

# Umberto, Badoglio Rumored In Algiers on Peace Mission

London —(AP)— Reuters reported from Algiers today rumors were current that Italian peace envoys, possibly including Crown Prince Umberto and Marshal Pietro Badoglio, were in the French African capital as Premier Mussolini presided over a cabinet meeting in Rome which the Italian radio said approved new decrees.

Official London quarters said they had no confirmation of the rumors of peace envoys in Algiers, and efforts to verify the rumors there were unavailing. Umberto commands an army group; Badoglio was deposed as chief of staff early in the war.

The report recalled the statement of President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, made in January at Casablanca, that only "unconditional surrender" would be accepted from any weakening Axis nation.

Mussolini stepped back into the limelight last night after a week of strange silence, declaring nine threatened southern Italian provinces "operation zones." This meant

martial law was extended to most of the Italian boot south of Naples, capital of Napoli.

The Rome radio, in a report recorded by The Associated Press, said the affected provinces were Foggia, Bari, Brindis, Lecce, Taranto, Cosenza, Cantanzara, Matera and part of Reggio Calabri. Sardinia and Sicily, besieged Italian Mediterranean outpost islands, long have been under martial law and "zones of operation."

The Morocco radio asserted that the Fascist party directorate had asked Mussolini to relinquish the entire conduct of the war to the party. This unconfirmed report, recorded by The Associated Press, suggested that strife within the party was rampant and that efforts might be under way to oust Mussolini in a move preliminary to eventual bargaining with the Allies.

Trustworthy reports from inside Europe said a tide of Italian bitterness has been rising against Mussolini, whose adventure into war already has cost Italy all of her

African empire and the Mediterranean islands of Pantelleria, Lampedusa, Lampione and Linosa, Italy, too, has been brought under devastating aerial bombardment from Africa and from the British Isles, and the whole of the exposed peninsula is within range of bombers. Moreover, Mussolini's deals with the Germans have brought increasing dominance from the senior Axis power.

These reports said Mussolini was attempting to shift the blame for his errors upon the Fascist party national directorate.

(CBS reported from Zurich, Switzerland, that the Italian government had ordered the evacuation of all nonessential personnel from Naples and the larger towns of Sicily by July 10. The same source said the evacuation of Sardinia would be completed by the end of June and the Vichy radio said Pierre Laval, French chief of government, had been conferring in Paris with the prefect of Corsica. That French island, north of Sardinia, is occupied by Italy.)