

Badoglio Rumored Head Of Italian Peace Party

Germans Rush 60,000 'Tourists,' Gestapo Agents

London—(P)—A series of round-about and unconfirmed reports from the continent and the Near East said today that Adolf Hitler had sent 60,000 "tourists" and squads of Gestapo agents into Italy to prop up sagging Fascist morale and to build hurriedly coastal fortifications against possible Allied invasion.

Tass, the Russian news agency, and diplomatic sources in Ankara, were the sources of these reports, while Reuters, British news agency, distributed another dispatch from the Turkish capital quoting recent arrivals from Italy as saying a separate peace had been started under leadership of Marshal Pietro Badoglio, Mussolini's "unofficial opponent."

Anti-Fascist Group

The tourists were alleged to have been filtering into Italy for the past three months, while Tass said the Gestapo men had been rushed in following Allied successes in North Africa.

According to Reuters account, an anti-Fascist group headed by Badoglio, the conqueror of Ethiopia, approached the Vatican to mediate, with the full knowledge of King Vittorio Emanuele, Crown Prince Umberto and Count Galeazzo Ciano, Il Duce's son-in-law and foreign minister. The British news agency went on to say that Mussolini quarreled violently with Ciano.

Dispatches from Bern, Switzerland, last April 28 said there had been Rome consultations by the king in which Mussolini and Ciano were left out. At that time it was said a government shake-up and a "change of policy" might be forthcoming. Badoglio's name was mentioned in those reports.

New Forts Erected

Added to today's list of unconfirmed reports was one by Tass under a Geneva dateline and broadcast by the Moscow radio quoting "a well-informed source" saying that Heinrich Himmler, head of Nazi police forces, was speeding up organization of black shirt SS units to put down revolt in conquered countries.

Tass asserted the biggest fortifications being erected in Italy were on the Adriatic.

The Soviet news agency said the greatest activity was on the heel of the "Italian boot" along Taranto strait.

This was among a crop of continental reports of growing apprehension and sagging morale caused in Italy by Allied success in North Africa.