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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Karen Adele Tosi for the Master of Arts
in History presented July 29, 1976

Title: The PCI Resurgent: 1943-1945

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

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The Italian Communist Party (PCI) emerged from the chaos of the Italian defeat in 1943 as a powerful and cohesive movement. Based upon organizational development throughout the years of Fascist rule in Italy, plus a combination of vigorous partisan activities and a willingness to compromise politically in exchange for governmental participation, the PCI showed promise for achieving economic and social change in Italy. Conservative countermeasures and Allied pressures, however, diminished the Communist advantage until, by 1947, the Party was no longer represented in the postwar government. The success apparent in the economic arena due to the Christian Democrat's program initiated in their monocolore government of 1947 and an East-West demarcation

internationally, with the Soviets gaining control in Eastern Europe, created for the general elections of April, 1948 an atmosphere ripe for Christian Democrat exploitation. The election was disastrous for the PCI; the combined Communist-Socialist ticket drew slightly in excess of four million votes, one million fewer than the coalition had gathered in the 1946 elections.

THE PCI RESURGENT: 1943-1945

by

KAREN ADELE TOSI

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requirements for the degree of

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Mussolini came to power in 1922. Four short years later, in 1926, he had deprived every opposition party of the parliamentary mandate. Italy became a totalitarian state; the leaders of the parties who opposed Mussolini and his rule either went into exile and hiding or they were arrested and imprisoned as they attempted clandestinely to bring about the end of the dictatorship.

Mussolini dreamed of Italy as a great power. His foreign policy was one of nationalist and imperialist aspirations. He invaded Abyssinia in 1935 and conquered her in 1936. He joined with Hitler in the Rome-Berlin Axis in the same year and supported Germany's annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland, and in her occupation of Bohemia and Moravia. In 1939 Albanian borders were violated and the country subdued by Italian forces. Finally, in May, 1939 Mussolini formed a defensive and offensive alliance with Germany.

Though he had claimed the status of a nonbelligerent at the opening of the Second World War, in mid-1940 Mussolini declared war on Britain and France in order to share in the spoils of Germany's successful campaigns in the North. However, Italian troops were ill-prepared for the rigors of the conflict. Expeditionary forces in Libya, Abyssinia, and later Greece, were decisively routed. Instead of Mussolini's dreams of Mediterranean hegemony, Il Duce was forced to rely upon

German forces, eventually relinquishing the prerogatives of the Commando Supremo within its own theater. Even with substantial German support in Libya, Tunisia, and the Balkans, Italy's defenses were gradually forced back to the homeland. The price for German preeminence was an Italy left relatively undefended in favor of Axis campaigns in the East.

On July 25, 1943 Mussolini was deposed and imprisoned. In August Marshal Pietro Badoglio's government accepted the inevitable and began negotiations with the resurgent Allies. Nazi Germany's domination of the affairs of Italy, however, was not so easily dispelled.

In September, 1943 Italy was a country divided. In the South the Allies had both occupied and liberated their reluctant foes. In the North the Germans had usurped civil authority, with Mussolini's neo-Fascist Social Republic as a figurehead. Faced with this set of circumstances anti-Fascist Committees of Liberation made up of representatives from existent political parties began to emerge openly in the South and clandestinely in the North. Their immediate aim was to rid Italy of the Germans and the Fascists. Their long range aim concentrated on the rebuilding and restructuring of Italian society.

Between 1943 and 1944 a provisional coalition government comprised of representatives from the six major political parties and the monarchy was formed, and shortly after the Allied troops reached Rome it began to operate from that city. One of the parties represented in the coalition government was the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI), the Italian Communist Party. The PCI had been established in Italy in 1921 when a group of dissidents broke from the ranks of the Italian Socialist Party. During Mussolini's consolidation of power, primarily in 1926 and in the years immediately following, Communist leaders were

either arrested and imprisoned or they went into exile. Throughout the years of Fascist domination in Italy the Communists aggressively opposed Mussolini and his forces. Wherever they were able--in joining Popular Fronts, in fighting in the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War, in organizing the clandestine effort in Italy--they fought the Fascists. During the crucial period from 1943 through 1945 when the Italians were fighting to rid their country of the German menace, they more than any other group demonstrated acumen in the political arena and initiative in the Resistance movement.

As participants in the Rome provisional government and as the leaders of the Resistance, the Communists clearly put into practice the dictates of their fallen leader Antonio Gramsci: in the South they carried on the "war of position" while in the North they fought the "war of movement." The "war of position" and "war of movement" are two metaphors created by Antonio Gramsci in an effort to deal with the problem of how Communism succeeds in an advanced society. Gramsci maintained that revolutionary strategy is of necessity different in backward societies and advanced societies. The war of movement, the use of guerilla tactics to destroy the superstructure of society with "lightening blows at key points," is the tactic to be used in the backward societies. The war of position is, in political terms, the long campaign of "passive resistance" inside the superstructure of bourgeois society. The revolutionary party must work within the parliamentary structure on its (parliament's) own terms. Gramsci believed that the war of position was the primary tactic in Western advanced societies, but he also felt that the war of movement must be continued (in the factories and in the field) in order to "convert success into revolution."

As a party which was an active participant in the provisional governments of the resistance years, the PCI was determined to maintain its status. It looked forward to the postwar years when it would function with viability and credibility as a working party within the governmental structure. As the leader of the Resistance its goals were twofold: to drive out the Germans and to prepare for the restructuring of Italian society. What follows is an analysis of the role played by the Italian Communist Party in Italian politics and the Resistance movement during the years 1943 through 1945.

CHAPTER II

OUTLINE: THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN ITALY 1921-1941

In looking at this particular period for the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI), the Italian Communist Party, three issues will be explored. The first will deal with crises within the evolution of the Party. The second will discuss the Party and its relationship to Fascism, and finally, the third will concern the Togliatti leadership from abroad and its clandestine efforts within the peninsula. A discussion of these three issues serves to point out the long-term presence of the PCI in the Italian socio-economic scene. More importantly, an understanding of the roots of the PCI in the Italian national framework will lead to a comprehension of the strength of the Party manifested during the armistice and liberation periods 1943 through 1945.

The first area of discussion covers the early years, roughly 1921 to 1926. In 1921 the PCI came into existence. The Communist Party in Italy, like Communist parties in other European states, came into being as a result of internal conflicts within already existing Socialist parties and also because of stimulus from abroad, that is, the success of the Bolsheviks and the appearance of German Communism.¹ The Italian Socialists had for a long period been in conflict concerning methods of operation based upon differences in philosophical outlook. There were

¹ Sidney Tarrow, Peasant Communism in Southern Italy (New Haven, 1967), pp. 101-102.

two main branches: the maximalists and the reformists.² A new group arose in the Party shortly after the First World War which was in favor of using the war in any way to promote revolution within the Italian state. This new group included such leaders as Amedeo Bordiga from Naples and a coterie who would come to be called the Torinese intellettuali: Antonio Gramsci, Palmiro Togliatti, Umberto Terracini, and Angelo Tasca. These men were the real founders of the PCI. At the Seventeenth Congress of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) in Leghorn in January, 1921, this radical faction walked out of the meeting and out of the ranks of the PSI forever. This extreme decision was reached for three reasons: Firstly, and in general, the Bordiga-Gramsci faction felt no accommodation could be reached with the moderates or with the maximalists, secondly, and most importantly, they could not at all agree with the decision of the PSI delegates sent to the 1920 Congress of the Third International who had refused to accept all of the International's Twenty-One Conditions, two in particular. One stated that the names of parties would now include the word Communist as opposed to the word Socialist; the other declared that all parties belonging to the Comintern would expel reformists from their respective organizations.³ Thirdly, and specifically, the "Communists" were disgusted with the success at the polls of the Socialist Party moderates in the postwar elections. For all these

² The history of Italian socialism is the history of conflicts between the maximalists and the reformists. The maximalists who were based in Milan had as the foundation of their philosophy orthodox Marxism; they were in favor of revolutionary action and were opposed to participating in parliamentary democracy. The reformists supported gradual social change within the framework of a parliamentary system.

³ John M. Cammett, Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism (Stanford, 1967), pp. 104-107.

reasons, the PCI had been born and it did take root. Though this was the case, all was not to be easy; the new party was going to have internal problems of its own.

Initially the PCI had its "immediate elan of unity." It accepted all of Lenin's theses, evident in its Organic Act of Constitution.

The Theses proclaimed the imminent dissolution of capitalism and the necessity of armed conflict between the workers and the bourgeois state, the hegemonic role of the proletarian party, and the goal of the destruction of the bourgeois state and the immediate establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat.⁴

Underneath this apparent manifestation of unity, however, ideological conflict between the Bordiga camp and the Gramsci camp was brewing. Bordiga was from non-industrial Naples, while Gramsci had spent his political life in the industrial center of Turin; in outlook they were definitely different. Bordiga and his followers felt that first an overthrow of the capitalist state must occur and then would follow the construction of socialism. Gramsci, on the other hand, who had first-hand experience amid the industrial turmoil of Turin, felt that the capitalist state could be changed from within as a first step towards, and in preparation for, the workers' revolution. Towards this end, he and his followers had begun to establish the Consigli di Fabbrica modeled on the idea of the soviets. These workers' councils had as their ultimate goal, through gradual escalation, the takeover by the workers of the means of production. In 1919 Gramsci had written:

The socialist state already exists potentially in the institutions of the social life of the exploited working class. To tie these institutions together...to centralize them powerfully...means creating from then on a true and real workers' democracy.⁵

⁴Tarrow, pp 102-103.

⁵Tarrow, p. 103.

And during the labor movement in Turin in 1920, he and the Ordine Nuovo group had fought with G. M. Serrati concerning the possession of power.⁶ Gramsci and his "Communists" of Turin believed that the masses could be elevated only by possessing power. Serrati and his maximalists of Milan dictated that the possession of power was the culmination of the general elevation of the proletariat.⁷

Amedeo Bordiga, however, totally disagreed with Gramsci's thinking on this point, and he accused him and his followers of espousing a reformist position. "Bordiga's greatest fear was that the Communist movement would be 'contaminated' by the values of 'bourgeois liberalism' and democracy, whether these values were expressed by traditional 'democrats' or Italian Socialists."⁸ As far as Bordiga was concerned there could be no acceptance of these values, values he saw promulgated by Gramsci. For him, as opposed to Gramsci, the purity of the party was much more important than winning over the large numbers of the working class. The only really important factor needed for a productive revolution was a "truly revolutionary elite" which would enact his (Bordiga's) own intractable, Marxist-oriented plan. To his way of thinking, there was no room for the Consigli di Fabbrica.⁹ Antonio

⁶ Ordine Nuovo (The New Order) was the group established by Antonio Gramsci in 1919 in Turin. This group--it took its name from the left-wing Socialist Party publication also founded by Gramsci--began the drive for the workers' control of the factories by establishing the Consigli di Fabbrica mentioned above.

G. M. Serrati was a maximalist Socialist leader from Milan and also the editor of Avanti!, the Socialist Party Daily.

⁷ Cammett, p. 103.

⁸ Cammett, p. 159.

⁹ Cammett, pp. 159-160.

Gramsci was the winner in this internal struggle of ideology between himself and Amedeo Bordiga. Before his arrest in 1926, and with his Lyons Theses with which he set out to frame the Italian road to Communism, he had become the leader of the PCI both intellectually and politically.

The second area of discussion under consideration also covers the early years 1921 through 1926, but from a different perspective. These are the years when Fascism was establishing itself as the only political power in Italy, and in these years is born the seed of the long-term struggle between the Italian Communists and the Fascists. What needs to be considered during these years is the relationship between Mussolini and the Communists and perhaps some indication of the consequences which developed as a result of that relationship and which would be manifested during the later years of their struggle in the 1930's, and finally even in the Resistenza (Resistance) itself. In their relationship to the Fascists, neither the Socialists nor the Communists represented any real threat for Mussolini during the initial years of his consolidation of power. Either the party was weak from within, as was the case with the Partito Socialista Italiano (Italian Socialist Party), or it was unwilling to or unable to for its own reasons combine with other parties in an effort to stop Mussolini and his Fascists, as was the case with the PCI.

