radio talk, no. 5 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Roma Stampa" on 1 October 1940 for "L'Isolotto per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Signora R. Sperti

N 6. Martedì 1 Ottobre

Il quarto nella serie di conversazioni dal titolo "From Me to You"

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Now coming back to the Summer Holidays. The holiday season is not over yet in Italy because the weather is still very warm and sunny. If one goes

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to the railway stations here in the morning one finds that the platforms are filled with people going away. Mothers with their children. Here and there perhaps a little sturdy boy dressed up in the uniform of the Fascist Youth will have in his hand a huge bunch of grapes, which he eats oblivious to the world around him. He is so interested in the railway engine. There is the usual hustle and bustle that one associates with a railway station in the height of the summer. Loud speakers announcing that a special train will leave in half an hour for Sorrento. Another will leave for the Italian Riviera and so on. All these beautiful Italian resorts are having a bumper season. The sands are full of people every body seems well fed and happy. Here and there people are crowding round a portable wireless to hear the afternoon news and the special program for the troops which announces the births that have taken place in their families, and which brings the soldiers together with their wives and dear ones for a few moments because many of these Italian soldiers are far over the seas in Africa.

The boarding houses are pensioned as they are called here are all decorated in the usual gay Italian style and the war does not seem to have effected them in one iota. They are all full up and in fact are training people away. At night the blackout is made bearable by the fact that the moon sky at night is very starry and no so dark as in England. When there is a moon xxxxxxxx well its like day. The sea also is very pleasant here children can wade cut up to their waste without fear because there are no breakers such as we have in England. The Sea just laps the shore and there is no beach as we have in England but wonderful fine dry sand. The sea rises and recedes very little with the tide here.

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You may say to yourselves all this needs taking with a pinch of salt, but I can assure you that it is quite true. It must be remembered that Italy is quite safe and secure from any form of attack except for very isolated air raids. Also that the Government here has more than made sure that life would continue normally in every way. The Italian Government has been in power for nearly twenty years now and has an unbroken life so that it has been able to get on with the job instead of spending most of its time arguing and getting nowhere. For instance there are specially reduced fares for families so that a father wanting to take his family for a holiday need not confine himself to a short journey on account of expense. He can choose any of the famous resorts in Italy. Another thing which makes holiday making easy is the fact that so little of the necessities of life are rationed.

There is one place in particular in Italy that is going through a very prosperous period and that is Ostia the seaside resort of Rome. This beautiful little place is only about fifteen miles from the ancient Capital and there is a very good bus and tram service to and from the sands. The return ticket costs about 9d so that you can imagine it is visited by thousands of people. I was there last Sunday and the place was literally crowded. There all types of uniforms Air Force Army and Navy, there also the famous blackshirt uniforms in abundance. Thousands of people sunbathing on the sands and little kiddies as brown as berries paddling in the water. These young children are the most healthy specimens I have seen and one cannot help contrasting them with the over-nourished little mites that one sees on the streets in London. These children are healthy but from the ordinary working

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My reason for explaining this to you is to show you that conditions in this country are not as you are told by the Newspapers and other propaganda.

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It makes no difference to Italy whether the war lasts for another month or for another six years. Her internal condition will not be affected in any way. Whereas I know that the every day the war last brings further misery to the British people. I wonder how many of you have been able to have your usual holidays this year. I dare say many of you cannot even have your usual Friday night drink in the local because of the air raids. There is really no need for the war to continue another minute. The Italian people have no hatred for the British people in fact everybody here is very sorry for the average British citizen who is considered the victim of a Jewish controlled policy. The Italian citizen is of the opinion that there are enough of the goods things in the world for everybody provided they are shared round, and he does understand why the British man in the street allows the Government to go on with a war which cannot benefit him in any way either now or in the future.

Now coming back to holiday resorts. The absence of Jews from these places is very striking. I dare say all of you used to be disgusted at the Jewish shopkeepers who used to profiteer at the seaside resorts in England. I do not know of one place in England where most of the amusements were not owned or controlled by Jews. The absence of Jews can also be felt in the General line of shops in Italy such as gown shoes shoe shops xxx and so on. An English person has to travel in other countries to realize what a big grip the Jews have on the life of England. You just think xx listeners of your local shops and recon up how many of them are Jews and you will begin to realize like I did when I came here that the English people have very little to say in our affairs.

The Jews want the world xxxxxxxxxx to believe that they are flogged and ill-treated in Italy well I can tell you that the Italian people are not so barbarous as that. They are determined to see Italy for the Italians and to this end they refuse to deal with Jews. In this way the Jew finds that he cannot thrive as he has always done and he packs up tracks and makes for other lands.

As I said before I cannot imagine what conditions are like now in England since the bombardments but they must have altered everybody's mode of living. I often wonder whether those poor people who have lost their homes will ever get them restored. If the war had gone as bad as beds for the Italian people as it has for the British no Italian would have tolerated his Government. Anybody who makes mistakes one hundredth part as bad as those Churchill and Chamberlain make would have been tried and shot here. And after all this is only just politicians should be responsible for their errors like everybody else. Now I can see that I have again wandered onto politics and I have been warned that my talk shall be strictly domestic. I do hope you will forgive me this time but one gets so incensed when one hears of ones country of origin just literally being led to its ruin. And I can't forget that we had everything we wanted in England and had no cause to declare war.

Well listeners I would like to go on speaking to you as I have so much more to say but I have already been speaking to long so that I shall have to take leave of you. I do hope you will be able to listen in to me next week when I shall

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I should like to repeat that I am very ~~grate~~ grateful to the Italian broadcasting company for being able to speak to you, and I do hope the war is over soon so that I can see my many friends I have left in England.

Well good night everybody untill next week.....Good night.

A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bove
Claude J. Bove,
1st Lt. F.A.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

25 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 6 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rona Spenni" on 6 October 1940 for L'Ispektorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

N6
No. 6 nella serie di conversazione dal titolo "From Me To You." Martedì, 8 Ottobre
di Rona Spenni

Good evening everybody..... Last week I was talking to you about holiday resorts in Italy and I also mentioned the Youth training organisation in Italy. This organisation is one of the most important in the Modern form of state such as we have in Italy. It is obvious from the efforts that are made and the numerous forms of training that the young children are given that the health of the rising generation is one of the principal concerns of the authorities.

This training however is not restricted to boys and men. There are also organisations which cater solely for young girls and women. This form of training varies according to the age of the girls. While they are still at school they are given gymnastic courses which are aimed at developing the body and keeping them healthy. They attend classes both during the normal school hours and after tea where they practice Grecian dancing and the normal forms of light exercise which develop the body without undue strain.

When these girls reach the age of fourteen or fifteen which perhaps the most important age in a girls life they're given a different form of education and training which prepares them for the normal life of a woman. Which is marriage and motherhood. Every summer they are collected into groups and they visit various parts of the country. For instance the Girls from Taranto will be sent to Turin and vice versa. The holiday camps are well equipped and are not lacking in any necessity. The expenses of the holiday are provided by the State and the girls are in charge of a competent staff of teachers and women experienced in the guarding of young women. This is a very good idea because a mother knows that her daughter is being properly looked after and supervised and is not likely to fall into bad company or trouble, when away from home. I know of many cases in England where young girls of about seventeen go away by themselves for their holidays and are left without supervision and very often fall into trouble. After all young girls of this age are subject to temptations and the proper thing to do is provide against this risk. In this way the rising generation of women in Italy are well built healthy and full the joy of living. This fact strikes one immediately in Italy. I don't want you to believe that the women of this country are being transformed into Spartans because this is

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Copy of radio talk, no. 6 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Roma SPERNI" on 8 October 1940 for L'Ispettorato per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

No. 6 nella serie di conversazione dal titolo "From Me To You." Martedì, 8 Ottobre
di Roma Sperti

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For instance the Young Women of the GIL which is the Italian Youth organisation of which I have been speaking has organised knitting and sewing classes where the young women knit comforts for the soldiers sailors and Airmen. They also serve in the censors Office and various other public services. The elder of the members give voluntary help to the Hospitals and Ante Natal clinics so as to relieve the

pressure put on the nursing staffs. They also take a great part in the Red Cross which is carrying out such a great service for the fighting men and is also giving so much aid to the prisoners of war. The Cardinal principle behind their work is that it is not military in any way but is more domestic and in keeping with femininity. There is one thing we do not see in Italy and that is women air raid wardens such as you have in London. Most likely the reason for there being so many women enrolled in this force in England is because the Government had not prepared for this emergency. In Italy however this important part of the war effort was well provided for and is carried on entirely by properly trained men. And when you come consider it, it does seem ridiculous that women should be defending able bodied men. After all its xx mans job to defend xxxxxxxx women and children. When ever I have described the British air raid precaution measures taken in England the people here have been amazed, at the fact that women have been employed. This does not mean that the Italian woman would not rise to the occasion if necessary. I have found that their moral is superb. But there are sufficient men here to do the job and therefore it would not be right for women to do it. Any time that women give to this type of work which entails long hours means that their families have to suffer and that is what is provided against here.

Now this evening there is another matter which I want to speak to you about. I have recently been listening to the wireless news from England and I notice that they have made a very ~~good~~ big story about the rationing of certain fats and oil in Italy. The picture that has been painted is quite erroneous and I feel that a little explanation of the situation in its real light would be opportune at this moment. Before I go on to give you this outline I should like to remind you that I have been allowed to speak to you as I do so that British housewives may be properly and truthfully informed of domestic life as it is in Italy. In doing this I have been ordered to present the fact as they are and in the true light. To this end I have been given a free hand and whatever I say is not subject to any form of Censorship.

