

TRANSLATION OF G.53, DIE ERSTE DIKTATUR GESTÜRZT

(OBVERSE)

THE FIRST DICTATORSHIP HAS FALLEN

On the 10th of July Allied Forces landed in Sicily. Fifteen days later Mussolini's Fascist regime lay in ruins. The first breach had been struck in the walls of the prison of Europe.

Two weeks after the landing the greater part of Sicily, including the capital of Palermo, was in Allied hands. The population had expected the Allies and treated them as liberators. Italian troops surrendered in masses. Italian soldiers had had enough of Fascism, and the people had had enough of Fascism. Soldiers and workers, peasants and citizens, intellectual and religious circles no longer supported the Fascist cause. Mussolini had to go.

Thus ended the first dictatorship.

Hundreds of times Mussolini had boasted about the strength of his regime: the first blow swept it away. With this first blow struck at the "unconquerable" southern flank of the fortress of Europe the first step towards political and intellectual freedom was taken.

One of the first measures of the new Italian Government was the dissolution of the Fascist Party. The bubble has been pricked: without resistance, with hardly any fuss. Less than a few weeks ago the Goebbelses of Mussolini-Farinacci, Gayda, and Appelius, were still screaming loudly about "granite-like determination" and "imperturbable calm". The only thing that one hears from them today is that they have been put behind bars. Nobody is interested in them any more.

But the Italian people are on the move. They want peace and freedom. Already during the first days great demonstrations are reported from Milan. The workers leave their factories and storm the Fascist Party offices and newspaper offices – the strongholds and poison kitchens of their oppressors. The army looks on or applauds. Woe betide anyone who still dares to wear a black shirt in the streets of an Italian town!

Two cries are heard again and again rising from the masses that fill the streets and squares of the Italian towns:

Peace! And Freedom!

These two words express everything that the Italian people want. They will get both.

Mussolini's Fascist dictatorship was the first in Europe. It was the first system that showed others how to strangle freedom, destroy the soul, humiliate man, organise murder and preach war of conquest. And now once again it has become the symbol for the fate which awaits the oppressor. He must fall, for he is guilty. **A Government which does not consult its people, but only dominates it, is alone responsible – also for defeat. Total its rulership, total its failure – total its eclipse.**

(REVERSE)

[Postage stamp showing Hitler and Mussolini]

"I have in the last weeks been reading a great deal about the Italian revolution. And it seemed to me that I might be reading the history of my own Party: so many similarities – the same struggle, the same enemies".

(Hitler, 20th January 1942)