Mussolini was expelled from the Socialist Party in 1914. He established his Fasci Italiani di Combattimento in 1919, and from that time on he used force against his former party. The split in the Socialist Party which had resulted in the creation of the Communist Party from its ranks in 1921, the inability of the PSI leadership to

be decisive in moments which demanded decision, and finally, the lack of support received by the Party in the 1921 elections, all contributed to providing Mussolini with a weak competitor in his bid for power.¹⁰

With the PSI in this weakened condition, with the PCI only a fledgling political party, with the government in Rome going through a series of crises, resulting in the fall of Facta's cabinet in June of 1922, and with Mussolini and his newly formed Fascist Party (November 7 to 11, 1921) making the most out of turmoil, the situation for the anti-Fascists was crucial. At this critical time an unfortunate action occurred, and though the PSI was not directly responsible, it bore the brunt of Mussolini's action and was yet another indication of the Party's general ineffectiveness. A group of trade unions called the Alleanza del Lavoro (Alliance for Labor) chose, without the approval of the Socialist Party, to call a general strike.

This poorly timed move provided the Fascists with an excellent opportunity to renew their attacks on Socialists and Socialist centers--an opportunity of which they made the most. On August 2 they moved on Ancona and took Socialist Buildings by storm, and then repeated this operation at Leghorn, Genoa, Milan, and several other places. In the Lombard capital they threw out the Socialist municipal government, took on the job of running the local transportation system, and produced D'Annunzio to give their intervention an aura of nationalist respectability. Withal, they gave Italians the impression that they could and would save the country from anarchy.¹¹

The culmination of all this violence was Mussolini's March on Rome and his subsequent call from the King to come to Rome to form a government. He was riding on a crest, and once again the Socialists, and this time the Communists, proved unable not only to stop him, but unable to even try to stop him.

¹⁰

Shepard B. Clough, The Economic History of Modern Italy (New York, 1964), p. 214.

¹¹

Clough, pp. 215-216.

He pushed through his reform of the electoral system in 1923 and called for new elections in April, 1924. Both the PSI and PCI were unwilling to or not able to--Clough speaks of their inability to--bring their forces together in order to present a common list of candidates to the voters. The Fascists were victorious. Tarrow indicates the PCI did not "recognize" the need to join its forces with that of other parties in an effort to fight the Fascists. He cites the Aventine secession as a case in point. When in utter disgust 123 deputies walked out of the Chamber as a protest against the murder of Giacomo Matteotti, the moderate Socialist who had earlier criticized the government from that very Chamber, the Communists did not as a party join the walkout. Later they joined the secession, allying themselves with Socialists, the Sturzo Christian Democrats, and others, but they "refused to seek the reestablishment of constitutional government, and continued to make violent attacks against the non-Communist parties."¹² The PCI, then, did not in reality act out collaboration. The subsequent consequences of this unwillingness or inability on the part of the PCI must be initially dealt with at this point.

On the one hand, the failure to stop Fascism in the early stages hurt the PCI's efforts to organize within Italy a resistance because of the imprisonment or exile of most of its leaders, and because of Mussolini's strength and tactics. These will be taken up in the third section of this

¹² Whether Gramsci as leader of the PCI failed to "appreciate the radically new nature of Fascism" as Tarrow steadfastly maintains, or whether he in fact did understand the true import of Fascism as is argued by Cammett, is an interesting digression of thought. For this paper, however, even if Gramsci did understand "the novel aspects of Fascism," and the writer leans towards this thesis, it must still deal at the level of fact. (Tarrow, p. 104.)

chapter. On the other hand, the very difficulties in communication between the leaders who were living outside of Italy and those cadres working within Italy actually worked in one way to the benefit of the Communists. Because of the breakdown in communication the Hitler-Stalin Non-Aggression Pact 1939-1941, which proved to be so damaging to the reputation of Communist parties in other European countries, did not have that negative effect on the PCI. When the Pact was signed the Italian Communists were working secretly against Mussolini on the peninsula, and they continued to work. By the time they received the message, the Soviet Union had been invaded by Germany; the International was once again preaching ardent anti-Fascism. "Thus when legal political activity began again after World War II, the PCI, unlike its French, German, and American counterparts, had a relatively clean slate. It has never ceased to profit from this record."¹³ Finally, the very fact that they resisted and carried on an underground movement during these early years put them in a position of regional, and thus local control, a position they occupied when it came time to fight the Salò forces in Northern and Central Italy in 1944 and 1945. The Communists, thus, took over the local leadership of the Resistenza Armata (Armed Resistance) and became identified as the leadership of the Italian Resistance. This would, for the future, be a most important event because the organizational structure and expertise developed in their underground years would provide that very organization and expertise needed by them as a political party in postwar parliamentary Italy.

Finally, the third area of discussion in this chapter deals with the Togliatti leadership from abroad and its clandestine efforts within

¹³ Tarrow, p. 105.

the peninsula. The years 1926 through 1941 are the framework for these activities. First a general outline of the period will aid in establishing a needed perspective. Secondly, three important occurrences taking place during this period will be discussed as further evidence of the PCI's increasing strength, which will culminate in its strength as a political reality in post-armistice Italy, and in its leadership role in the Resistenza Armata.

In 1926 Palmiro Togliatti happened to be in the Soviet Union attending the Seventh Plenum; he, thus, unlike many other fellow Communists, escaped arrest. The Plenum appointed him to be in charge of the Party Secretariat of the Italian Communist Party, and as its leader he carried on party activities from outside of Italy, chiefly from Zurich and Paris. The main thrust of activity was to reorganize party activities on a clandestine basis in Italy. This included sending men secretly into the peninsula to carry out the organization. Underground operations made rapid progress in Lombardy, Tuscany, Emilia, Piedmont, Rome and Southern Italy. In Milan itself L'Unità had a circulation of 5,000.¹⁴

In 1927, however, Mussolini launched his counterattack against the Communists, and over the next few years he was able to succeed in crippling, if not bringing to a virtual standstill, the operations of the PCI. He established the OVRA (Inspectorate of Public Security) to carry out his anti-Communist campaign.¹⁵ Togliatti, in his Le Parti

¹⁴ Fulvio Bellini, "The Italian CP Part I: The Transformation of a Party 1921-1945," Problems of Communism, V (January-February, 1956), p. 41.

¹⁵ The OVRA (Opera Vigilanza Repressione Antifascista) was the secret political police. It was established in 1926 at the initiative of Mussolini.

Communiste, speaks of this when he observes that many of the prisoners--some of them young and some women--caught by Mussolini's security forces were tortured until they were dead or had gone crazy.¹⁶ By 1928 dozens of Communists had fallen into the Fascist net; in March of that year at Marina di Pisa the entire staff of the underground located within Italy was arrested. This turned out to be a decisive blow against the Communists for the short run; though the PCI center in France endeavored to substantially revitalize the resistance in Italy, they met with little or no success. The OVRA kept up a continual operation of capturing those new men sent in from the outside.¹⁷ By mid-1934 Mussolini's efforts had reduced the PCI to a campaign which had as its main concentration the propagandizing of party members outside of Italy, namely in France and the United States.¹⁸

From 1936 through 1938, many Italian Communists fought against Franco and his Italian and German allies in the Spanish Civil War; the ramifications of this activity will be pointed out a little later in this chapter. A final note in this general outline concerns the years 1939-1941. As was mentioned earlier, in 1939 the Soviet Union entered into a non-Aggression pact with Germany. When this occurred the PCI was forced to follow Russia's lead and thus to declare a moratorium on its anti-Axis maneuvers and propaganda. The Nazi attack on the Soviet Union in June of 1941, however, ended the Non-Aggression Pact, and

¹⁶ Palmiro Togliatti, Le Parti Communiste Italien, trans. Robert Paris (Paris, 1961), p. 86.

¹⁷ Bellini, p. 41.

¹⁸ Bellini, p. 41.

Togliatti and his followers could once again pick up their activities against the Fascists which they promptly and forcefully did. With this cursory background, a second area of importance concerning the Togliatti leadership from abroad can now be examined.

Three significant events took place in this time period which, as was laid out above, culminated in strengthening the PCI's position in post-armistice Italian politics and in the Resistenza Armata. The first event was the signing of a "unity of action" agreement between the Communists and the Socialists. This occurred in August, 1934, and its significance lies in the fact that with its creation was established the rivalry between the PCI and the Giustizia e Libertà (Justice and Liberty).¹⁹ A brief digression in order to provide background for this "unity of action" agreement is warranted at this point.

As has been pointed out earlier, when Mussolini outlawed other political parties there were two choices for those who were militantly against him and his Fascist rule. One choice was to remain in Italy in the underground; inherent in this choice was the great possibility of arrest and confino (internment). The second choice was to leave Italy and fight the Fascists from the outside. Many of those who chose the latter emigrated to France, a country which had been openly friendly to the residence of these revolutionary elements. There were, thus, many different persuasions of political philosophy to be found in Paris during the late 1920's. In 1927 these exiled Italians formed the Concentrazione antifascista (Anti-Fascist Concentration) which was composed of two schools of Italian socialism, the Republicans and a

¹⁹ H. Stuart Hughes, The United States and Italy (Cambridge, 1953), p. 113.

number of anti-Fascist Liberals.²⁰ The Concentrazione was a loosely organized structure and one definitely not militant enough for some. In 1929 one of these men, Carlo Rosselli, formed the movement called Giustizia e Libertà which was attracted to democratic ideals as well as to some of the welfare ideas promoted by the socialists. Its ideological framework rested upon what Rosselli termed "Liberal Socialism."²¹ At first Giustizia e Libertà worked separately from the Concentrazione. There were two main divergencies of thought between the two elements: they could not agree on an analysis of why Fascism had conquered in Italy, and Rosselli's followers preached an active involvement in clandestine activities while they accused the others involved in the Concentrazione of wiling away time arguing about various resolutions on what to do. Finally, in 1931 the Rosselli group did ally itself with the Concentrazione, but other events and pressures were already in process which would cause that entire group to break up early in 1934. Mussolini and his OVRA, mentioned above, were beginning to make rapid headway in smashing the underground activity in Italy; this, along with the internal conflicts, caused the final breakup. Something else happened in 1934, however, and this is what was the beginning of the

²⁰ Shepard B. Clough and Salvatore Saladino, A History of Modern Italy Documents, Readings, and Commentary (New York, 1968), p. 522.

²¹ Rosselli's "Liberal Socialism" was an endeavor to shape a theory of modern socialism which was free of Marxist determinism. Rosselli was openly critical of the Marxist theory of the inevitability of the class struggle and of the final revolution. He tried to establish a link between the early liberal tradition of the Risorgimento, from which he evolved his ideas of freedom and democracy, and socialist demands for the reform of Italian society.

turn towards the Communists as the eventual leaders of the anti-Fascist forces.

The Communists, as should have been noted, had remained isolated from the intrigues of the Giustizia e Libertà and the Concentrazione. They considered the methods used by these other anti-Fascists as "the expression of an amateurish activism and an indication of lack of seriousness."²² Their argument was that the struggle against Fascism was one that had to be carried out through the use of propaganda and agitations and strikes. They also recognized that the struggle should be waged by both workers and peasants together, and they were committed to the importance of those willing to struggle from within the underground in Italy where there was direct contact with the people.²³ In 1934, as a result of the break up of the Concentrazione, and with the Socialists again on their own, the two wings of that party--the maximalists and the moderates--were able to come to an agreement and join forces. In August the unified Socialists signed their "unity of action" agreement with the Communists. Thus, in 1934, with the break up of the Concentrazione marking the end of a loose unity of the anti-Fascist political parties, and with the striking disagreement between the Communists and the followers of Rosselli in Giustizia e Libertà being apparent, the two main forces in the Italian anti-Fascist movement had squared off against each other. The Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939 "was to provide the stage for their rivalry-and for the eventual triumph of the Marxist bloc."²⁴

²² Giuliano Procacci, History of the Italian People (New York, 1968), p. 361.