The Italian people have been used to a great abundance of the primary xxxxx essentials in food stuffs and included in these are the vegetable and animal fats such as olive oil butter and lard. Because of this the average woman has become quite truthfully more than extravagant in her use of these foods. For instance an Italian housewife would never think of using olive oil more than once to fry things in. Then again a great deal of butter has xxxxx always been used for cooking purposes and this is never used more than once. In this way the amount of oil, lard, and butter consumed in Italy has been enormous when compared with other countries. In view of this, semi waste which is not in the interests of the country in these times the authorities decided to restrict the amount which can be used for cooking purposes. In doing this the Italian government was xxxxx obviously not guided by the lack of fats. This can be proved when one considers that Italy is the largest producer of olive oil in the world and in fact exports more than twice her home consumption! Also as I pointed out in one of my earlier talks the country does not import any butter or lard there more than enough for home consumption. Italy in fact also exports lard and Butter. This measure has been taken purely and simply because it is not in the interest of the country that there should be waste in war time. This measure will allow more of the product to be exported and will not place such a heavy task on the producers.

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I have recently been listening to the wireless news from England and I notice that they have made a very big story about the rationing of certain fats and oil in Italy. The picture that has been painted is quite erroneous and I feel that a little explanation of the situation in its real light would be opportune at this moment. Before I go on to give you this outline I should like to remind you that I have been allowed to speak to you as I do so that British housewives may be properly and truthfully informed of domestic life as it is in Italy. In doing this I have been ordered to present the fact as they are and in the true light. To this end I have been given a free hand and whatever I say is not subject to any form of Censorship.

The Italian people have been used to a great abundance of the primary xxxxx essentials in food stuffs and included in these are the vegetable and animal fats such as olive oil butter and lard. Because of this the average woman has become quite truthfully more than extravagant in her use of these foods. For instance an Italian housewife would never think of using olive oil more than once to fry things in. Then again a great deal of butter has xxxxx always been used for cooking purposes and this is never used more than once. In this way the amount of oil, lard, and butter consumed in Italy has been enormous when compared with other countries. In view of this, semi waste which is not in the interests of the country in these times the authorities decided to restrict the amount which can be used for cooking purposes. In doing this the Italian government was xxxxx obviously not guided by the lack of fats. This can be proved when one considers that Italy is the largest producer of olive oil in the world and in fact exports more than twice her home consumption. Also as I pointed out in one of my earlier talks the country does not import any butter or lard there more than enough for home consumption. Italy in fact also exports lard and Butter. This measure has been taken purely and simply because it is not in the interest of the country that there should be waste in war time. This measure will allow more of the product to be exported and will not place such a heavy task on the producers.

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It should always be borne in mind that Italy does not lack in any food-

stuff whatever. As I have said there is an overabundance of all kinds of foods. But in spite of the rationing which has been announced the amount allowed is something like five times as much as you English housewives are allowed. As I mentioned xxxxx before a litre of Olive oil is equivalent to about a pound and a half of "Cokeen" or "Wrex" and the amount we are allowed now is half a litre which is about three quarters of a pound per head. When we compare this with the very few ounces allowed in England we can see that the Italian people are far better off from this point of view. Now coming back to the use of olive oil this has been wasted to such an extent that people have the habit of covering Tomatoes sauces or similar foods with a layer of olive oil to keep them from going bad. Needless to say this oil is thrown away when the sauce is used.

The restriction of the use of these fats is not really a rationing in the strict sense of the word it is a measure taken to avoid useless and undue waste.

Although lard has been restricted meat fat can still be bought ad lib. For instance beef fat can be bought and melted down for dripping and this makes very good cooking fat. There has been no resentment at the rationing because the people know that whatever happens they are better off than any other country from the point of view of foods. And above all they know that they are not really making sacrifices because they have more than sufficient for ordinary household use. All it means is that must be more careful and not wasteful.

I hope you don't say to yourself this woman is trying to give us a false impression because I am really quite genuine when I tell you that I live far better in Italy now than I have ever done in England and I spend much less on food than I used to do. Quite truthfully there is one thing I miss and that is the fresh herrings and kippers which I used to get in England. However the Italian people have never taken to herrings which of course are not caught in the Mediterranean. I suppose this is because they have never been pushed in Italy. The fish which takes their place are fresh sardines which are very abundant. I don't suppose any of you have ever had fresh sardines fried. Believe me they are much nicer than the tinned fish. Some of them that can be bought here are about as big as a small herring and they're just as nutritious and sustaining as herrings, but have the quality of smelling so fishy.

What I would like to impress on you is that in Italy we do have butter xxxxxxxxxxxx and lard and that these are not of a standard and diluted grade as you have in England. Also we can get beef and mutton fat as much as want, and that this supply is added to by the olive we are allowed. Whereas in England you get practically no butter worth speaking very very little lard and cooking fats and you cannot get olive oil at all. In fact you are unable to obtain any substitutes this I know from my own experience about four months ago. Also there is nothing in the new regulations which stops the average small farmer from producing his own. I should like to remind you that the larger part of the Italian people are farmers and mostly produce all their own foodstuffs. It will be seen therefore that the restriction really only applies to the cities.

Now listeners I am going to say good bye but before doing so I should like to tell you I am going to a large open air gathering of the Youth organisation one day this week and I shall try to describe it to you in my next talk which will be at the same time next Tuesday.

Good night everybody Good Night.

90025

A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bove
Claude J. Bove,
1st Lt. F.A.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

26 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 7 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rona SPERNI" on 15 October 1940 for L'Ispektorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

No. 7 nella serie "FROM ME TO YOU" letto da Signora SPERNI. 15/10/40/XVIII

Coal supplies in Italy.

Good evening everybody. I suppose you are already in the throes of winter weather in England by now. We in Italy have had very warm weather up to now but we are beginning to feel the change. Naturally we are all preparing for and thinking of the cold weather which is to come.

Apart from the knitting of woollens which I suppose we all do at this time of the year we have to think of house heating.

There was a time just before Italy entered the War and when this country was still feeling the cold when the average Italian house wife looked forward to this coming winter with some concern. This was because the British government had held up a large number of ships which were laden with coal destined for Italy. As you all know Italy is not a large producer of coal and she has always imported large quantities. Of course modern life cannot go on with out coal gas and many of the other services which coal is used for. The lack of coal is of course primarily felt by women and children who suffer from the cold through lack of house heating. You may say yes but it was warmer in Italy than in England during the winter. Well this applies to the Southern regions of the country but it is not true of the Northern parts of the country.

In Northern Italy it gets far colder than it does in the British Isles. Therefore at that time seeing that England had stopped a very large percentage of the total Italian imports we all thought that we would have to go without any heating in the houses. While the Italian people were prepared to make this sacrifice for the sake of the country they have not had to suffer from the lack of coal.

The authorities have announced that measures would be taken to assure the country sufficient supplies of coal throughout the winter.

As I understand it England said she was willing to supply Italy with

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As I understand it England said she was willing to supply Italy with all the coal she required providing she paid for it in Industrial goods. Well I am not very well up in economics but I do know, as I have explained to you before, that Italy is primarily an agricultural country and while she has got a good industrial output this only sufficient for her own needs. The Italian Government offered to pay in agricultural products which would have helped the British people but the English Government would not accept. This however did not affect Italy German guaranteed to supply Italy with all the coal she needed via land routes which would be free from British interference and the two countries entered into an agreement. The German Government promised to supply Italy with a million tons of coal a month, and the Germans have been keeping their word. We now find that today we are in a much better position as far as coal goes than we were before we entered the War. Some while ago the price of domestic gas was reduced and the quality was raised at the same time. We housewives have definitely benefitted from this agreement with Germany we find that our gas bills are much lower. Now returning to

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house heating this is done in a different way to in England. The custom in most British homes is to use coal fires. This isn't so in Italy I suppose xxx because there has never been what you would call an abundance of coal. Every block of flats here both working class and otherwise are equipped with central heating which supplies both water and radiators. Generally this service is provided free but where it is not included in the rent one pays so much per room. This system of course while it may not be so luxurious as the British custom certainly has its advantages. For instance we have no chimneys to worry about. Neither do we have to do all the cleaning necessary when coal fires were used. When I took my curtains down recently to have them cleaned I found xxxxxxxx that it was hardly necessary to have them washed although they had been up for some months. Of course I am speaking of large curtains and not small net ones.

I find that radiators are very useful for airing clothes on especially my babies clothes and all round this system saves a lot of money both from the individual and collective point of view. We are now guaranteed enough coal for all uses this winter and in fact coal is already being sold here and the price has been reduced. I suppose this is because there has been more and more coal arriving in Italy from Germany lately.

Last week I went into the country for a day with my children and we had a picnic on the side of a railway line. I had my friends little boy with me and he was fascinated by the goods trains that were going by one after the other. We sat there counting the wagons and some of the trains took as long as ten minutes to go by. What he could not get over was that the xxxxx trains were being pulled by electric engines. He was born in England and had lived there for the most part of his life. He would keep on asking where the puffer was. Seeing so much coal made me think of being in the Midlands where coal trains are to be seen everywhere. Now I don't want you to think that this statement of mine is untrue I am telling you of things I have seen and that is in the South of Italy. My husband has a friend who lives in the North and when he and his wife were paying us a visit some while ago they were complaining that they lost a lot of sleep through the noise of the trains which went through the town one after another all through the night. They have just bought a house by the side of the railway and are regretting they ever entertained the idea.

For my part I am going to use a coal fire this winter as I have a fireplace in the living room of my flat. I will admit that I prefer the cosiness of a coal fire much more than I do central heating although it has its advantages. In fact I have already bought some coal and the price works out at about one shilling and eleven pence for half hundred weight. I don't know what the price of coal is in England now but it was about three and six pence a hundred weight just before I left. So that you can see there is not a great deal of difference in price although the coal has to come a great distance by rail and although rail transport is dearer than water transport, or at least I remember being told that at school.

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The railway station where in the regulations is Italy in the past xxx

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There has been another change in the regulations in Italy in the past xxx week or so which may be of interest to you. In fact there have been several. The first one concerns the black-out. Summer time will continue to remain in force here so that we may enjoy longer hours of daylight. In order to reduce the public inconvenience to a minimum the authorities have changed the street lighting from Blue to amber and this has helped a great deal. There is now sufficient light to walk about in comfort and in fact to drive a car in without the use of headlights. I suppose the authorities have been able to do this because there is no so much risk from air raids as you have in London. So far of course we have had none in Rome and we have only had two allarms and they proved to be false. I saw some pictures the other day taken from some foreign papers. They showed crowds of women and children lying and sitting on the escalators of one of the London tube stations. How are you people managing to keep alive under these conditions. It must have a terrible effect on the children and while they may not show the effects of it now they will when they grow older.

the second change that has taken place is the increase in the sugar ration. When the ration was introduced this year none of us thought that it would be increased at least not until next summer. But we have had a very pleasant surprise because the new ration has been increased to 500 grams per head. This is just over a pound because one kilo or 1000 grams is equal to 2 and one tenth pounds. In reality this means that we are not rationed at all. At least that is as far as I and most people are concerned I never buy more than 31lb at a time and as there are four of us in family I have some of my ration to spare.

As I said before rationing in Italy does not really exist in the real sense of the word, and to explain xxx this I should point out that one can eat at will in any bar or restaurant without coupons. That means that a person who eats out once a day as my husband does has more to spare for his meals at home. There is no limit to what one can eat in public restaurants so therefore the rationing does not restrict one to a fixed limit. In Italy it was introduced to stop waste, and excessive consumption. As I have already explained there is more than enough of all food stuffs produced in Italy therefore the rationing has not been introduced through the lack of supplies as in England where you are absolutely reliant upon imports for your food. In my opinion the British Government was criminally negligent in not undertaking some form of land plantation scheme many years ago.

Have you ever travelled by car up the Great North road? If you have you will have noticed that practically from Hatfield which is just North of South Mims onwards there are acres and acres of land just left idle. Here and there xxx one can see a few Cows literally churning up the ground and wandering about without any control. This goes on for mile after mile as far as York. All this ground could have been tilled and planted to the benefit of the Country many years ago. Here in Italy every square inch of the ground is cultivated and planted with something of another. In fact in the Mountain districts the people have even cultivated the Mountain sides by carrying up the earth and xxx a system of irrigation. Many of the thousands of unemployed in England who have never done a days work in years could have been employed on tilling this land. Or better still the Government could have confiscated these large tracts of land from the Big Titled land owners, who are content to let lie there just for the sake of shooting or hunting, and cut it up into small holdings and given it to the unemployed for them to till and work. In Italy this was done many years ago and it is still being carried on. The Italian Government build nice little homes on the ground and anybody who is willing to undertake the job of growing something or another can rent the land from the Government. He does not have to have any Capital because he can live free for the first and pays the Government back after this period at a low rate. He is addition guaranteed a fixed price for his product so that he does not have to fear a fall in price which is very often due to the machinations of the speculators. My time is up now listeners but I would like to speak to you longer on this subject and I propose to deal with it in my next talk which will be next Tuesday at the same so Good night everybody; good night.

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SECURITY DIVISION

26 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 8 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Roma SPERNI" on 22 October 1940 for L'Aspettativo per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Signora Sperni. 22 ottobre. 1940. XVIII
No. 8 nella serie "FROM ME TO YOU"

Maj Sorbello

Good evening every-body. Have any of you ever spent an afternoon walking through the poor districts of London? I suppose many of you have been through them at one time or another. I suppose you will have noticed the dilapidated and unhealthy houses which house as many families as there are rooms in most cases. These houses should all have been demolished many years ago and proper ones put up in their place. I know from personal experience that the reason why these poor people have not been provided with proper homes is because the landlords by rack rentings these premises get a far larger return on their money. Who are these landlords for the most part, Jews. Also have you ever noticed the unhealthy look on the faces of the youngsters who lived in these slum districts of London. Mr Profressor I am a Nurse I trained in England and I have my State certificate. I remember when doing Ambulance duty in the East End I used finish my days work thoroughly disgusted at our English system. We used xxxxxx go to some houses where there was practically no sanitation where the children could hardly read or write on account of the schooling they had missed through being ill for so many months of the year. Whenever we questioned the people as to the cause of their poverty we practically always had the same answer. The husband had done no work for years. His wife had run out and the U.A.S. refused to give the family any help. This state of affairs does not only apply to one district of London but many others such as North Kensington, the Old Kent Road, Deptford and so on. Neither is it only to be seen in London in Liverpool it is even worse not to mention the North Midland towns such as Leeds Bradford, Huddersfield and Warkson. Now at that time I had not visited Italy and in fact I had not been out of Britain. I will admit that I formed the idea that if condition are as bad as this in England what must they be like abroad.

I suppose like myself you all have the idea that Italy is a very backward country that the people are nothing more than glorified savages. Yes I think so. English people who have never travelled really do believe this. Our papers tell us that we are better off than anybody else and we have accepted this as a consolation for our obvious shortcomings. Well I am going to tell you that this is absolutely untrue and I do hope you will believe me. I have travelled through

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Copy of radio talk, no. 8 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rona Sparni" on 22 October 1940 for L'Ispektorato per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

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The first thing one notices about Social conditions here as compared with England is that there is not that great difference between one class of people and another as in England. For instance the average manual worker here lives on the same standard as does the white collar man.

As far as the essentials of life are concerned which are food clothes and a place to live in their is very little difference between the poorest people in Italy and the richest. It is true we do not have the great luxury Hotels such as there are in London, it is also true that there are no luxurious places of entertainment. But then are these necessary for the welfare of the people. Do any of you ordinary people ever go to the Grosvenor House or the Savoy even if you earned twenty pounds a week would you be able to visit these palaces? I have heard rich people

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who have come back from Italy after a tour say that they missed their High Spots to use an Americanism but they could not say that Italy was lacking in the essentials. Every Italian family xxx enjoys the pleasure of good food even now in war time. I England I was never able to have wine with my food neither was I able to have every kind of vegetable. I was limited to Greens Potatoes and tomatoes when they were not too dear. Yet in Italy I have fresh fruit ad lib. If I want to but asparagus I can buy it because it is well within my means. In fact I can enjoy all the best foods obtainable foods which only the rich people have in England. You may say yes that's because Italy produces all the food she needs but that is not the answer. It is because the Fascist government has spent the greater part of its time searching for ways and means to elevate the standard of living of the population. This Government we have in Italy xx has at heart the welfare of the people it is not controlled by vested interests. The vested interests are put way down on the list of considerations in this country.

Land which was at one time kept for the pleasure of the few has been confiscated and split up into small holdings and given to families so that they can work it and benefit from what is their Birth right the wealth of their land. Even now although Italy is engaged in a terrific struggle she is building homes and houses for the farmers and fishermen in all parts of the country. I don't want you to believe that I am anti-British I am not I still love my country but I detest the form of government which is keeping our poor people in ignorance and subjection. I listened in the news from London this week and I heard the announcer say that Italy cannot continue the war and that the people are being promised that it will be over by Christmas. This is preposterous. We xxxxxxxx would not know there was a war on at all in Italy; life has not changed one iota we have all the food we want and all the liberty we xxx human beings could ever hope for. I know that is not the case in England. I know that your movements have been restricted that you cannot travel about as you please. I also know from my own experience that food, is very scarce. I can remember paying a shilling for a salad last spring and I dread to think what lettuce will cost this year. We can still by eggs at three halfpence each. I wonder what you are paying for them now. We can still by meat as much as want and the price has not increased by even a penny a pound. This news is being given to you so that you will go on suffering the horror and destruction of a war which cannot benefit the the British people at all; except perhaps those large industrialist who are amassing fortunes. In fact while I am speaking to you about the amount of food we have in Italy I can give you another example of its abundance contrary to x what you are being told. This morning when I went into the wine shop to buy some olive oil I noticed that the price of oil had been reduced. Of course I am referring to olive oil which as I explained takes the place of a large part of xx the cooking fats used in England. You will remember perhaps that I explained to you that one pint of Olive oil is about equal to two pounds of Cookeen or Trex and that it costs x the equivalent of 10pence per pint.

Now coming back to the standard of living of the Italian people this is for the most part better than that of the British people. As I said the are not many cinemas here and there are not so many motor cars as in England in peace time although there are more now but this does lower the standard.