²³ Procacci, p.361.

²⁴ Hughes, p. 113.

The second event concerning the growing strength of the PCI, then is the ground gained by the Communists in the Spanish Civil War. In this war Italians from all persuasions of anti-Fascist thought joined the ranks to fight Franco. Two things happened: First, amateur fighters gained experience and became seasoned soldiers. This would have great significance later when these soldiers would form the ranks of the Resistenza in Italy. Second, the Communists clearly took over the leadership position among the anti-Fascist forces in this struggle. "By the ruthless use of the superior organization and material means at their disposal, the Communists had squeezed out or suppressed their rivals."²⁵ The Communists who had all along been advocating active struggle seized the opportunity which came before them in Spain. They organized and took control of the International Brigades in which Italians were predominant. It is true that they did not control all of the Brigades; there were commanders who were from Giustizia e Libertà. But the Communists held the most key positions, and they saw to it aggressively that they were an influencing factor wherever they were within the organization of the struggle.²⁶

Luigi Longo and Giuseppe Di Vittorio were both Communists and both very influential in the Spanish campaign. Their roles further point out the significance of the part played by the Communists in the Spanish Civil War: it was their experience gained in Spain which would form the backbone for the organizing of the partisan movement in northern and central Italy.²⁷ With the exception of individuals,

²⁵ Hughes, p. 113.

²⁶ Hughes, P. 114.

²⁷ Hughes, p. 114.

Giustizia e Libertà proved to be a weak counterpart to the Communists in the Spanish War. Rosselli did form a small unit of his followers, but they paled in comparison to the aggressive tactics of the Communist-led groups. Rosselli himself left the campaign in 1937 for health reasons and was killed in Normandy by agents contracted to the Italian government. His death severely weakened any opposition to the Communist-Socialist alliance, and this alliance was now in control of the anti-Fascist forces outside of Italy.²⁸

The last section of this chapter has attempted to point out how the PCI through a gradual process gained strength and prestige during the Fascist regime. Two events have been discussed: the 1934 pact between the Communists and the newly reconstituted Socialist Party and the part played by the Communists in the Spanish Civil War. A third and final point concerning this process needs to be included in this discussion. This third point centers on the atmosphere inside Italy in 1941. It was ripe for the resumption of underground activity, and the astute Communists took definite advantage of this fact. The Italian people had not favored Italy's entry into the war in 1940. This factor of an unpopular war effort, coupled with the general public apathy, made conditions in Italy responsive to the renewed underground effort aggressively pushed by the Communists.²⁹ In the fall of 1941, with the Soviets entering the war, and with the smell of Fascist defeat in the air, the Communists began their seige. Party organizers were sent into Italy and into the factories of the major northern cities where they set

²⁸ Hughes, p. 114.

²⁹ Bellini, p. 42.

up cells and began the process of education, beginning with propaganda preaching the defeat of Fascism. This organization in 1941 would be the groundwork for strikes and agitation later in 1943, and again in 1944, when the Communists and the Resistance were beginning to close in on Mussolini.

In July, 1941 Togliatti and his Communists sent Umberto Massola, a 37 year old Piedmontese worker and a member of the PCI external center to Italy. His task was to make contact with small Communist groupings which had somehow maintained their existence in Mussolini's Italy, and to renew their activities within the framework of the Togliatti Party still headquartered for the present outside of Italy. Massola reached Milan, and he began to lay the groundwork for the reestablishment of the PCI within the peninsula. He was successful in establishing the printing and distribution of L'Unità the party newspaper. It rapidly gained circulation, and it thus provided a viable means to educate the people and to coordinate plans for the defeat of Mussolini. "By the end of 1941, the PCI could once more be regarded as an effective political organization within Italy."³⁰

³⁰ Bellini, p. 42.

CHAPTER III

THE PCI SEPTEMBER, 1941-JULY, 1943: A TIME FOR AGITATION

Under the provisions of the Rome-Berlin Axis, Italy entered the war on June 10, 1940. Almost immediately the initiative was wrested from her grip; in the Mediterranean her underequipped armies yielded a disastrous performance, and in both the Balkans and North Africa she had to be buttressed with German reinforcement, even then suffering formidable defeat in the end. As its defeat progressed outside of Italy, so too did the internal demise of the Fascist regime proceed. As its power began to crumble, attempts towards its sabotage gradually increased.

The group which was to capture the lead "in rallying the forces of revolt" against the Fascists was the PCI. It has already been noted above that the Communists during the years of their exile from Italy had gained strength and experience and prestige through their involvement in Popular Fronts, their military activities in the Spanish Civil War, and their intrepid and dogged efforts in organizing and maintaining clandestine cells within Italy. The PCI in 1941, then, was the one group which had worked for and had gained "organizational preeminence" among those Italians who were anti-Fascist.

The focal point for the PCI in rallying the forces of revolt was the working classes who comprised the trade union movement in the

¹H. Stuart Hughes, The United States and Italy (Cambridge, 1953), p. 175.

industrial cities of the North. In the fall of 1941 encouraged by the entry of the Soviets into the war and the seemingly imminent downfall of the Fascists, the Communists renewed with vigor their abandoned underground struggle against Mussolini's regime, due to the devastating effect of Mussolini's secret police.² They sent party organizers into the factories of the large industrial cities to set up clandestine cells and to begin the spread of propaganda for the defeat of the Fascists.³ Their organizational abilities did not go unrewarded. During the latter part of 1942 and in the first four months of 1943, the Communists initiated and directed a long series of work stoppages which succeeded in disrupting war production in Italian factories, and which climaxed in the 1943 strike at the large Fiat plant in Turin.⁴ The most important events to be recorded in the history of anti-Fascism between June, 1940 and Mussolini's fall were these strikes which occurred in the spring of 1943."⁵ The 1943 strikes, though they were not the

²See Chapter II, concerning the effect of the OVRA on the clandestine movement within the Italian peninsula during the 1930s.

³The party organizers were very task oriented. It is true that in numbers they were a minority--of 21,000 workers in the Fiat-Mirafiori plant only 80 were members of the Party, 30 at Lancia, 72 at Aeronautica, and 60 at Viberti--; yet, they were most efficient and proved themselves worthy adversaries to the endless Fascist police inside and outside the factories. (Roberto Battaglia, Storia della Resistenza italiana, ed. Giulio Einaudi (Torino, 1964), p. 49.)

⁴In factories in the cities of Turin and Milan, workers had struck ten times between August and December, 1942 even though it was prohibited by the Fascists. (Maurice F. Neufeld, Italy: School for Awakening Countries (Ithaca, 1961), p. 449.)

⁵Elizabeth Wiskemann, "The Italian Resistance Movements," Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946, ed. Arnold and Veronica M. Toynbee, Vol.: Hitler's Europe (London, 1954), p. 329.

first which had been launched against the Fascist regime, were indeed important in that they demonstrated the present and the potential depth of feeling and action which could be aroused against the continuation of the war and for the downfall of Fascism. They were important for another reason as well: the strikes "gave the PCI virtual control of the working classes," and with this control the Party achieved a lever which enabled it to deal with the other Italian political parties on a basis more equal than it had previously been.⁶

The first significant strike effort of the war began some days prior to the actual outbreak of strike activity. Instructions were handed out by organizers on the 20th of February, and on March 5th demonstrations commenced at the Mirafiori-Fiat plant in Turin. The immediate demand called for the Fascists to keep their promise of compensation for those workers who had been bombed-out.⁷ The authorities attempted to react calmly, but exactly one week after the March 5 demonstrations, the Mirafiori workers went out on strike.

They downed tools and walked out, demanding full payment of the sum which had been voted to them for the cost of evacuation (equal to the pay for 192 hours of overtime), and shouting in unison:⁸ 'We want a subsidy for the high cost of living! We want peace!'

⁶ Fulvio Bellini, "The Italian CP Part I: The Transformation of a Party 1921-1945," Problems of Communism, V (January-February, 1956), p. 42.

⁷ Though this was the immediate demand, the workers had many grievances: the economic chaos caused by the war, the ever-increasing gap between wages and prices, "worsening conditions in the factories, and the feeling of helplessness on the part of workers to defend their families and themselves from the bombing raids carried out by the British and the Americans." (Roberto Battaglia, The Story of the Italian Resistance, trans. Peter Cummins (London, 1957), p. 32.)

⁸ Roberto Battaglia, The Story of the Italian Resistance, trans. Peter Cummins (London, 1957), p. 33.

On March 13th the strikers achieved some results; 300 lire was offered to every man who would go back to work and "maintain discipline." With this the strike in Turin abated, though some of its leaders were arrested and put to death.⁹ The strikes, however continued outside of Turin. Activity spread to other large factories in Piedmont, then to those in Lombardy, Liguria, and the lower Po Valley. In the city of Milan the strikers succeeded in closing down the Pirelli, Breda, Borletti, and Marelli factories. In all of these locations the Fascists were forced to come to terms with the workers by granting them the increases in wages they demanded.¹⁰

For the Fascists the 1943 strikes signaled a new phenomenon in Italy: an effective organized opposition to their rule. Two points serve to make this clear. First, it was the first time that the Fascists had experienced a powerful demonstration which was directed against them, and they were not able to deal satisfactorily with it. The Fascists, though they employed police both inside and outside the factories, were unable to break the strikes and had to acquiesce to the demands of the workers. When, on the 2nd of April, they announced that an increase in pay would be forthcoming, they pointedly added that they had decided to pay each person a little extra in celebration of the April 21 anniversary of the founding of Rome. This only served to point out further the weak position from which they were then operating. "Behind this demagogic pretext, it concealed its impotent fury at the check it had so suddenly received."¹¹

⁹ Wiskemann, Survey of International Affairs, p. 329.

¹⁰ Neufeld, p. 449.

¹¹ Battaglia, The Story of the Italian Resistance, p. 33.

The second item which makes clear the impact of the 1943 strikes on the Fascist regime deals with the long-range ramifications of the strikes. As the sentiment expressed in the diary of a member of the Fascist hierarchy indicated, "the implications of the strikes could not be laughed off...for now that the workers had won an economic round against the dictatorship, they probably would turn next to political goals."¹² The strike action of 1943 and the tumult it caused instilled in the workers a confidence in themselves as a force with which to be reckoned. Because of their impact in Piedmont, Lombardy, Liguria, and other places in the North, they now moved in force from a position of defense to one of offense: the workers realized their own combative capability vis-a-vis the Fascists. For the first time the overthrow of the regime by their own hands became a possibility and not merely a hope.¹³ On the eve of the March strikes those same leftist leaders (the Communists, the Socialists, and the Actionists) who had initiated them and who would carry them out, met together at Lyons in France and affirmed their desire to proceed in the task of destroying the political, economic, and social elements which had made Fascism possible, re-establishing democracy in Italy, and rebuilding the state in a manner which would ensure the supremacy of the workers.¹⁴ Out of the conference at Lyons came an anti-Fascist document which for the first time recognized

¹² Charles F. Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies The Italian Anti-Fascist Resistance (Princeton, 1961), p. 209.

¹³ Battaglia, Storia della Resistenza italiana, p. 50.

¹⁴ A description of the Socialist Party (PSIUP) and of the Action Party (PdA) is included in Chapter IV.

explicitly and unanimously the need for a national insurrection pledged to overthrow the enemy. It called for demonstrations in the streets, strikes to sabotage war production, the organization of partisan groups to fight the enemy, and in general, for the Italian people to affirm themselves anti-Fascist by taking up arms and striking out at the Germans and the Fascists wherever and whenever possible.¹⁵ Indeed the political goals would follow. The Resistance movement with its partisans and Committees of National Liberation in the North, as well as the Central Committee of National Liberation at Rome, would provide the necessary leadership for the ultimate defeat of the Fascists.¹⁶

In addition to l'urto (the impact) which the March strikes had on the Fascist regime they also strengthened the Italian Communist Party in a political sense. Throughout 1941 and 1942 the Communists had done their job and had demonstrated their skills and their perseverance in organizing and mobilizing the workers in the factories. Even more important than this, however, was their ability to know and to express the needs of the workers and their discerning aptitude to choose just the right moment when to arouse the key potential force of the working classes, that of solidarity. The Communists as has already been pointed out made the most of this aptitude: the 1943 general strikes throughout northern Italy, which were the culmination of two years of hard work at organizing and mobilizing, gained for them what amounted to effective control over the working masses. With this control established, the PCI next sought to consolidate forces in an effort to carry out the

¹⁵ Battaglia, Storia della Resistenza italiana, p. 51.