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able to have every kind of vegetable. I was ~~not~~ fruit and ~~not~~ lib. I see when they were not too dear. Yet in Italy I have fresh fruit and ~~not~~ lib. In fact I want to but asparagus I can buy it because it is well within my means. In fact I can enjoy all the best foods obtainable foods which only the rich people have in England. You may say ~~yes~~ that's because Italy produces all the food she needs but that is not the answer. It is because the Fascist government has spent the greater part of its time searching for ways and means to elevate the standard of ~~the~~ living of the population. This Government we have in Italy ~~xx~~ has at heart the welfare of the people it is not controlled by vested interests. The vested interests are put way down on the list of considerations in this country.

Land which was at one time kept for the pleasure of the few has been confiscated and split up into small holdings and given to families so that they can work it and benefit from what is their birth right the wealth of their land. Even now although Italy is engaged in a terrific struggle she is building homes and houses for the farmers and fishermen in all parts of the country. I don't want you to believe that I am anti-British I am not I still love my country but I detest the form of government which is keeping our poor people in ignorance and subjection. I listened in the news from London this week and I heard the announcer say that Italy cannot continue the war and that the people are being promised that it will be over by Christmas. This is preposterous. We ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ would not know there was a war on at all in Italy; life has not changed one iota we have all the food we want and all the liberty we ~~xxxx~~ human beings could ever hope for. I know that is not the case in England. I know that your movements have been restricted that you cannot travel about as you please. I also know from my own experience that food, is very scarce. I can remember paying a shilling for a salad last spring and I dread to think what lettuce will cost this year. We can still buy eggs at three halfpence each. I wonder what you are paying for them now. We can still buy meat as much as want and the price has not increased by even a penny a pound. This news is being given to you so that you will go on suffering the horror and destruction of a war which cannot benefit the British people at all, except perhaps those large industrialists who are amassing fortunes. In fact while I am speaking to you about the amount of food we have in Italy I can give you another example of its abundance contrary to ~~xx~~ what you are being told. This morning when I went into the wine shop to buy some olive oil I noticed that the price of oil had been reduced. Of course I am referring to olive oil which as I explained takes the place of a large part of ~~xx~~ the cooking fats used in England. You will remember perhaps that I explained to you that one pint of olive oil is about equal to two pounds of lard or tallow and that it costs ~~xx~~ the equivalent of 10pence per pint.

Now coming back to the standard of living of the Italian people ~~the~~ **000020** is for the most part better than that of the British people. As I said there are not many cinemas here and there are not so many motor cars as in England in peace time although there are more now but this does lower the standard of living the ~~xxxx~~ health of the nation does not suffer from lack of motor car rides. But this lack of luxuries can be attributed to the hegemony of the British Government in the raw materials which are needed. There is one thing however which the Italian Government has succeeded in giving to the nation which is the greatest blessing in life and that is health and strength. On Sunday I spent the afternoon in the famous Villa Borghese Gardens here in Rome; these gardens are the equivalent of Hyde Park in London. The grounds were teeming with fine strapping girls and boys members of the Fascist Youth Organisation. They were dressed in the uniform of the Fascists the Girls in white blouses and black skirts and the boys in their uniforms. It was the day of youth in Italy that is the day when the youngsters pass up from one grade to another. The ~~xxxx~~ Figli della lupa or in English the Sons of the Wolf are the youngest of the organisations then there are the Balilla which means stout hearted and after this the Foreguard and then the Fascisti proper. Each one of these organisations gives the children the training which is suitable to their age. As I said before

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they are trained in Gymnastics and lead a thoroughly healthy life generally.

Last Sunday there were thousands of these children lined up waiting for the honour of being transferred into the next organisation which for them is a step towards becoming good Italian citizens. I have never in all my life seen such a parade of children so full of the joy of living as these children were. I don't want you to think that is purely military training because it is not. It is a training which is given with the idea of bringing up the Youth of the country on a sound basis of comradeship and usefulness. The Girls are trained in housewifery and the arts of Womanhood and these ~~X~~ in my opinion are an essential to the life of the community. The atmosphere was such that it enveloped on as the Italian atmosphere does it is so free and easy and free from snobbery and class distinction as there is in England which is only maintained after all so that the Upper classes can keep up their reserve and position. Fascism has removed all this from Italian life. In Italy a man is judged on his merits and not from the family which he comes from. You may even answer this by ~~xxxx~~ saying how can this be because Italy is a monarchy and not a republic. Well I as an observer can tell you that the Italian people have the greatest of affection for the Royal Family and I doubt whether there is any monarch in the world who enjoys the love of his people as does the Italian King Emperor. But in Italy there are none of the hangers on that are to be found in England people drawing huge salaries because they hold some defunct and forgotten position which serves no purpose today. Italy is a modern country that has made enormous strides in the past few years and which is even today in spite of the war continuing to forge ahead the guiding principle of the Government being the betterment of the conditions of the people. If only our English Governing classes had decided to spend some of the millions we are now wasting on war on providing benefits for the people I really believe we would have been the best off country in the world, because we have all the necessities. After long thinking about this I have come to the conclusion that it is our system that is wrong in England and the sooner it is completely changed the better. It is no use electing the same people under another name that will never bring an end to our troubles. Well everybody I have just received a signal that my time is up so I shall have to say good bye untill next week. Good bye everybody.

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A true copy of original.

Charles J. Dove
 Claude J. Dove,
 1st Lt. F.A.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.I.P.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

18 April 1945.

Copy of radio conversation in English, entitled "From Me To You", broadcast by "Signa. Roma SPERNI" on 29 October 1940 for the Ispettorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Numero 9 nella serie "From Me To You".
Signora Sperni. 29 ottobre 1940. X.

"Good evening everybody. This is the ninth in my series of talks during which I have tried to give you some idea of life in Italy as seen by an English woman especially during war time. As I said before the thing that struck me most when I arrived in Italy was the Young atmosphere about life here. By this I mean that the Young people of the country seem to take a much larger part in the running and organization of it. Everybody seems to be on their toes and full of energy. There isn't that old and tired atmosphere here that one associates with life in England. Yesterday was the 19th anniversary of the Fascist march on Rome and it was celebrated throughout the country with patriotic demonstrations. One can sum up these gatherings in a few words "they represented Youth". Yesterday evening as I was taking a walk with my husband I heard the strains of music coming from various houses and Cafés where people were singing patriotic songs that were really stirring. Everybody seemed to have a "Devil May Care" attitude. The atmosphere these gatherings and songs created was one that reminded me of such songs as "The Old Bull and Bush" which were all the rage in England about thirty years ago and which whenever we hear them give us the impression that we have lost something vital in England. It is as though life in England has become anaemic. The faith that the Italian people have in Signor Mussolini, or the Duce as everybody calls him here, is remarkable and at the same time wonderful. The Italian people have progressed so much under his leadership that they dread to think of any other form of Government. The Italian man in the street knows that his future is safe so long as Mussolini is guiding the affairs of the country.

An example of this feeling of security can be seen in the way a Young man who wants to leave his town and further afield does so. He doesn't think twice about leaving his job because he knows that wherever he goes there will be some occupation for him. This is the reverse in England. A man in employment lives in fear of being dismissed because he knows he will be condemned to the ranks of those millions of unemployed who have never done a stroke of work in years. As far as the conditions in England are concerned I am able to assure you that this is the case. During the two years that I was doing welfare work in England I saw many instances of this. It seems as though the Italian nation has taken on a sort of Frontier complex. That is if there is nothing to do in one district then on to the next. Another current running through life here is the attitude of "off with old and on with the new."

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Copy of radio conversation in English, entitled "From Me To You", broadcast by "Signa. Roma Spini" on 29 October 1940 for the Ispettorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

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When I arrived in Rome, the Taxi I took from the station to the hotel which I intended to stay at passed along the "Pittagora" which is one of the main streets in Rome. This street at its lower end was bounded by block of old houses which made this end very narrow and difficult for traffic. I arrived in Rome four months ago and today although the country is at war these old houses have been pulled down, the street has been widened, and new buildings have already gone up. Last Sunday, Signor Mussolini found time to inspect this work although he must be very busy attending to affairs of State in these historic times. The Italian people in my opinion are more than justified in their absolute faith in their leader. He has never promised them anything which he has not been able to carry out.

I remember when war was declared last September. I was in London at the time and I had gone into a friends house to listen to Mr. Chamberlain's speech on her invitation. No sooner had he declared war than a shadow seemed to fall over all

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of us in the room. Then came that first alarm. One of the men present said "Well they're here but we're over there as well by now". He seemed to be the only one that had any faith in the soft soap that had been handed up to us during the year which had gone by. We were told every precaution has been taken. German aircraft can never get over our country. Our defenses, they said, are the best in the world. Every move has been taken and will be taken to assure absolute safety from all forms of attack on the people or disturbance to the National life. How far were these promises true? As far as I can see they were nothing more than hot air. The British people are being put out by air raids day and night and it appears as though the defenses are not even capable of interfering with the raiders let alone stop them.