¹⁶ See Chapters IV and V.

pledge promulgated at the Lyons meeting. In the spring of 1943 the Party sent a delegation to Rome to confer with representatives of the monarchy and the army. The PCI suggested that all three forces join together in an effort to overthrow the Fascists. It guaranteed that it could suspend work in all the factories of Turin, Milan, and Genoa. From the beginning the Communists made it clear to the representatives from the South that they were operating from a base of strength and not from one of weakness. In return for their ability to drastically damage Axis war production as part of the effort to overthrow Fascism, the PCI leadership wanted the assurance that the future anti-Fascist government would drop any discrimination against it as a viable political party.¹⁷ It was precisely because the PCI had stabilized its leadership, through the March strikes, over the working classes of the North that it was willing to risk carrying on negotiations with the monarchy and the army.

Without that base [the control of the working classes] any offer or proposal indicated inevitably the acceptance of its [the PCI] own subordination to the initiative of the monarchy. With that base, the operation assumed instead the character of an endeavor to use the Crown for its own ends and the danger of being used [by the King] instead, if even existent, was reduced to the minimum possibility.¹⁸

Though PCI leadership had been achieved in the North, this fact did not produce immediate results. The Party's offer to aid the King and his forces in Rome was met with resistance and inaction. The Christian Democrats were uncertain about the Communists and tended not to trust them. The Liberals, surprised by their attitude, had difficulty convincing themselves of the Communists' sincerity. In the end the

¹⁷ Battaglia, Storia della Resistenza italiana, p. 54.

¹⁸ Battaglia, Storia della Resistenza italiana, p. 53.

Roman leaders seemed to shy away from a plan "so explicit and so binding." The talks hung in the air and no decision was reached. As late as July 20, 1943, in a final effort, the Communists sent a mission, headed by Ludovico Geymont and Concetto Marchesi, to Rome to try once more to reach an agreement. They informed the leaders there of the unanimous desire on the part of the anti-Fascist Committee of Milan to proceed alone in its plans for insurrection if no help was forthcoming.¹⁹ Five days later the Italian situation had changed radically; on July 25, King Victor Emmanuel III summoned Mussolini and dismissed him from power.²⁰

¹⁹Battaglia, Storia della Resistenza italiana, p. 53.

²⁰"With the fall of Mussolini on July 25, 1943, and the conclusion of a separate armistice between Italy and the Allies on September 8, the Communists emerged as the strongest political force in central and northern Italy. Scores of experienced Communist leaders, released from Fascist prisons and penal islands under the amnesty ordered by the Badoglio Government a month before the armistice, resumed their place in the party and further increased its efficiency." (Bellini, p. 42.)

CHAPTER IV

THE PCI AND POLITICS JULY, 1943-DECEMBER, 1945: A TIME FOR CONCILIATION

The period from summer 1943 through spring 1945 was one of rebuilding and resistance in Italy. In the North the partisan forces were fighting to drive the Fascists and the Germans out of Italy. In the South, the newly formed Italian government was struggling to begin the task of rebuilding the country. While the Italian Communists were fighting "the war of movement" in the North, the Italian Communist Party was fighting the "war of position" in the South.¹ A close look at the internal politics in Italy during this period reveals that the PCI's goal was to continue to participate in the government and from there to broaden its base of political power, as opposed to pursuing intransigent revolutionary methods. The Party was more interested in debating issues and working out solutions to problems within a parliamentary framework than concentrating on the immediate annihilation of the system and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Putting aside the revolutionary 'maximalism' of its origins, the PCI's policy was flexible and accommodating: the party carefully avoided getting involved or committed on questions of

¹ The story of the part played by the Communists in the Resistenza Armata will be considered in Chapter V. The present chapter will discuss the role taken by the PCI during a period when it participated in the Italian government.

principle and ideology, preferring the substantial political advantages to be achieved by viable tactics.²

I. BACKGROUND

The explosive forces in Italy, feeding on the inefficient, corrupt, moribund, Fascist state, were set in motion on the afternoon of July 24, 1943 when the Fascist Grand Council met and by a majority of 19 to 7 voted to restore all military and constitutional power to the King Victor Emmanuel III.³ This sealed the fate of Mussolini; the resolution in effect called for the ousting of the Fascist leader, and of the regime. On the morning of the 25th the King had appointed Marshall Pietro Badoglio to take over the reins of the government as Prime Minister.⁴ Mussolini, in conference with Vittorio Emmanuel later in that same day, learned of his dismissal, which was promptly followed by his arrest. He was transferred to Ponza and later to Gran Sasso, high in the Apennines. On September 12th Captain Otto Skorzeny with ninety Nazi paratroopers "swooped down to rescue Mussolini..."⁵ He was quickly transported to Hitler's headquarters where the German leader informed him that if he wished to return to Italy he must establish a new pro-Nazi government, try the members of the Grand Council

²Giuseppe Mammarella, Italy After Fascism A Political History 1943-1965 (Notre Dame, 1966), pp. 69-70.

³The Fascist Grand Council was the supreme body of both the state and the Fascist party.

⁴Ironically Badoglio had served as a soldier under the rule of Mussolini. He was, in fact, one of those who in 1928 approved Mussolini's parliamentary reorganization plan, when it was put to a vote in the Senate.

⁵Charles F. Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies The Italian Anti-Fascist Resistance (Princeton, 1961), p. 261.

who had engineered his ouster, and acquiesce to the German occupation of several border provinces. As a result, on the 16th of September, 1943, Mussolini announced over Radio Munich to the Italian people the organization of the Partito Fascista Repubblicano (Fascist Republican Party), along with the main points of the program of the Fascist Social Republic. The attempt to rebuild a new Fascist state complete with Fascist army had begun. Meanwhile, for the Allies and for the Badoglio contingent, political and military events were also moving, sometimes not with as much speed as was desired.

On July 10 the Allies had landed in Sicily, and one week later the Allied Military Government had come into existence in Italy.⁶ Before the end of July, martial law had been proclaimed in Italy, Badoglio had formed a Cabinet, and the Fascist Party had been outlawed. The armistice agreement between the Badoglio government and the Anglo-Americans, however, was not reached with comparable alacrity. Mussolini's government had fallen July 25; yet, the armistice was not agreed upon until September 8. The negotiations for the armistice were convoluted and drawn-out for perhaps two reasons. First, the Anglo-Americans were not prepared for what they considered the early fall of Mussolini; consequently, they were not ready for the problems contingent upon Italy's request for an armistice. The representatives of the Allies, for example, would not discuss with the Italians anything regarding future peace-treaty conditions. They also refused to talk about final

⁶There were two Allied governmental structures in Italy. The Allied Military Government (AMG) was established in Sicily on July 17, 1943. The Allied Control Commission (ACC) was established in Brindisi on November 10, 1943. The ACC and its operations were usually carried on to the rear of the battle lines while the AMG functioned in the forward zones under the direct command of the local Army Headquarters.

territorial settlements, the pre-Fascist colonies, and the future size of the Italian army. Second, the Italian government appeared to be too "optimistic" about the terms of the armistice. The Italians in general expected gentle treatment at the hands of their former enemies. The King and his advisers had been persuaded, probably as a result of Allied propaganda, that the elimination of the Fascist regime by the Italians themselves would effectively modify the Allied attitude of a harsh peace for Italy.⁷

The fact remains that Marshal Badoglio had already by mid-August set on footsteps towards the conclusion of an armistice with the Allies, while at the same time playing the difficult game of keeping the Germans in the dark as to Italian intentions.⁸

The important focus for this work, however, is not the machinations of either the Anglo-Americans or the Italians in their efforts to achieve an armistice. The important point is the negotiations were allowed to drag on from July to September. The Badoglio government failed to realize that the German reaction to a separate armistice on the part of Italy would have indeed been a violent one, and consequently failed to take any steps that might have mitigated the reaction.

Instead of prompt and determined action, Badoglio delayed the start of negotiations with the Allies and gave the Germans, who with Mussolini's fall had become highly suspicious of the Italians, enough time to send more troops to Italy. By the end of August, a month after the dictator's collapse, the Germans had enough forces in Italy to be able to control any move of the Italian Army.⁹

⁷ Mammarella, p. 22.

⁸ Muriel Grindrod, The New Italy Transition From War to Peace (London, 1947), p. 9.

⁹ Mammarella, pp. 21-22.

It is a fact that on July 25 when Mussolini fell, only seven divisions of German soldiers were present in Italy. Added to this, Badoglio and his government had some modest strength available in the Italian home reserves and in the entire population, including Fascists who had not reacted negatively to the July 25 overthrow.¹⁰

At this point it is significant to emphasize the importance of the following two factors. First, by the middle of September, 1943 Italy had within its borders three different functioning governments. In the South, the Allied Military Government under the direct command of the local Allied Army Headquarters had been established in Sicily on 17 July. As the Allied forces fought their way northward, the AMG also moved northward. In Rome, the King and Marshal Badoglio had formed the Italian anti-Fascist government, with Badoglio convening his first cabinet on July 26.¹¹ In the North, on the 16th of September Mussolini had announced the formation of his new Fascist Social Republic in his desperate effort to re-establish the Fascist state with the help of Hitler and Germany. On September 23 he announced his new cabinet, and his government took up residence in Salo, a small town on the western shore of Lake Garda not far from Verona. The second observation to be made is that Italy was a country divided. By the end of September, 1943, it had become painfully clear to the Italians that, though an armistice had been reached, the war for them was not over. The Allies having landed in Sicily and Salerno and on the Adriatic coast, had control

¹⁰ Mammarella, p. 21.

¹¹ On September 10 the Germans occupied Rome. King Victor Emmanuel and Marshal Badoglio fled further south to Bari from which they continued to run the Italian government under the direction of the AMG.

of most of the South. The Germans, due in great part to Badoglio's delays, had infiltrated and now controlled the northern and central parts of Italy as an occupying army, and had on September 10 occupied the city of Rome. In October the Italians declared war on Germany, becoming a co-belligerent of the Allies, but it would not be until spring of 1945 that Italy itself was liberated.¹²

Italy is a relatively young nation; she achieved unification only by 1870. It can be reasonably posited that the short fifty years which intervened between 1870 and the coming of Fascism in 1922 did not supply enough time "to establish the habit of parliamentary method and to train a generation of politicians versed in democratic practice."¹³ Italy can be likened to a young child growing up and learning one set of values, when Fascism came on the Scene and arrested that growth and development. As has already been noted earlier, those people, and more to the point, those politicians who disagreed with the Fascist experience either went into exile, were arrested, or simply took no part in public life. All of these men who had been active in government and who would be active again in the post-Fascist era, came back to governmental life after twenty years of inactivity within the Italian state structure. The one element they had in common was their anti-Fascism. The problems arose when these different men, representing different political parties, disagreed on the degree to which they desired to change Italian society and on the kinds of changes they were willing to make.

¹²The King dragged his feet on the issue of declaring war on Germany. There were several reasons for his hesitations; these are discussed adequately in Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies The Italian Anti-Fascist Resistance, pp. 315-318.

¹³Muriel Grindrod, The Rebuilding of Italy Politics and Economics 1945-1955 (London, 1955), p. 6.

...while the revolutionaries of the twenties now planned with renewed ardour to change everything and build afresh on new foundations, the more cautious and orthodox aimed instead at going back to the point where the 'wrong turning' had been taken and resurrecting the pre-Fascist State intact.¹⁴

These differences in how to restructure Italian society in the post-Fascist postwar era form the foundation for the political crises which plagued the Badoglio, Bonomi, and Parri governments in the years 1943 through 1945. Before moving on to analysis of these crises, and in particular before looking at the role of the PCI in these political machinations, some specific background information is called for outlining the political parties and their arrival on the scene after the fall of Mussolini.