The opposite is the case in Italy the Fascist Government said that all measures necessary for the country's defence would be taken and it went about it's work in a proper businesslike manner without all the trumpet blowing and fanfare that one associates with the British Government of today. Just recently the Italian people were a little disturbed at the news that the British Government intended to occupy parts of Greece which is very near to Italy in order to establish air bases from which to attack the Italian mainland. So far we have had no air raids in Rome and in the North around Milan and other cities the people have had occasional alarms but have heard very few bomb explosions except in one or two districts. Naturally everybody here wondered whether the raids would come from Greece or whether something could be done to stop them. Everybody seemed to have faith in the Duce and the General opinion was, he would do something about it and it appears he has. We get a great number of tourists in Rome from the Balkan and central European countries and I have spoken to some of them. Those I have spoken to seem to be amazed at the peaceful atmosphere of the country and they all appear to be grateful to Italy for succeeding in keeping the war away from their countries. However they seemed concerned at the news that the British army was preparing to land in Greece as they thought this would bring war and destruction to their countries. Well as we all know the Italian Government has decided to send troops into Greece to protect that country. You will say yes it's the same old story. My answer to that is if Italy wanted to attack Greece she could have done it many months ago. It is my conviction and I say this as an English woman that Italy is above all concerned with localising the present suffering and hardships which have been brought to the world.

I myself have argued with Italian people and tried to convince them that England was not to blame really for the war but the reply they gave me was such that I could not answer. It was "If the British Government did not want the war why did they declare war on Germany?" Well I can tell you that most Italian people realise that we English people do not want to go on with this war and that we never did really want it and they also realise that it is the governing classes who can only gain from it.

In fact our Government in England started the war without having properly prepared for it. Here in Italy we are looking forward to the winter, which is just beginning to be felt, with the greatest confidence. It was announced this week that lamb and venison which is eaten in great quantities in Italy can be bought on all days of the week. As you know we are not limited as to the amount of meat we can buy here and this means that for all purposes there is no meat rationing whatever. On these days when we cannot buy beef we shall make do with lamb or goat meat. Personally I don't like roast meat as I have never been used to it but I am told it

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Another food which has been made cheaper is olive oil. As I said in one of my previous talks olive oil is very widely used here in Italy and this will materially help the housewives in their budgeting. In addition the sugar ration has been increased. The visitors I mentioned just now who come to Italy on holiday are really amazed to find such an abundance of food stuffs here. Some of them had heard the broadcasts from London in which it was stated that Italy is in a very poor plight. When they arrived they met an entirely different situation. They found a country which was very well organized and which was as peaceful as if it were not engaged in war.

Now in dealing with the insinuations that Italy has no supplies of necessary materials there is one thing I would like to talk to you about and which is perhaps very important. It will go to show the difference in the methods of the British

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Government and those practiced here. I remember in England attending knitting classes where comforts for the troops were being knitted by women. We bought our own wool or we were supplied with it by someone who felt benevolent enough to supply it. This seemed a very bad system to me. I asked myself why it was that British troops should have to rely on voluntary donations for necessities such as warm wollen clothes. I did know that the quality of the uniforms supplied to the troops was very bad indeed because a friend of mine who had been a "machinist-forewoman" before she was married took a job at one of the factories, the Rego Factory at Edmonton in London to be precise, where she was in charge of a group of women making soldiers uniforms making "Khaki" as she put it. She showed me some of the material and we both came to the conclusion that it wasn't fit to put on human beings. She told me, the Jews who own the firm, were making thousands out of the Government contract, and that all the contracts were secured by the large Jew Tailoring concerns and then they placed some of the work out to smaller people on the piece work system so that the Jews thus had a virtual monopoly of the Government contracts. In Italy, in contrast, the Soldiers are really well equipped their uniforms are well made and the material is first class and is as good as the best material obtainable anywhere. Their boots are also well made and at least seem to fit the men properly. Also they are supplied with good woolen socks and scarfs to keep them warm. Of course women here knit things for their men folk just as everybody else does but the situation is different. If a woman hasn't got the time or money to spare then she knows that her dear ones are not going without necessities. I saw a large formation of Italian troops marching along a road the other day and it was the first time that I had been able to get close and look at their clothes. I was really amazed at the fine way they were turned out and the healthy condition the men were all in. an Italian woman said to me providing concerts for the men is not enough. They must be kept well fed and warm especially in winter time.

Now listeners I am sorry I must finish my talk here as I really have so many things to talk about, but, I will continue in my next talk which will be next week on the same day and at the same time. One of my neighbours here expects her husband home on leave from Africa in a day or so and I will let you know of his experiences if they are interesting. Good night everybody Good night."

A true copy of original.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

26 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 10 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rosa SPERMI" on 5 November 1940 for l'Ispettorato per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Numero 10. nella serie "FROM ME TO YOU"

Good evening everybody. This evening I am going to leave domestic subjects alone and talk to you of another aspect of Italian life as it exists today. That is how I see it after having lived all my life in England without ever having left the shores of England before I came to Italy. Before I left England I had a very narrow outlook life that is I was absolutely ignorant of how the rest of the world lived apart from what was idished up to me by the newspapers.

Now although there is supposed to be freedom of speech in England and although we are told that the papers are absolutely free to say what they please I used to notice that they all agreed down to the last detail in their descriptions of Italy. Naturally I supposed this was because they were reporting the truth. I like all of my friends formed the opinion that life in Italy was dreadful that one was shadowed by the secret police, that it was dangerous to express an opinion for fear of being sent to concentration camp, and that every body lived in fear. Now my husband tried to convince me that this was not so and I may say that we had several quarrels over this question. When his people came to visit us in England I was to an extent surprised to find that they were just as cultured and human as any Englishman but I still had doubts as to conditions in Italy. This was because for years I had been reading these strange stories about Italy and it's Government and I really had by a certain amount of auto-suggestion convinced myself that the reports must be true.

Now I'll wager that there are many of my listeners who have this opinion of Italy and the present Italian government. This is because you have never had a frank description of Italy and the great work that has been going on in this country for the past twenty years. When the time came for me to leave England I really believed I was going into the fearful unknown and that I would regret ever having left the old Country as we call it. Well I had no choice my husband had to leave England for business reasons. It was either go with him or be separated for a long time. I have never regretted the day I left England not because I do not like the country but because my life here as

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Another thing which has deeply impressed me is the great courtesy which is shown to be by everybody I meet here. Now although I am an English woman by birth and to all intents and purposes I am English except technically by nationality I was treated very badly by some of my neighbours in England because I xxx has married an Italian and the papers and the Government were against Italy, at

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the time. Everybody except my old friends treated me a very disgusting manner.

I know of other women who had married foreigners who were treated far worse even than I. In Italy in contrast the people all treat me with the greatest respect and no mention is made of my origin. In England I used to hear expressions such as "dirty Italian" and "Dirty Foreigner". I never here this type of talk here. The reason for this is that the Italian people do not nourish any hatred for the British people and do not have a superiority complex such as most English people have and which is a result of the training they had when children. We all know that we are taught to believe that everything British is best and that if a custom or article comes from abroad then it is no good. The Italian people if anything have sympathy for the British people who are misled and misused by their Governing classes. I for one feel quite sure that if you could really see the conditions of Italy and the great work which has been done and which is being carried on here every day, you British people would not submit yourselves to the suffering you are experiencing now. You would do what the Italian people did many years ago. That is clear out all the old Governing clique and start on a clean sheet. It is no use changing your Government if the same people are always at the head of it. We are always told we are fighting to maintain those customs and systems which are dear to us in England and without which they country would not be able to survive. But the very curious thing about it is that the man in the street is never able to compare the British system with that in other countries and thus see for himself the true value of the British system ~~with which~~ which has been forced on the British people. Now when it comes to that part of the system which concerns women and children there one part of it that I for one know ~~xxx~~ is absolutely wrong. Take the Hospitals in England. The major part of them are run on the voluntary system that is they rely on donations for their funds. The hospitals are perhaps one of the most important adjuncts of modern life. Most of the working classes are unable to find the money for medical attention and have to rely upon some collective system, hence the hospital. In Italy the Hospitals are built staffed and run by the state and because of this they are among the best equipped and most efficient in the world. Now hospitals are going up in every populated district in spite of the war.

Now coming back to the attitude of the Italian people to British people it astounds my British listeners to know that all of the many hundreds of British people who are in Italy at the present moment are free to travel and go where they please. They have not been interned as Italians have in England. Their property has not been taken away from them and in fact they are as free as an ordinary citizen. This to me demonstrates that the Italian Government has very little to fear from the conduct of the population. In fact any subversive propaganda will have no effect on the Italian people because they are more than united around their leader they know that in him they have their future well being and salvation.

Italy as you know is famous for her emigrants who have gone to all corners of world. Before the last war many millions of families left the shores of Italy in search of work as there was very little for them in their own country. In the last two or three years there has been a large movement of these people and their children back to their native land. Another sign of the way the Italian Government looks after its people is to be found in the

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for the British people and do not have a superiority complex such as most other people have and which is a result of the training they had when children. We all know that we are taught to believe that everything British is best and that if a custom or article comes from abroad then it is no good. The Italian people if anything have sympathy for the British people who are misled and misused by their Governing classes. I for one feel quite sure that if you could really see the conditions of Italy and the great work which has been done and which is being carried on here every day, you British people would not submit yourselves to the suffering you are experiencing now. You would do what the Italian people did many years ago. That is clear cut all the old Governing clique and start on a clean sheet. It is no use changing your government if the same people are always at the head of it. We are always told we are fighting to maintain those customs and systems which are dear to us in England and without which they country would not be able to survive. But the very curious thing about it is that the man in the street is never able to compare the British system with that in other countries and thus see for himself the true value of the British system with which he has been forced on the British people. Now when it comes to that part of the system which concerns women and children there one part of it that I for one know xxx is absolutely wrong. Take the Hospitals in England. The major part of them are run on the voluntary system that is they rely on donations for their funds. The hospitals are perhaps one of the most important adjuncts of modern life. Most of the working classes are unable to find the money for medical attention and have to rely upon some collective system, hence the hospital. In Italy the Hospitals are built staffed and run by the state and because of this they are among the best equipped and most efficient in the world. New hospitals are going up in every populated district in spite of the war.

Now coming back to the attitude of the Italian people to British people it astounds my British listeners to know that all of the many hundreds of British people who are in Italy at the present moment are free to travel and go where they please. They have not been interned as Italians have in England. Their property has not been taken away from them and in fact they are as free as an ordinary citizen. This to me demonstrates that the Italian Government has very little to fear from the conduct of the population. In fact any subversive propaganda will have no effect on the Italian people because they are more than united around their leader they know that in him they have their future well being and salvation.

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Now I have been speaking to you on these lines because I know there are many of my British listeners who still believe that the Italian people are in a very bad state and they are not behind their government. This impression which no doubt you have formed from the paper articles you read and speeches made by your leaders is absolutely wrong. It will be impossible to alter the

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decision of the Italian people to continue the struggle to the end. Firstly because the war has not affected them as it has all other countries. Secondly because the Italian people are determined that they will not have any other form of government forced on to them. They have too many sad memories of the past to succumb to this. What is perhaps the most important reason is that they cannot be made to suffer from lack of food or the necessities of life. These are secured for the Italian people thanks to their fertile land and good climate.

I listen in regularly to the radio from London and I have heard some of the talks which have been made to the British people urging them to resist so that their form of government can be maintained. Now I do not want to say anything which would incite the British people to an unpatriotic act but I am convinced that if some of you people especially women were live in Italy for a short while you would realise that in getting rid of the Governing clique we have in England would be more than patriotic it would go some way to wiping away some of the disgraces that have been brought on the name "England" during the past twenty years.

Now you may say my talk has been political for a woman but really it isn't I have tried to compare the attitude of the Italian people to the War and there general outlook as compared with that which you English people who have not travelled abroad unfortunately have. My fifteen minutes is up now so I will say good night until my next talk; which will be at the same hour next Tuesday evening. Good night everybody.

A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bove
Claude J. Bove,
1st Lt. F.A.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

27 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 11 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rona SPERNI" on 12 November 1940 for L'Ispektorato per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Signora. Sperti

Numero 11. nella serie "From me to you" scritto e letto da Signora Sperti.

Good evening everybody..... Last night there was a nearly full moon and my husband and I decided to take a walk along the new Via dell Impero here in Rome. This road as you most likely know is one of the permanent monuments to Fascism, it having been constructed during the last ten years. It connects the famous Piazza Venezia with the Colosseum that Great Roman Amphitheatre. It is bounded on both sides by a veritable orgy of relics of the Old Roman civilisation. Forums, temples, statues and so on. The night was so peaceful that one almost imagined one was living back in the times of the Romans. This part of Rome is really very beautiful and well laid out and I was reminded of the many drives my husband and I had taken in the autumns around the Whitehall district of London. It was one of our favourite pastimes in the late evening to get out the car and go for a ride. I thought of all the digging that had been done in the Green park, Regents park and Hyde park and of all the destruction that had been done to the famous lawns of our parks in England and I compared it with the atmosphere of peace and serenity here in Rome. When we reached the Italian monument to the killed of the last war I remembered that it was armistice day in England and also that it was my mothers birthday and that my uncle who had fought in the last war had said I hope that my children never have to fight again for a cause that we know nothing about. Now those words of my uncle for a cause that we know nothing about "are very descriptive of the present war which the English people were led into mostly against their will.

I thought of what life was like in England two years ago when things were beginning to pick up and I remembered what it had changed to before I left the country. Rationing, Blackout, Food twice as dear as normal, people losing their jobs, and evacuation. Families being split up mothers not seeing their children for weeks and even months on end and then finding that they hadn't been looked after properly and were suffering from all sorts of complaints, scabies and so on. I asked myself why it was that we had been made to suffer all this in England. Italy is at war she was forced to enter the war although the Italian Government tried right up to the last moment to intervene and make peace.

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Copy of radio talk, no. 11 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Roma SPERNI" on 12 November 1940 for l'Ispektorato per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Signora. Sporni

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Italy is at war she was forced to enter the war although the Italian Government tried right up to the last moment to intervene and make peace but the Italian people have not suffered in this way neither are they suffering now. Their life has not been changed in one iota except that some of the men have been called up for service. The prices of their food has not increased in England and neither is there a shortage of anything. Rationing as I have explained in one of my previous talks to all extent and purposes does not exist in Italy that is as we know it in England. You have to pay 4/- a dozen for eggs although the winter has only started. Compare this with 1/6 a dozen the summer before. Our present Government declared war on Germany. Eggs here in Italy cost 1/6 a dozen which is not one farthing higher than they cost before Italy entered the struggle.

Silk stockings and underwear are no longer available in England and this must be a hard blow to the average British woman who always prides herself on being neatly dressed. Here and you believe me absolutely when I tell you this, good silk stockings can be bought for 1/11d a pair which is a rise of about 1d over

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peace time prices. As I said before I used to do welfare nursing in England and I know that immediately the war broke out all welfare work was stopped. The maternity clinics at the Hospitals were closed and only about two out of all the London hospitals were continuing taking maternity cases. Here in Italy not one of these essential public services has been stopped or even curtailed if anything they have been increased. This surprised me a great deal when I first landed here and I asked some friends how it was that Italy could do this and pay sufficient attention to her defence preparations. The answer I got was It is a key word of the Fascist Government that whatever happened whatever calls are placed upon industries the National health must not suffer in one degree. In other words as I see it the Italian Government and about the same than one tenth the resources of the British Government and about the same population to provide for has been able to prepare the country for a terrific struggle without denying the people one essential. This shows the difference in the efficiency of the two systems that in Italy and ours.

Now coming back to the War which I suppose is still the main topic of any conversation in England; the more I travel in Italy and see what strides the Italian people are making in spite of the virtual control of essential materials which the British have had for so long the more I realise that we have nothing to fight for in England. It will be impossible for us to get richer than we were, it will be impossible for the British people to benefit from even a victory. I once listened to a speech made by Sir Oswald Mosely long before I left the shores of England to go abroad and I remember he said "Our policy must be to look after our own business and develop our Empire which has been so sadly neglected". To make a confession I was narrow in my outlook at that time and I was so prejudiced against anything Fascist that I refused to take notice of those words. Now as an English woman I realise that his motto was full of what we call "horse sense". Even if this war goes on for another ten years I can realise that it will not effect the people of Italy but I know that even if at the end of the time we do succeed in gaining what we call a victory we shall never be able to reap its benefit. We were told we are declaring war so as to defend our Empire, South Africa Australia New Zealand and so on but have any of you ordinary British people ever been to your dominions. Have any of those millions of unemployed ever been given facilities to start a new life in any one of those Dominions that we were supposed to have fought to protect in the last war. The answer of course is xxx No! For the simple reason that they are nothing more than dens of slavery maintained for the benefit of the landed classes above all the Jew Industrialists.

We were also told and are still being told that the British people are fighting to maintain liberty and freedom of Speech yet what was the first step taken by the Government when war was declared. The restriction of Liberty of the people wholesale. Public houses now close hours earlier than they did in peace time. People are not allowed to travel to certain areas of the country. The man next door regards you as a spy or a fifth columnist and you perhaps have the same opinion of him. In fact everybody goes in fear of his fellow country man a most disastrous situation.

Here in Italy there is none of this atmosphere of fear and mistrust. One can know that the other is good Italian and is united with all Italians

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Here in Italy there is none of this atmosphere of fear and mistrust. One man knows that the other is good Italian and is united with all Italians in the decision to see this struggle which was forced upon them through to, the end. Now in saying this I do not mean that ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ most English people are not patriotic or that they do not love their country this would not be true what I mean to point out is that you English people least of all had no reason whatever to fight and right now more so. There was never any sense to our country we had ample of everything what we needed then and what we need now is proper form of Government. A Government that has the interests of the man in the street at heart not a Government that thinks in terms of bank notes and Pinnaciers.

As an example in London supposed to be the richest city in the world and I do not doubt that it was before the war, there are miles and miles of slums which are not fit even for animals to live in. What is more disastrous is that nothing has been done either in the last 10 or 20 years to meet the situation. Anybody who has the intuition to realise this and wants to move out

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to the suburbs has no other choice than tying himself up for life with some Jewish controlled Building Society which is in full swing with the Catch as Catch can builders. The famous and very recent Mrs Borden case will do as an excellent example of this. She was called the "Modern Portia" because she defended herself in Court. It transpired at the trial that the Jew builders in connivance with the building Society had forged the Agreement. Here in Italy especially in the towns where the problem is more acute the Government has financed and controlled the erection of large modern and luxurious blocks of flats which are well within the range of the ordinary worker as far as rent is concerned. No Italian is left at the mercy of the Monoid classes so that they can exploit him. Now all this conversation of mine started with me describing the serenity and calmness of Rome. Well Rome is not the only Calm and Serene city in the Italian peninsula. I was talking to a friend of mine who has just returned from Naples last night. He tells me that the Serenity of the city was disturbed by an air raid alarm the other night and that in view of the constant threats to bombard Italian cities most people thought they would see fireworks however they had to be content with hearing guns in the distance. He tells me that during the alarm one old man looked at the sky and said those English they like Naples so much that they even try to get here by aeroplane. Well xxxxx Listeners I could go on talking for much longer but I am only allowed half an hour so I must take my leave of you once more. I should like to remind you however that I will be speaking to you again next week at the same hour and on the same day

.....GOOD NIGHT EVERYBODY.GOOD NIGHT.....