II. COMITATI DI LIBERAZIONE NAZIONALE

Comitati Di Liberazione Nazionale (Committees of National Liberation) emerged at the beginning of 1943. These were anti-Fascist committees which had been active underground. Early in 1943 when Mussolini's fall was imminent, leaders from the old (pre-Fascist) opposition parties had resurfaced. These leaders, along with many younger men who knew only the Fascist experience, formed in several cities Anti-Fascist Freedom Fronts which were the forerunners of the Committees of National Liberation. Together the Committees embodies the willingness of anti-Fascist factions to put aside their political differences for the moment and to join together to rid Italy of the new Fascist forces of the Social Republic and the Germans, and to restructure the state along democratic lines. Very soon after the fall of Mussolini CLNs mushroomed

¹⁴ Grindrod, The Rebuilding of Italy, p. 6.

throughout Italy--many were clandestine in nature due to German occupation--even though the Badoglio government had officially prohibited any organized political activity. Beginning with Rome, CLNs appeared in many cities: Milan, Turin, Florence, and elsewhere.¹⁵ Later the Rome organization called itself the Central CLN (CCLN) to distinguish it from the CLNs in other cities. Later still, the CLN in Milan changed its name to CLN dell'Alta Italia (CLNAI), CLN for Upper Italy, in an effort to handle more efficiently matters which affected the occupied North, particularly the military resistance. Despite the differences in name, however, the CLNs represented the political spectrum, from extreme left to extreme right, and from the beginning of their public debut they involved themselves in a propaganda campaign to inform people of the current situation and to encourage them to actively participate in the changes needed.¹⁶ At its first public meeting the Rome CLN invoked "all Italians to the struggle and to the Resistance, and to reconquer for Italy the place it deserves in the community of free nations."¹⁷

After the reality of the armistice, then, the CLNs proved themselves to be a positive force; they grew in number, and most importantly, they

¹⁵"When Ivanoe Bonomi's (member of the Labour Democracy Party) Anti-Fascist Committee, meeting in a house on Via Adda early in the morning of September 9, 1943, heard the news of the royal-military government's "hegira" to Brindisi, it sought to fill the political void. At the suggestion of Labor Democrat Ruini, it voted that afternoon to rename itself the Committee of National Liberation (CLN), in the style of the French CLN that had been organized in Algiers a few months earlier." (Delzell, p. 271.)

¹⁶Mammarella, p. 36.

¹⁷Delzell, p. 273.

appeared in all of Italy--in the South and in the occupied central and northern areas of the peninsula. The Rome CLN laid the groundwork for the first active resistance against the invading Germans. In the liberated South the CLNs provided the focus for political activity. In the northern and central portions of the country the Committees resorted to secret activities in their fight against the German and Fascist troops.

In both cases they symbolized the union of all anti-Fascist forces, different with regard to ideological background and political programs, but all equally determined to act together for the rehabilitation of Italian society from its Fascist past.¹⁸

III. THE POLITICAL PARTIES

By early fall in 1943 there were six (in some regions more) major political parties represented in the CLNs of southern and central Italy and five parties represented in the North.¹⁹ These parties, after an absence of twenty years from the Italian political scene, once again openly resumed activity. They were able--at least during the two year period until total liberation--to combine and work together in a common effort to solve Italy's immediate problems. From right to left the CLN parties were the Italian Liberal Party (PLI), the Democratic Labor Party (PDL), Christian Democracy (CD), the Action Party (PdA), the Italian Socialist Party (PSIUP), and the Italian Communist Party (PCI).²⁰

¹⁸ Mammarella, p. 36.

¹⁹ Mammarella, p. 36.

²⁰ Delzell, p. 207. PSIUP stands for Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (Partito Socialista di Unità Proletaria). This was the official "denomination" of the Socialist Party from 1943 until 1947.

The one party not represented in the CLNs of northern Italy was the Democratic Labor Party; the followers of this small political group were almost entirely based in the South. The essential characteristics of these parties in the Italian political spectrum in 1943 are summarized as follows:

The Italian Liberal Party (PLI)

The Liberal Party was the furthest to the right of the CLN parties. It was also the oldest of them in terms of political experience and historical tradition. It can be traced back to the Risorgimento, "not so much as an organized party in the modern sense but rather as a current of ideas or a political orientation."²¹ The political class which was responsible for the Risorgimento and which held political supremacy in Italy from 1860 to the coming of Fascism was liberale.

This term does not correspond conceptually to that of the American "liberal"; it must be considered within the framework of Europe in the second half of the 19th century. Liberalism in that period meant acceptance of parliamentary democracy, laissez faire principles in economy, the recognition of the fundamental freedoms, tempered, however, by the necessity to safeguard and maintain a political system from which the working classes were excluded. In Italy, the Liberal Party provided the cadres for the ruling class which, having initially started from the progressive positions of the Risorgimento period, ended in a conservative defense of its privileges.²²

This conservative orientation asserted itself once again when the PLI first emerged as "a full-fledged party" in the fall of 1943.²³

²¹Mammarella, p. 37.

²²Mammarella, pp. 37-38.

²³Delzell, pp. 219-220.

When it did return to the scene in 1943, as a political group, it returned with considerable prestige. It had within its ranks a number of very outstanding intellectuals: Benedetto Croce, Giolitti, Vittorio Orlando, Antonio Salandra, Luigi Einaudi, and Francesco Ruffini. These were men who voiced "magnificent scorn of Fascism." The following words, inspired by Croce, and read at the first congress of the reconstructed Liberal Party held at Naples in June, 1944 were exactly what the CLNs and the Italian masses wanted to hear:

Fascism was a giant evil genius...which made bad taste a science. It had a senile cunning in evil; it does not deserve to be honored by involving the mythical figures of Ahriman or Satan, for it deserves another name, more apt and not imaginative but prosaic. It should be called human folly.²⁴

Besides being a party of some import, the postwar PLI was a divided party. The conservative orientation, already mentioned above, and a progressive orientation were coming into conflict. This conflict arose out of the different regional or professional backgrounds of PLI members. In the one camp, university professors, students, lawyers, and other professional people were genuinely interested in promoting progressive ideas. They sensed the times in which they were living and "were well aware of the necessity of orienting the country toward a modern and intelligent reformism."²⁵ In the other camp, landowners, mostly from the South, and small or big businessmen composed the

²⁴ Margaret Carlyle, Modern Italy (New York, 1965), p. 65. Benedetto Croce was a world renowned philosopher who remained in Italy during the years of Fascism. Throughout the regime he continued to publish his journal La Critica which was highly critical of Mussolini and Fascism. He was not harmed probably because of his reputation. He was a Southerner and, of course, a member of the PLI.

²⁵ Mammarella, p. 40.

conservative orientation of the party. These particular men, no matter what liberal beliefs they cherished, "had tradition, not to say reaction, in their bones."²⁶ Specifically, this faction was

in favor of the restoration of the political and social conditions that had existed prior to Fascism. For them, the 'old values,' that is, the values of pre-World War I liberal society, remained unchanged. Disregarding the social and historical evolution that had taken place, they thought that a return to these values would solve the problems of the new Italian democracy.²⁷

Though this internal conflict within the party continued for several years throughout the postwar years, the political position of the Liberal Party itself remained essentially conservative and opposed to concrete changes in society. Many of the members demonstrated an almost exaggerated proclivity for law and order, for legal and constitutional tradition and practice. Thus, a considerable proportion of the party cadres, though not supportive of the current King, were predisposed towards the monarchy as an institution.²⁸ In the realm of economics the party line adhered to Croce's assertion that "the party of freedom need not descent to mundane affairs and formulate a specific program."²⁹ In concluding, though they were staunch advocates of political liberty, the liberali were unable to comprehend the demands for social and economic justice exacted by the working classes; in the end they channeled their political action towards the defense of the interests of the upper classes.

²⁶Grindrod, The Rebuilding of Italy, p. 18.

²⁷Mammarella, pp 40-41.

²⁸Grindrod, The Rebuilding of Italy, p. 18.

²⁹Delzell, p. 220.

The Democratic Labor Party (PDL)

This member party of the CLN was the party which was represented in the southern and central Italian Committees but was not represented in the North. Its leaders were for the most part men who had been involved in politics for a long time. For example, Ivanoe Bonomi and Meuccio Ruini, both leaders of the PDL in 1943, were former Socialists who had turned their backs on the party in 1912 because their reformist posture did not mesh with the revolutionary maximalism of the majority.

In terms of the program which they offered, the Labor Democrats have been described as standing midway between the Action Party and the Liberal Party. The PDL platform was first published in Rome on July 26, the day after the fall of Mussolini. It called for

...popular self-government and parliamentary supremacy;... progressive and extraordinary taxation; the principle of the 'nation in arms'; regional autonomies; free public schooling, even through the university; inviolability of freedom of the press and of organization...[The party] favors all reforms that may raise the dignity of labor and labor's rights with respect to capital, [provided] that the State's economic framework be not suddenly endangered."³⁰

In particular, and in the main, they differed from the Actionists in that the majority of the Labor Democrats desired to maintain the institution of the Monarchy; in fact, they, unlike the Actionists, staunchly refused to actively propagandize against the House of Savoy. Secondly, they did not agree with the extent to which the Actionists favored socialization.³¹ In concluding, the program of the Democratic

³⁰ Delzell, p. 219.

³¹ Delzell, p. 219.

Labor Party differed only slightly from that of the mainstream parties and because it was unable to attract a popular following; it "faded out" after 1946.³²

Christian Democracy (CD)

The Christian Democrat Party which emerged in 1943 was the direct heir of the Partitio Popolare Italiano (Italian People's Party), the modern and progressive Catholic party founded by the Sicilian priest Don Luigi Sturzo in 1919.³³ Several of the Partitio Popolare leaders endured the years of Fascism, some in prison, others in exile. In 1942 and 1943 they, along with fresh advocates, initiated renewed, secret political contacts. In these years they laid the foundation for a new Catholic progressive party to be known as Christian Democracy. They supported Alcide De Gasperi as their leader and spokesman, and they leaned heavily on the Church for help in restructuring the party organization.³⁴ This was supplied through Catholic Action and the

³² Grindrod, The Rebuilding of Italy, p. 19.

³³ The Partitio Popolare was against imperialism, insisted upon proportional representation, the vote for women, and the breaking up of large uncultivated estates for use among peasants. Further, it demanded total separation of the state from Church influence and called for more local autonomy as opposed to excessive centralization. (Mammarella, p. 52.)

³⁴ The political career of Alcide De Gasperi predates the First World War when he was a representative to the Austrian Congress in Vienna from the city of Trento. Prior to the war the Austrian Empire had under its administration the towns of Trento, Trieste, Bolzano, and Gorizia and their territories. After World War I the Italians gained these territories, and De Gasperi was elected to represent them in the Italian Parliament. During the Fascist years De Gasperi was persecuted and put into prison. Upon his release from confinement, he retired to the Vatican where he worked quietly as a librarian.

lower clergy, the latter of which had direct contact with and reasonable influence over the common people.

The political program of the DC in the postwar years emulated that of the Partito Popolare. The chief points in its platform were the division of church and state, the authenticity of the Lateran Agreements, the establishment of regional governments and the strengthening of communal institutions, total freedom for the workers to organize trade unions and their right to take part in the management of businesses, public social insurance, progressive taxation and land reform. Especially important to the platform was a solid statement defending Christian values and a call for good relations with the Catholic Church.³⁵

The Christian Democrats succeeded in enticing into their ranks probably the widest cross-section of the population. There were farmers and industrial workers (though among the working classes the party's main strength lay in the agricultural areas) co-existing with representatives from the petit-bourgeoisie and from industrial management. This circumstance provided the stage for a party with a definite class character, from progressive left to the extreme right.