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A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bove
Claude J. Bove,
1st Lt. P.A.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

24 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, No. 12 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Roma SPERMI" on 19 November 1940 for L'Ispektorato per la Radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Signora. Spermi

No. 12 nella serie "From me to you";..... 19th November 1940 XIX

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Just before I arrived at the studio here this evening I had a sort of argument with an Italian woman who hearing that I was recently in London wanted to hear something of conditions there. Our talk drifted from a description of London and the English country side to conditions in war time. We got to talking about unemployed and she refused to believe me when I told her there were more than 600,000 unemployed. She said she could imagine that there would be some unemployed in peace time in England but she couldn't see how this could be in war time when presumably every Britisher was working on war work.

Now this lady is a typical example of the average Italian woman she has no hatred or venom for the British people. She admires the English woman for her many good qualities but she cannot understand how today Mrs Smith or Mrs Jones not to mention Englishmen can go on blindly believing the rubbish which the papers are printing about Italy. I had a copy of the Daily Mirror with me dated the 15th October 1940. I translated for her an article reporting the court proceedings at Remon against a man who said to some friends "we stand little chance of winning the war" This man a worker was fined twenty five pounds or one month's imprisonment. That lady I was speaking to said do they really do that in great Britain to people who express their opinion. If they do then all I can say is it is about time the British people woke up and learned what freedom is.

I thought about this woman's statement and I realised that one of the worst effects the war has had on the English people is that their liberty has been completely taken away from them. I remember when our papers were publishing tirades against Signor Mussolini and Hitler calling them oppressors and tyrants when the war started we were told that the British people were fighting to free Europe and above all the Italian and German people from Tyranny. They told us and I say us because I am English and at that time listened to what our leaders said, that 90% of the German and Italian people were against their governments. That people went in fear of the castor oil squads and the Fascist and Nazi thugs. That German and Italians were afraid to speak in hearing of somebody for fear of being arrested and sent to a concentration camp. But now we find that this very same state of affairs exists in England; in the country that has always considered

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We were told that the Fascist form of Government is all wrong because it is based on xxx oppression of the masses. Mr. Churchill and other British parliamentarians said that we will win this war because our system of government

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what they called democracy, is based upon freedom of criticism and freedom of speech and a true conception of liberty. xxx I noticed however that as soon as the Government had decided to declare war they immediately passed a series of acts which took away all and every semblance of liberty that has ever existed. An act was passed which suspended the Habeas Corpus act which is xxx or was the foundation stone of what we English people have always regarded as our birthright "Our Liberty". This means that the police on the orders of an official can arrest anybody and keep them in prison without lodging any charge. They can also forbid them from seeing relatives or Solicitors and so on. We were forced to have identity cards so that the authorities could keep a check on us and so on. Now in Italy there have been no regulations passed such as these. No additional laws have been passed or even examined. One is free to go where he pleases he can say what he wants without any fear of being arrested and sent to prison. Our English Government told us that being governed by them was much more efficient and better for the people, yet when they came to fight the fascist countries they adopted those very same measures which they accused Signor Mussolini and Herr Hitler of using. To me there appears to be something very wrong with all this. As matters stand today instead of the average Britisher having any control in the destinies of the country or what is more important himself he is controlled by a small clique that has supreme powers to even condemn him to death if necessary without trial. Really listeners when you come to talk about it don't you see through it like I do. Don't you realize that to talk about fighting Hitler and Mussolini and Fascism and Nazism is nothing more than a mere bluff. That it is nothing more than an insult to your intelligence. Can any of you listeners say that you have visited Italy and Germany and that you have seen these supposed atrocities with your own eyes? Of course you can't. You rely like I used to on the papers which unfortunately for our country are controlled by millionaires and the men who we have returned to Parliament. Do you really believe that all Italians are xxx barbarians? Can't you imagine that they are human people like yourself and have the same feelings as yourselves? Can't you realize that you are suffering untold misery so that the Government classes can benefit. They tell us that Mr. Bevin is a man of the people they tell us that other men who have risen to high positions are true representatives of the people but the fact remains that all our leaders today come from a few families and if they haven't been to Eton, Harrow Marlborough or some other society school then they stand no chance. These people who have been allowed to ascend to the higher positions are mere puppets who have sold themselves to the governing classes.

I remember xxx when Sir Kingsley Wood who was then Minister for Health paid a visit to the Hospital where I was working in London. His ignorance of Medical matters was obvious from the first question he asked the Medical Officer and we nurse who were lined up to welcome him could hardly refrain from laughing aloud. I am mentioning this to prove my point. At that time he was boosted up as the best Minister for Health we had had and we were told unanimously by all the papers from the Daily Herald to the Times.

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Now listeners out of a chance conversation I have rambled at some length on the political differences between xxxxxxxxxxxx Italy and England and I should not have done. However I feel you will agree with me that all

I have said is fact and is true. You like have experienced it. The difference between us being that I have had the opportunity of seeing the other side of the story and you have to be content with the view that is dished up to you.

Before I close this talk I should like to tell you something about the great work which is being done by the Italian Red Cross society. This organisation is really working at great speed. It is taking care of the British wounded which come in from Africa or who are picked up at sea after some Naval battle. It also takes care of the Greek wounded who are beginning to arrive in Italy. The Italian Red Cross has seached and has found Italians who speak both English and Greek so that the wounded men can be comforted and can have somebody to speak to them. It has arranged knitting classes and sewing classes where women give their time free and in addition provide the material for comforts for the wounded men. A friend of mine in fact a neighbour who gives her services free to the Red Cross was telling me about a young English airman ~~xxxxxx~~ who was recently wounded in an action. She speaks English and busines herself going round comforting the British prisoners. The young man she spoke about was only 18 years old and had never been out-side of England before he was sent on service. He was very upset because he had not communicated with his -----

A true copy of original.

Claude J. Dove
Claude J. Dove,
1st Lt. F.A.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION

22 April 1945

Copy of radio talk, no. 13 in a series entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signora Rona SPERNI" on 26 November 1940 for L'Ispektorato per la radio e la Televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

Signora.....Sperni

No. 13 nella serie "From me to you"

26.11.40

Good evening listeners.

The war has now been on for over fourteen months and I suppose there are many of you who are wondering when it will finish, when you will be able to return to your homes, when you will be able to see your children again, or maybe wondering whether you will live to see the end. No doubt you are mostly if not all disappointed because the war did not finish months ago as you were all told it would. Every time a Minister gets up to speak he talks of fighting on no matter how long the war will last, and I suppose this makes you wonder whether it will be possible to go on suffering the hardships that you are at present. Although I have been out of England for a matter of four months I can well imagine what the general situation must be like. I remember those long months of inactivity those months of depression when the only consolation we got for the hardships which were already at that time unbearable were the assurances that the German Nation was about to crumble. I know for a fact that most of us believed this we were told and we believed that if conditions are as bad as this in England what must they be like in Germany. When Italy entered the War everybody said the Axis will fall quicker than ever now because Italy has less even than Germany.

Well listeners I can tell you that there are more serious aspects to the war than rationing. As I have pointed out before there is practically no rationing in Italy but what is more important there has been no disorganization of the life of the nation. I dare say that you would be able to put up with rationing you expected it anyway and I know that British people are sufficiently patriotic enough to put up with some hardship for their country. What are you suffering for the benefit of your country today? I can assure you that you aren't. You are suffering so that a few monied people can benefit. Whatever is the outcome of this war it should be obvious to you that you will never be able to benefit from it. All those of you who have been forced to leave your homes and who have been separated from your children, do you think it possible that you will ever be able to return to them when the war is over? About all those hundreds of thousands of men who have left their

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In Italy although the war has been on for practically seven months

life has not changed one scrap. There has been no rise in the unemployed in fact there are no unemployed. There has been no evacuation either compulsory or voluntary. Families have not been split up some members in one part of the country and some in another. The prices of food have remained the same. There has been no destruction of Italian cities and factories as you have had in Britain. This is not because the British air forces has not tried to bomb Italian cities but because the Italian statesmen have been wise enough to keep the war away from the Italian mainland. Because as I see it, they had the foresight to realise what a war meant. Italy has not even started to feel the war. In this country it is difficult to tell that a war is on.

Last Sunday I went to mass at St. Peter's Church as the Pope was making a speech. As I walked through St. Peter's Square which was full of happy people my thoughts turned to those of you in England in London or some other city and I wondered what your mood must have been like at that moment. I thought about those of you who were perhaps eating a meal at some rest centre. I thought of the little children who perhaps had not had a good night's sleep in days and being a mother with children of my own I felt very deeply for you all, and like many another Italian mother I wondered how long you would put up with it. If the situation in Italy were as bad as that in England, if the Government here had made the colossal mistakes that the present British Government had made I would say that there would be more than a possibility of the Italian people deciding to end the war. But this is not the case. The Italian people have been through their torment they have experienced all the suffering that you are today and they know that they have the right form of Government. They know that whatever happens they will never suffer from the war as you are doing. They are fighting for an ideal which is justice for all nations but the British people are not fighting they are resisting a new world order. They are existing in order to maintain a system from which the majority of people have never benefitted and will never benefit.

A small event took place in Italy last week which normally would not have attracted any attention but I am going to tell you of it because small as it is it gives some idea of the way in which life is proceeding normally in Italy in spite of the rumours which are being fed to you British people. Last week a party of about 150 children arrived in Genoa from Libya by boat. These children are the sons and daughters of Italian colonists in the Italian colony. These youngsters are going to one of the Fascist winter holiday camps, in the mountains where they will be able to spend a month or two's holiday free of charge. Now the fact that these children have travelled by sea from Africa to Italy without any incidents goes to show that the war has not even disturbed the communications and traffic between Italy and her colonies. The children arrived in charge of a school mistress and several children's nurses who look after them during their journey to the camp where they are handed over to the Hostel authorities. The kiddies do not have to bring anything with them they are provided with clothes by the Government during their holiday so that the trip does not cost their parents a penny. Now in my opinion this incident is one of the best proofs one can have of the normal way in which life is continuing here. You will agree with I know that the Government is keeping news from you about the damage which is being caused to the ports and other important war objectives. I see that

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For the first time in history the people of our islands are being made to suffer untold misery from a war and this is because the present Government

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has badly bungled the affairs of state. There was no need for this war at all. The Italian people do not bear malice to the British people as I have told you already but they know that there will never be peace for Europe until our system is done away with. What is more disgraceful is that the Government deliberately mislead the people by lulling them into a sense of false security; by telling them that Germany and least of all Italy were not in a position to fight. The fact is, and I have been able to see this with my own eyes, Italy is absolutely self sufficient; she does not have to rely on one iota being imported. One thing alone proves the wisdom of the Italian government. Nearly every car here runs on a home produced fuel this fuel was developed on the orders of the Government and the result has been that motor-ing is going on just as it did in England in peace time, that is the people who need to use cars for their business and livelihood do not have to worry about making the ration last out the month. They can use their cars when they want and for much less cost. Well everybody I have come to the end of my fifteen minutes which is after all only a short period but I do hope I have been able to show you that in reality Italy is not suffering at all from the war whereas the British people are really as you all know very much hard put to it to continue to say the least. As far as I can see the war could continue for ten years and it would still make no difference to the Italian people, thanks to the Fascist Government.

Well good night everybody until next time good night.

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A true copy of original.

Claude J. Pove
Claude J. Pove,
1st Lt. F.A.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
C.M.F.
PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMISSION
SECURITY DIVISION.

22 April 1945

Copy of radio talk in English, entitled "From Me to You", broadcast by "Signa. Roma SPERINI" on 10 December 1940, for the Ispettorato per la radio e la televisione, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Rome.

From me to youSignora Sporni.

10003

Good evening everybody.

During the past three weeks I have been travelling through some of the country districts of Italy in which the majority of the Italian people live and I think it would be interesting to you to know what kind of life they lead and just how they are faring during the War.

In the first place Italy is very different from England because she is first and foremost an agricultural country. The population for the most part is very evenly spread out and relies upon the wealth of the land for a living. In Italy we do not find those huge concentrations such as we have in the Midlands and the North Midlands of England where millions of people are employed in the factories. These people as you know have to rely on employment for their living and in the event of being unemployed they lack the where-with-allis of life. For the most part Italy is a huge collection of small holdings each family having his own farm which produces the necessities of life, such as flour; meat; eggs; butter and so on. It is very rare for an Italian farmer to go into a town to buy anything other than boots or clothing because he produces all his own products. This self sufficiency of the Italian people was recognised as a great asset to the nation and was, as you most likely know encouraged and fostered by the Fascist Government. The Italian who lives in the country is a very lucky person to my idea of thinking he has not suffered in one iota from the War. I passed through many of the small country villages and was amazed at the serenity, life goes on in them as it has done for centuries. There are no ration offices no military no sand-bags or any other of the adjuncts of war which so much marred the beautiful English country side. These Italian people are very simple in their mode of living they do not wear the stylish dainty shoes that the people of the cities wear. The women do not rely on the modern methods of washing their clothes such as the use of patented powdered soaps they use the old fashioned methods of washing and bleaching which to me seems just as clean and efficient. Of course they have the opportunity of using these methods; I

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Now you may ask yourself, and quite rightly, how can this be the case when certain things have been rationed in Italy? The answer to that would rationing only affects the city people who form a very small part indeed of the Italian Nation. Rationing only affects those people who have to buy their food from stores. There is no secret about the fact that the Italian people have made some sacrifices for their country. This applies to any nation that is at war. In some countries the restrictions being much more severe

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than in other according to the geographical position of them and the extent of their preparedness. It has been said that there is no Coffee in Italy and some people have an idea that this is a great sacrifice. The fact of the matter is however the majority of the Italian have never even tasted coffee. Where you would drink tea or coffee the Italian would drink wine which he makes himself. Coming back to the rationing in Italy as I said once before this cannot be considered restriction in the real sense of the word the amount of each thing that is rationed being more than enough for maintaining the standard of health of the nation and certainly enough for the average healthy appetite of the citizen. Obviously there has had to be some restriction but as I have just said this only applies to the cities the remainder of the population the greater part of it is not affected. In spite of this however the Italian city dwellers are much better off than their British counterparts. In England meat has been rationed on a price basis. Now this system at first seems to be the most equivocal but on analysis it shows great cunningness on the part of the authorities. It works out this way. When rationing first started you were mostly able to buy about a pound of steak or one pound and a quarter of lamb per person per week. However as the country's meat supplies got scarcer and the price goes up your ration gets less. Or again if the authorities want to restrict your ration all they have to do is to increase the price of the meat. In this way the public does not notice that the rationing has been tightened up. In Italy on the other hand we have four meatless days a week on which days one can only buy lamb and goat meat. However one can buy as much as one pleases without any coupons or restrictions. On the other three days meat can also be bought without coupons quite freely. This means that those people who are large meat eaters can have meat every day of the week. What is the most important thing about it all is that the price of meat has not risen by more than a penny a pound for all kinds. I do my own shopping and I can tell you that the price of meat here after about seven months of war is slightly lower than it was in England before the war. I know from my own experience that the ration allowance in England is not sufficient for more than two days at the most.

The greatest inconvenience from rationing is "how far does it affect the life which you are used to". For example the English people well known as great meat eaters whereas the Italians are for the most part vegetarians by this I mean that they seldom eat meat in normalcy. Therefore meat rationing is more of a hardship to you British than it is to the Italians. However I suppose you would be able to make do with other foods if they were available, but as you know owing to the lack of attention paid to farming in England for the past fifty years there is a great shortage of every food stuff. I suppose you will all have suffered from the shortage of onions which have reached a phenomenal price. This is just one example of the lack of foresight on the part of the British leaders. In some cases it is more than a lack of foresight it is the deliberate action of the authorities in closing their eyes to a situation which they were well aware of. Onions could have been produced in England by Britishers, but this would not have served the interests of those people who have made their fortunes from importing food stuffs from abroad. I need hardly point out that they are for the most part Jews I suppose all of you at some time or another would have noticed that practically all the companies at Covent Garden, or any of the other central markets are Jewish. I have heard much talk about the lack of food

and some people have an idea that the Italian have never even tasted of the matter is however the majority of the Italian would drink wine coffee. Where you would drink tea or coffee the Italian would drink wine which he makes himself. Coming back to the rationing in Italy as I said once before this cannot be considered restriction in the real sense of the word the amount of each thing that is rationed being more than enough for maintaining the standard of health of the nation and certainly enough for the average healthy appetite of the citizen. Obviously there has had to be some restriction but as I have just said this only applies to the cities the remainder of the population the greater part of it is not affected. In spite of this however the Italian city dwellers are much better off than their British counterparts. In England meat has been rationed on a price basis. Now this system at first seems to be the most equivocal but on analysis it shows great cunningness on the part of the authorities. It works out this way. When rationing first started you were mostly able to buy about a pound of steak or one pound and a quarter of lamb per person per week. However as the country's meat supplies got scarcer and the price goes up your ration gets less. Or again if the authorities want to restrict your ration all they have to do is to increase the price of the meat. In this way the public does not notice that the rationing has been tightened up. In Italy on the other hand we have four meatless days a week on which days one can only buy lamb and goat meat. However one can buy as much as one pleases without any coupons or restrictions. On the other three days meat can also be bought without coupons quite freely. This means that those people who are large meat eaters can have meat every day of the week. What is the most important thing about it all is that the price of meat has not risen by more than a penny a pound for all kinds. I do my own shopping and I can tell you that the price of meat here after about seven months of war is slightly a lower than it was in England before the war. I know from my own experience that the ration allowance in England is not sufficient for more than two days at the most.

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Our problem is one of food and making things comfortable for our families. As far as this aspect of the war is concerned the Italian mother and her family enjoy a very enviable position for all they have suffered there might not even be a war on. As I said this is not only a result of their geographical situation but also a direct result of much attention and study by the Italian government which has for its principal dictum the welfare of the nation.

When Signor Mussolini addressed the Italian Nation some days ago he was

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xxx able to say to them and I am going to use his own words "the sacrifices which have been called for from the Italian people are very tolerable indeed "When I heard these words I wondered whether Mr. Morrison could say the same to the British Nation. Well listeners this brings me to the end of my fifteen minutes so that I shall have to say good bye untill I can speak to you again Good bye everybody. Good bye.....

A true copy of original.

Claude J. Bove
Claude J. Bove,
1st Lt. F. A.

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