While the necessity of mediating between these currents assigned a center position to the DC in the Italian political spectrum, historical necessity and the interplay of internal tendencies often compelled the party to switch alternately from the center to the right or the left.³⁶

An example of this was De Gasperi's willingness to participate in the government with the Communists, at least during the war years. He

³⁵ Mammarella, p. 57.

³⁶ Mammarella, p. 57.

firmly believed that his Catholic party was obliged to collaborate with secular democratic forces in an effort to ensure the viability of democracy in Italy.³⁷

The Action Party (PdA)

The Action Party, unlike Christian Democracy, was not the direct heir to any political party existing prior to the twenty years under Fascism. In fact (although it had been in de facto existence since July, 1942) it did not emerge as a party with a program until the beginning of 1943. A large proportion of those who formed the ranks of the PdA had been adherents of Giustizia e Libertà, the political movement founded in 1929 in Paris by Carlo Rosselli and other exiles living in France.³⁸ These Actionists, through a series of underground meetings, were finally able to agree upon a program; in July, 1942 they made public their seven-point program:

1. Abdication of the Savoyard dynasty, co-responsible with Fascism for the country's ruin, and establishment of a Republic;
2. Regional autonomy and economic equalization of the regions;
3. Nationalization on a flexible basis of large industrial monopolies;
4. Radical agrarian reforms and land redistribution;
5. Restoration of labor union privileges to factory workers and permission for them to share in industrial management;
6. Full religious freedom, and separation of Church and State;
7. Promotion of a European federation of free democratic states within the framework of still broader world collaboration.³⁹

The leaders of the Action Party were proposing to establish a new party that would cut itself off from the political traditions of the past

³⁷ Delzell, p. 216.

³⁸ Giustizia e Libertà is discussed in Chapter II.

³⁹ Delzell, pp. 213-214.

and would become the tool for a "liberal revolution." They had as their goal the joining together of workers and the petit bourgeoisie, elements which had been won over by Fascist propaganda "when they had been irritated and frightened by the Socialists and had easily succumbed to the Fascist appeal of the 'party of order.'"⁴⁰ The Action Party's official stance promulgated the idea that the working class and the small middle-class must be educated as to where they stood: their common enemy was the large industrial entrepreneur who was in turn the epitome of all the traditional conservative forces--the monarchy, the aristocracy, the higher echelons of the army and civil service, and the higher clergy. The Action Party was not moved by theories, as was the case with the Liberal Party, but instead taught that each social and economic problem should be confronted and solved in a concrete fashion, and done so with the welfare of the masses of people in mind.⁴¹

The Italian Socialist Party (PSIUP)

Immediately to the right of the PCI was the Italian Socialist Party. It had been founded in Italy in 1892, had all but disappeared from the political scene in 1926, and reappeared once again in August of 1943. Italian socialism got a late start--in 1892 socialism had already taken root in France, Germany, and Britain--probably for two reasons:

⁴⁰ Carlyle, p. 51.

⁴¹ Carlyle, p. 51. Two outstanding political figures were members of the Action Party: Count Carlo Sforza and Ferruccio Parri. Both of them fought Mussolini throughout his years in power, Sforza from exile and Parri in the underground. Both were also active in politics during the period 1944-1945; Sforza served as Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the first Bonomi government, and Parri was Prime Minister in 1945.

first, the industrialization of Italy after its unification moved at a very slow pace, and second, extremely backward conditions plagued the country, particularly in the South.⁴² The party did fade from the Italian political scene after 1926, but as has already been pointed out, so did every other party in Mussolini's regime. The Socialists, however, like the Christian Democrats, continued to exist and to keep in contact during the period from 1926 to 1943; in fact, socialism was "well represented among the exiles in France and was a movement rich in leaders."⁴³ In August, 1943 Pietro Nenni, Bruno Buozzi, and others succeeded in re-establishing the party under the new title Partito Socialista Italiano di Unità Proletaria (PSIUP).⁴⁴ This group named Nenni as secretary-general and director of Avanti!, the party newspaper.

Two observations should be noted concerning the Socialist party. The history of the party seems predicated upon conflicts between the

⁴² Mammarella, p. 41.

⁴³ Carlyle, p. 58.

⁴⁴ Pietro Nenni was born in 1891 and was a journalist by profession. He published The Spectre of Communism in 1920, a book in which he explained his switch to the Socialist Party (from the Republican Party). He was an outstanding man, intensely anti-Mussolini, fighting him first from exile and then, after August, 1943, in the underground. In that same year he was elected President of the Socialist Party. Among his accomplishments were the creation and responsibility for the publication of Avanti, the clandestine newspaper, and after the war he held political office in the Parri government and the De Gasperi government.

Bruno Buozzi was a labor leader who had been active in labor in pre-Fascist years. He had headed the Italian Federation of Metallurgical Workers (FIOM) and had become Secretary-General of the General Confederation of Labor (CGL). He emigrated in 1926 and re-entered Italy in 1943. He was largely responsible for the Pact of Rome agreement in 1944 which established the CGIL, a labor organization composed of Communist, Socialist, and Christian Democratic leadership. In 1944 he was captured and shot by the Germans.

maximalists and the reformists. As these two groups fought amongst themselves, causing splinterings and break-offs from the party, during the period between the founding and the Second World War, so these conflicts between the maximalists and the reformists would flare up again in the years following World War II. For example, the moderate faction of the party, led by Giuseppe Saragat would break away from the PSIUP in 1947 and form the Italian Workers' Socialist Party to demonstrate opposition "to the pro-Communist 'fusionist' tendencies of Nenni's majority faction."⁴⁵ The second observation to be registered concerning the Socialist party is a comment on its activities after it had resurfaced as a political force. As will be seen in the following chapter, the Socialists played an active role in the partisan resistance of central and northern Italy, in scope and importance being second only to the Communists. Besides their partisan role, they were represented in the Committees of National Liberation where they took an active, not passive, posture. During the time from 1943 to 1945 they were, as were the Communists, both anticlerical and antiroyalist, though as will be seen in the final segments of this chapter (relating to the Communists), both they and the Communists did not accentuate their opposition because their overriding purpose was to remain in the government.

The Italian Communist Party (PCI)⁴⁶

At this particular juncture it need only be indicated that in 1945 at the beginning of the postwar era, the PCI was in an

⁴⁵ Shepard B. Clough and Salvatore Saladino, A History of Modern Italy Documents, Readings, and Commentary (New York, 1968), p. 549.

⁴⁶ An accounting of the Italian Communist Party, more detailed than that found above in the discussions of the other parties represented in the CLN, can be found in Chapter II of this work, "The Communist Party in Italy 1921-1941."

ascending position of strength. The party set out in this period already imbued with three very enviable "assets."⁴⁷ The first advantage the party had was the existence of an organization which had remained viable from an early stage through clandestine efforts from abroad and within the Italian peninsula; this intact organization was superior to any other party structure.⁴⁸ The second advantage held by the party was growing support from the industrial working classes in the North, support which had already been demonstrated in the factory strikes of 1943, beginning in the Fiat-Mirafiori plant in Turin.⁴⁹ The final advantage of the Communists was their involvement and leadership in the Resistenza Armata.⁵⁰

IV. ISSUES: THE BADOGLIO MINISTRIES 26 July, 1943-5 June, 1944

The chief issue to be discussed in this section, and the problems surrounding it, occur during the period prior to April, 1944 when the CLN finally joined the Badoglio cabinet. The issue itself pivoted around the Monarchy, or the institutional question as it had come to be called. The immediate central question posed was whether the CLN would be willing to form a government with the King Victor Emmanuel whose, in the words of Benedetto Croce, "clear will to make use of institutions and men of

⁴⁷ Grindrod, The Rebuilding of Italy, p. 15.

⁴⁸ See Chapter II, "The Communist Party in Italy 1921-1941."

⁴⁹ See Chapter III, "The PCI September, 1941-July, 1943: A Time for Agitation."

⁵⁰ See Chapter V, "The PCI and the Resistance September, 1943-May, 1945: A Time For Aggression."

Fascism, [and whose]...long delay in declaring war on Germany, made necessary his retirement."⁵¹ This central question concerning the monarchy and the way in which it was treated, and in effect solved, by the PCI is the main focus of interest in considering the Badoglio ministries from 1943 through 1944.

As was seen earlier, Marshal Badoglio had formed a cabinet almost immediately after Mussolini had been dismissed. As late as 1944, however, his cabinet did not include in it any of the political parties represented in the CLNs. Instead, it was made up of "technical experts" who were carrying on as the government, in effect, as if the anti-Fascist parties and Committees did not exist. The British-American military authorities realized that this was a situation which could not continue; they recognized the need for a wider political base in the government. They therefore requested (in fact, it had been among the conditions for the recognition of Italy as a co-belligerent that the anti-Fascist parties be included in the government) that the King call upon the six anti-Fascist parties to join his cabinet. Two factors, however, were present which caused delay in bringing about this change. First, the King dragged his feet so to speak because he was hesitant in having any factions in his cabinet who would not support his monarchy.⁵² It has also been argued that Victor Emmanuel feared that with an opening to any of the political parties, Communism would be provided with "a logical wedge to force its way into the cabinet."⁵³ Second, and most

⁵¹ Delzell, p. 325.

⁵² Mammarella, p. 61.

⁵³ Maurice F. Neufeld, Italy: School for Awakening Countries (Ithaca, 1961), p. 452.

important for current purposes, was the trenchant resistance towards the monarchy, either on a personal basis which was the case with the Liberals and several others, or on an institutional basis which was the case for the leftist parties. The Liberal Party, some segments of the Christian Democrats, and all of the anti-Fascist conservative groups supported the institution of the monarchy but would have nothing to do with either Vittorio Emmanuel or his son, Crown Prince Umberto. As far as they were concerned these two men had openly cooperated and co-functioned with Mussolini and his Fascist regime, and they were thus unacceptable as representative of the monarchy.⁵⁴ The feelings of the leftist parties--the Communists, the Socialists, and the Actionists--took a different tack. They were in opposition to a monarchical kind of government. They approached their opposition from a philosophical point of view, rather than from a reaction to Victor Emmanuel's guilt by association. To the leftists the monarchy was the symbol of tradition, order, privilege, and Fascism. The institution itself simply did not mesh with the socio-economic changes they proposed for Italian society.⁵⁵

As the year 1944 emerged, the existing Italian government found itself unable to move forward towards meeting the British-American

⁵⁴ Mammarella, p. 62.

⁵⁵ Delzell, p. 328. The King's answer to the accusations made against him was that he bore no political responsibility. He maintained that Mussolini's rise to power was the direct result of the inability of the democratic parties to organize against him. (Mammarella, p. 63.)

demands for inclusion of the anti-Fascist parties in the government.⁵⁶

While the conflict continued, accompanied with proposals and counter proposals from various elements, new situations which touched on the problem were continuing to develop. The Bari Congress which convened on 28 January, 1944 was one of these situations. As the CLNs gained more and more political voice in the liberated South, they began to act in concert. The Committees requested permission to convene a national convention in Naples on December 20, 1943. The AMG refused to grant their request, basing their refusal on regulations prohibiting political meetings in AMG territory. The Allied Control Commission, however, quickly interceded and persuaded Marshal Badoglio to allow the Congress to meet in the town of Bari which was in that part of Italy occupied by the King. The Bari Congress was important because it signaled the first free political assembly to meet openly in Europe since the Nazis overran the Continent. "The congress did not, of course, mark the birth of free political parties, but it signaled their first dramatic bow on the public stage."⁵⁷ Bari was, however, also important for other reasons which relate to the continuing story of conflict discussed above.

⁵⁶ During the conflict the AMG at different times lined up with one or the other side. Mammarella states that the Americans definitely favored the anti-Fascist parties, at least after Adlai Stevenson's fact-finding report on Southern Italy had been presented to the State Department. The British, on the other hand, representing Churchill's attitude, were generally on the side of the monarchy. They had little faith in the political prowess of the political parties, and they feared extremism. (Mammarella, p. 64.)

⁵⁷ Delzell, p. 332.

Two key proposals were aired at the Congress.⁵⁸ The first proposal was introduced before actual formalities began. It was sponsored by the three leftist parties and set forth the manifesto that the Congress itself was the legal Italian government, and as such, the Allies must now deal with it instead of with Marshal Badoglio. This proposal died quickly, due in large part to the influence of Benedetto Croce. A final outcome, deriving from this defeated proposal, was the formation of a junta which was comprised of representatives of the six parties, and which acted as a standing committee of the Congress. The importance of the creation of this junta must not be minimized during this period of conflict for "This [junta] was the germ of the six-party coalition of 1944-5."⁵⁹ The second key proposal aired at the Congress--and this one was passed--demanded the abdication of the King and called for the institutional problem to be decided by popular vote at the end of the war. This compromise on the viability of the monarchy was realized because the southern PCI, "engaged at the moment in a furtive flirtation with Badoglio, failed to give vigorous support to the leftists' resolution."⁶⁰

⁵⁸"On a different plane, one of the most important achievements of the Congress of Bari was the foundation of the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL, Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro), which merged into the same labor organization the Communist, Socialist and Christian Democratic workers unions. This act achieved a unity on the labor front similar to that reached among different political forces already existing in the CLN." (Mammarella, p. 66.)

⁵⁹W. Hilton-Young, The Italian Left A Short History of Political Socialism in Italy (London, 1949), p. 166.

⁶⁰Delzell, p. 333. There appears to have been a difference in attitude between the southern and northern PCI. Southern leaders appeared to want to shelve the conflict and concentrate on driving the Germans out of Italy. There was even a rumor that the PCI would join the Badoglio government. The "coquetry" of the southern Communists was not appreciated by their northern counterparts.

This open willingness on the part of the PCI to bend politically can be viewed as the first fragment of evidence that Italian Communism in 1944 and in the postwar years would hold as its highest priority participation in the Italian government. The Togliatti return to Italy, with his almost immediate decision on the monarchy, forms another bit of evidence supporting this contention.⁶¹ At the conclusion of the Bari Congress, the political parties had come together enough to agree upon the monarchy; however, no joint cabinet had been formed. The King still defied abdication.

The conflict over the monarchy became increasingly fierce before it was finally (at least for the immediate future) resolved. The British renewed pressure to retain the monarchical institution while the ACC Political Section worked out a specific plan for abdication. In February, 1944 Enrico De Nicola, a political leader from Naples, finally persuaded the King to agree to abdication in favor of his son Prince Umberto. Still, final agreement among all parties concerned hung in the balance. The left-wing parties would not accept Umberto because of his role as Commander-in-Chief of the Italian forces in 1940 when Mussolini had declared war on France.⁶² It was at this point that Palmiro Togliatti arrived in Naples from Moscow. And it was at this point that the PCI, under his leadership, facilitated an agreement between King and political parties, making it possible for Marshal Badoglio to form a cabinet with the six anti-Fascist parties in membership.

⁶¹Togliatti's decision concerning the monarchy will be discussed later in this chapter.

⁶²Hilton-Young, pp. 166-167.

Straight from the fountainhead of authority, he swung the communist leaders right round overnight; the communists would henceforth be prepared to collaborate in the government with anybody at all, with the King, with Badoglio, with black Catholics, with laissez-faire liberals. Now was no time for sterile gestures of disapproval; the war must be won in collaboration with anyone who was prepared to win it. At the same time communist propaganda in Naples suddenly increased and demonstrations became more businesslike.⁶³

Thus, Togliatti, speaking for the PCI, voiced no objection to collaborating with Badoglio even with the King remaining on the throne.

The PCI's "realistic approach" was accepted by both the King and the Allies.⁶⁴ The other political parties, if somewhat reluctantly, also accepted the PCI attitude as workable. The formal agreement was reached on April 24 and was based on the De Nicola plan mentioned above. This plan called for the transfer of all royal powers from the King to a Lieutenant General, provided that the King would retire from the throne without the necessity of abdicating, and ensured that Umberto, the son of Victor Emmanuel, would become Lieutenant General.⁶⁵ Thus, a new government was formed; it was still under the premiership of Marshal Badoglio, but it had within its membership representation of all the CLN parties.

Togliatti's PCI "svolta" laid the foundation for the future of the party. Two items are of particular note. First, the svolta assured the Communists of participation in the government. In the April, 1944 Badoglio cabinet, they were given the Department of Agriculture, and

⁶³ Hilton-Young, p. 167.

⁶⁴ Mammarella, p. 67.

⁶⁵ Mammarella, P. 68.

Togliatti was made minister without portfolio.⁶⁶ This membership in the government continued through successive ministries (to 1947), and provided the party with a base from which to strengthen their impact upon the Italian people. Second, the svolta established a pattern of behavior for the Communists which was to continue through the years 1944 and 1945 and beyond that. They were intent upon remaining in the government.

There was evidently going to be no more of the Bombacci-Bordiga tradition of intransigent political virginity, but a determination to get into the government at all costs. For the communists, the most implacable, incorruptible and gallant of the anti-Fascists, to lead the way in co-operating with a monarch who was compromised even in the eyes of a convinced monarchist like Signor Croce was a break with tradition that showed how far above other aims did they rate the getting of placed in the government. They did not thereafter revise this rating.⁶⁷

In conclusion, an understanding of the circumstances which facilitated the final agreement between Badoglio and the six anti-Fascist parties is crucial to comprehending the behavior of the Italian Communist party in the years 1940-1945 (and beyond). As noted earlier the PCI, from the moment Togliatti took command in Italy, set aside its revolutionary intransigence and assumed a posture which was flexible and accommodating. The party eschewed involvement or commitment on philosophical questions. They opted for practical political strategy.

V. ISSUES: THE BONOMI MINISTRIES 9 June, 1944-12 June, 1945

The presence of crises did not end with the agreement which had brought together in the government Badoglio and the anti-Fascist

⁶⁶Mammarella, p. 69.

⁶⁷Hilton-Young, p. 168.

parties. Before long, in fact, the Marshal resigned, never to be Prime Minister again. In early June the Allies marched into Rome and liberated the city. At this time the De Nicola plan went into operation; the King transferred his powers to his son who became the Lieutenant General, and Badoglio prepared to form his second government with the six parties as he was directed to do by Umberto. Badoglio was in trouble from the beginning. The Central CLN (CCLN) still chafed at working under a Prime Minister who had openly functioned under the command of Mussolini. More importantly, and particularly on the part of the Socialists and the Actionists, the CCLN viewed itself as the ultimate constitutional authority. Thus, it exerted pressure to be recognized as such thereby reducing the Lieutenant General to nothing more than a "figurehead."⁶⁸ Marshal Badoglio in the end bowed to CCLN pressure; he informed the Lieutenant he would not form a new government. Umberto was compelled to offer the Badoglio post to the man supported by the CCLN; on June 9 Ivanoe Bonomi, the seasoned Labor Democrat, formed a new government.

There were two governments under the leadership of Bonomi, and the Communists served in both of them. The conflicts between the political parties of the CCLN which transpired during the duration of these two governments serves to further illustrate the pattern of behavior exhibited by the PCI and outlined above in the description of its conduct during the Badoglio cabinet. The actions of the Communists under Bonomi demonstrate first a firm decision to remain in the government, even at the cost of flexibility and compromise concerning men and issues. Second, their actions testify to a keen interest in broadening their base of power from within the government coupled with an incisive

⁶⁸ Mammarella, p. 72.

awareness as to how to maneuver their position in order to accomplish this aim. Evidence to support the above description of the PCI can be shown through analysis of the two major points of dissension which plagued the Bonomi ministry. The first dealt with the purpose of the CLNs themselves, both on a local level and at the cabinet level. The second concerned the political purge of ex-Fascists from all areas of public life.

As was demonstrated above, the Central CLN had become powerful enough to oblige the Lieutenant General to choose their candidate for Prime Minister when they no longer wanted Marshal Badoglio. The CLN at the local level had also achieved a considerable amount of power. In liberated Italy they operated in most of the towns and villages, and because they were the only political forces available, besides the Fascist ones previously existing there, they were the ones given administrative powers upon liberation at the hands of the Allies. The AMG, as a matter of fact, because they were not familiar with the local situations, tended to depend upon local CLN government. For the above reasons, the local CLNs "became the arbiters of local life."⁶⁹

There was disagreement among the political parties of the Central CLN as to how much power these local CLNs should in fact exercise. The Liberals and other conservative elements, because they were interested in preserving the pre-Fascist status quo, obviously wanted to curb the authority of the local CLNs. It was in their mind that when the Italian government regained control over the liberated portions of their country, the normal channels of administration would be resumed at the

⁶⁹Mammarella, p. 75.

expense of the local CLNs. These normal channels--prefetti, police chiefs, local bureaucrats--were the pre-Fascist traditional channels they so much preferred.⁷⁰ The rightist parties were patently interested in continuing their influence and in running their country, after the war ended, in a way which would be beneficial to them. The leftist parties, on the other hand, the most vociferous of which were the Socialists and the Actionists, desired to strengthen the local CLNs for the purpose of weeding out traditional elements; their aim was to utilize the CLNs as a base from which to facilitate the social and economic changes they foresaw for postwar Italy. The Communists, though they supported the Socialists and Actionists on a theoretical plane, would in the end be willing to lose ground on the local CLN issue through their direct compromise on the purge issue. This will be demonstrated shortly; first, one other observation needs to be asserted.

The conflict over the role of the local CLNs was related directly to the purge of Fascists from the administration of government. None of the anti-Fascist parties disagreed with the premise that Italian political life must be purged of those who had collaborated with Fascism. It seemed reasonable, on a moral basis, to punish those who by compromising with Fascism had gained at the expense of the Italian people. This is where agreement ended, however, for the political parties. Those on the right were interested in prosecuting members of the "Fascist hierarchy and Fascist profiteers."⁷¹ They did not want the purge to extend beyond the

⁷⁰The prefetto is a governmental official of high rank who speaks for the government in the province. He has ultimate authority in the province, even exercising this power over the locally elected officials.

⁷¹Mammarella, p. 77.

leaders because a purge of such magnitude would encompass those classes of people which would form the bulwark of their political support once elections were again legal in Italy. The Liberals and the Christian Democrats both needed the support of the former ruling class in order to establish a viable political base.⁷² The leftist parties, on the other hand, and this included the PCI, viewed the purge as political in function.

In order to build a new democratic society it was first necessary to eliminate the old political class, which stood for values contrary to democracy and whose political approach was strongly tied to Fascist mental habits and methods.⁷³

To get rid of the leaders of Fascism, then, was not the sole aim of the leftist groups. Their plan adamantly demanded that broad segments of the governmental bureaucracy, the army, and the economy be cleansed of any and all individuals who had fraternized with Fascism either overtly or merely by a sympathetic attitude.

Regardless of the position taken by the leftists concerning the Fascist purges, the PCI, when it came down to choosing sides, opted to compromise--and to compromise substantially--on the purge issue. Their actions pinpoint another indication "that the ruling passion of the new type of communism was government office."⁷⁴ Added to this, through their compromise, they gained ground politically testifying to their constant awareness for astute maneuvering within the government.

The argument over the role of the local CLNs and the purge continued for months, producing many tense moments in the first Bonomi

⁷² Mammarella, pp. 76-77.

⁷³ Mammarella, p. 76.

⁷⁴ Hilton-Young, p. 175.

cabinet. For the rightists matters had been made more intense by the appointment of a Communist, Mauro Scoccimarro, to be the "High Commissioner for Epuration."⁷⁵ They accused Scoccimarro of purging too many officials. When, late in November of 1944, he sought the expurgation of particular finance and maritime officials, passions erupted. The Navy Minister Admiral DeCourten and the Treasury Minister Soleri (PLI) immediately resigned. Bonomi backed them solidly and went so far as to demand the dissolution of the office of High Commissioner for Epuration.⁷⁶ Feelings were so acute that Bonomi resigned as Premier.⁷⁷

Bonomi's resignation of itself caused another crisis. When he resigned he offered his resignation to Umberto the Lieutenant General, thus publicly acknowledging him as the executor of constitutional authority. This was a stinging affront to the leftists, particularly to the Socialists who detested the monarchy and who were committed to constitutional authority residing in the CLN. "Bonomi patently was dissociating himself from any conception of a new political order based on supremacy of the CLN over the old state apparatus."⁷⁸ With all this trauma, a new Premier had to be chosen. Consultations for a new government began on the 26th of November, 1944 and continued for about fifteen days. With the blocking by the British of Count Sforza

⁷⁵ Hilton-Young, p. 172.

⁷⁶ Delzell, p. 399.

⁷⁷ Two other reasons which contributed to the downfall of Bonomi were the British attitude towards Count Sforza and the problem of the relationship between the Rome government and the local CLNs. Regarding the first, the British had blocked Count Sforza from becoming Foreign Minister in the first Bonomi cabinet. Regarding the second, the local CLNs resented the appointment by the Rome CLN of their local officials.

⁷⁸ Delzell, p. 460.

for Prime Minister, the three rightist parties finally agreed to support "England's man" Ivanoe Bonomi as the person to form a new cabinet.⁷⁹

The Socialists and the Actionists adamantly declined to join the government in opposition to Bonomi. Nenni had, at the onset of the crisis produced a manifesto stating that the Socialists would not truck with a reactionary monarchist such as Bonomi if he ever formed a second government. The PSIUP held firm to its expression in the manifesto. This refusal on the part of the Socialists surprised few, if any. When Togliatti's Communists announced their intention to join the Bonomi cabinet, however, the atmosphere must have been reminiscent of his April svolte during the Badoglio government. "The Communists, as always, proved to be more accommodating and although they maintained their reservations with regard to Bonomi, they agreed to cooperate with him."⁸⁰ For Bonomi's second government the Communists appeared to be model partners. "The communists continued to show themselves pliant in practice although rigid in theory...Signor Togliatti followed his declared policy of collaboration with the Regent and the forces of reaction'for the moment' - 'per adesso.'"⁸¹

For the Communists themselves, the second Bonomi government mirrored both failure to advance changes which they had advocated and

⁷⁹ Delzell, p. 461.

⁸⁰ Kogan in Italy and the Allies maintains that one possible reason for this action on the part of the PCI was the desire on the part of the Soviets to keep in power in Italy "Weak, ineffective, and unprogressive groups to improve the prospects of a later successful Communist seizure of power." (Norman Kogan, Italy and the Allies (Cambridge, 1956), p. 183.

⁸¹ Hilton-Young, p. 176.

in gaining positions in the government which were useful in strengthening their influence nationally. On the negative side, though the power of the national CLN had been upheld, the functions of the local CLN "were sharply limited, to merely consultative functions."⁸² Along with this, the extent to which the political purge would be carried out was cut drastically; the High Commission in charge of the purge operation, which had been a committee of the CCLN, was abolished, and the orders for purge were transferred to jurisdiction of the judicial courts. The courts invariably moved more slowly and with more leniency than had Scoccimarro and his committee.⁸³ On the positive side, the Communists gained influence in the Bonomi cabinet. Togliatti became a Deputy Prime Minister. Antonio Pesenti served as Minister of Finance, and Mauro Scoccimarro gained the post of Minister for the Occupied Territories. The position captured by Scoccimarro turned out to be an important one for the Communists. It provided for them a vantage point within the resistance movement. Thus, an examination of the Bonomi governments does indeed show, the PCI, chiefly through its willingness to be flexible and to come to compromise, in a position of give and take. They gave on a couple of issues they had advocated, more power for the local CLN and a continuance of the purge at high levels; yet, unlike the Socialists, they were the ones who were in the government, and by being so they gained offices and thereby had a base from which to exert their influence.

⁸² Mammarella, p. 79.

⁸³ Mammarella, p. 79.

VI. ISSUES: THE PARRI MINISTRY
19 June, 1945-24 November, 1945

Ferruccio Parri came into office on the shirtils of the vento del nord, the "wind from the north." The vento represented the spirit of the heroic resistance efforts in the North which many hoped would provide the catalyst for social and economic change in the Italian state now that the war was over and the business of rebuilding could be resumed wholeheartedly. Parri had been the supreme chief of the partisan forces; he was popular and as such his choice as leader of the government was received wholeheartedly by those who had been a part of or who identified with the Resistance. This enthusiasm was in no way matched by the CCLN which had actually selected Parri. At the time he was being considered for office, forces had been solidifying within governmental parties for some time and now that the war had ended crystallization of ideas was imminent. Within the CCLN the Christian Democrats on the one side and the Communists and the Socialists on the other side were already squaring off against one another. This had gone to the point that neither of these major parties was willing to give on an issue which might enhance the political strength of the other party. Thus, the DC blocked the possibility for a Nenni Prime Ministership, giving as their ostensible reason the idea that a Socialist leader would not be looked upon kindly by the Allies. Likewise the Socialists obstructed the way for a De Gasperi Prime Ministership for reasons of the same genre.⁸⁴ Ferruccio Parri was the man the parties were finally able to agree upon.

As an individual Parri's rating is high. "He was a man of great organizing ability, absolute rectitude and freedom from spite, and of a

⁸⁴Mammarella, p. 96.

positively eccentric modesty--even humility."⁸⁵ He thrust himself into his job, working very long hours and sometimes sleeping in his office.⁸⁶ Granted this on the positive side, Parri had never before served in government; he therefore was lacking in important experience. Also, while in prison in Switzerland early in 1945, he had gone on record as one who eschewed the actual play of politics.

If he could, he said, he would prevent the Party from taking part in ordinary politica and from holding office and would encourage it to give its best men to the civil service and to the non-political organs of reconstruction which, it was to be expected, would be doing the detailed and useful work of administration after the war.⁸⁷

Whatever positive or negative attributes can be dredged up in an effort to evaluate Parri in a role he had been cast in, he did face Herculean problems which demanded immediate attention.⁸⁸ Whether his failure in office--he was forced to resign a mere five months after he resumed his duties--was attributed mainly to his own inherent shortcomings or chiefly to the unwillingness of the political parties to come to terms with each other, and thereby come to terms with the issues facing them, is perhaps, a moot question. Nevertheless, one factor is true, and for purposes here, is important. The PCI, indirectly or behind the scenes,

⁸⁵ Hilton-Young, p. 181.

⁸⁶ Delzell, p. 563.

⁸⁷ Hilton-Young, p. 182.

⁸⁸ These Herculean problems consisted of "fighting the inflation and black market which were reducing millions to destitution; compromising the Augean problem of epurazione; healing sectional wounds; handling noisy Sicilian separatists; defining the borders against Yugoslav and French pretensions; preparing for elections that would shape the political institutions of the new Italy; and satisfying some of the demands for land reform." (Delzell, p. 563.)

worked to the disadvantage of the Action Party and Signor Parri. They, more than any other group, were consciously responsible for his inability to succeed in what he set out to do.

Ferruccio Parri fashioned his government around two goals. First, the nation would continue the fight against Fascism not merely on a legal basis, but also on a moral basis. Second, social and economic change must have as its foundation nothing less than complete structural reform of Italian society.⁸⁹ The first goal met with a complicated situation. With the liberation of northern Italy and the end of the war, Italian society faced a mass readjustment to a normal society problem. The social and economic landscape was glutted with war veterans, resistance fighters, and ex-prisoners of war; with the country already in a state of physical and financial ruin, there was little hope that these people could restructure a decent life in the immediate future. To this situation of increasing discontent--unemployment was rampant--was added the availability of weapons left over from the war and the resistance movement. As a result the potential for violence was established, and many political demonstrations ended in violence. The reaction of Parri to this state of affairs was in line with his goal of fighting Fascism on a moral basis. He was the leader of a democratic state which was totally anti-Fascist in his view. As the head of such a state, he could never react with "police repression" to the demonstrations of those people who had put their lives on the line to rid their country of the odious Fascists. "He was committed to realize in the political life of the country the values that had

⁸⁹ Mammarella, p. 103.

been established by the resistance movement."⁹⁰ Morally, he could not send the police and the Carabinieri to fire upon the people for exactly the same anti-Fascist values he and the government (supposedly) were committed to.

The political ramifications of this atmosphere--both the action on the part of the masses and the reaction on the part of Parri--are extremely important.

The absence of adequate public powers was deplored by the propertied and the privileged and soon the 'strong state' was regretted and the use of energetic means of repression to bring about order advocated. After a period of disorientation the forces that traditionally had controlled the economic power began to react to what appeared to them as an emergency situation, attempting to retake the initiative lost to the popular classes. In this case the industrial haute bourgeoisie, who desired a rapid reconstruction of industry in order to defend its privileged position, allied its interests with those of the petit and middle bourgeoisie,...Such a state of affairs bred a reactionary spirit with its traditional class hatred.⁹¹

The political representatives of the forces discussed above reacted in kind towards Parri. Because he would not deal concretely with the demonstrations, they accused him of being weak and partial to those responsible. Even more than just accusations and criticisms within the cabinet, the Christian Democrats and the Liberals openly and publicly harangued Parri's actions through the information media over which they had control. These circumstances succeeded in establishing an "atmosphere of hostility" that crippled the Parri government.⁹² One last reference to the problems which confronted Parri's efforts to carry out his first

⁹⁰ Mammarella, p. 100.

⁹¹ Mammarella, p. 99.

⁹² Mammarella, p. 100.

goal of dealing with the vestiges of Fascism on a moral basis should be mentioned. This concerns the purges which had also plagued the Bonomi governments.

The middle classes were opposed to extensive purge, and extensive to them meant any purge at any level that involved them. Parri's intent was to broaden the purge operation which had been reduced as a result of the arguments endemic to the Bonomi governments. The Actionists, the Socialists, and the Communists not only supported this move, they demanded it. Indeed, Palmiro Togliatti had been given the portfolio of Justice, and he was ready and willing to act. It is almost anti-climactic to assert the position of the middle classes on this issue. They were intensely against increasing the purge operation; their ranks had the most to lose from such a program.⁹³

The realization of the second goal sought by Parri fared little better than did that for the first, and for quite similar reasons. In his effort to achieve structural reform of the society, Parri was intent on checking the power exercised by oligopolies. He hoped to reorganize industry along more just lines than it had been organized in the past; in his scheme the smaller and medium-sized corporations would have more and better opportunities aimed at achieving a sense of balance in the industrial sphere. The specific plan by which Parri meant to bring his shake-up about was two pronged: first, it provided for a new income tax which was designed to strike out at the major industrial alliances which had reaped large profits while playing the game during the Fascist regime. Second, the plan created a system of distribution of the then very scarce, much needed raw materials which overtly favored small and

⁹³ Mammarella, pp. 100-101.

medium-sized businesses over the large ones. As in his efforts to accomplish his first goal, Parri was met with staunch resistance from the right. The Liberals reacted openly in criticism for the same reasons they had criticised the other ideas of Parri. They were committed to maintaining the traditional power structure of Italian society which had been fact since the Risorgimento, and they knew that Parri's political direction was the tool for the destruction of their power base. In their attacks against Parri, the Liberals gained a wide range of support from different public elements, not because they stood to lose in the same way, but because they viewed the second goal of the Parri plan as a means of attacking private property.⁹⁴

The really long-range political ramifications which resulted from the conflict in the Parri government, however, was the sharp line being etched between left and right. Because the leftist parties openly supported Parri's program, Parri, who aimed at restructuring society socially and economically with parity as the foundations, was "accused of complicity with the Communists and of favoring their plans for gaining control of the economic life of the country."⁹⁵ Fuel was added to leftist versus rightist fire by the continually inflammatory institutional question. Parri and the republicans wanted to arrange national elections as soon as possible; they felt that the time was favorable for a republican win, and they wished to exploit this situation. The monarchists--the Liberals and certain Christian Democratic elements--on the other hand wished to delay the elections. They, of course, felt that they had everything to gain by waiting for a more strategic electoral opportunity.

⁹⁴Mammarella, p. 101.

⁹⁵Mammarella, p. 101.

The "ill-starred government" of Parri was doomed to early failure. Crisis-ridden, it was taut with tension. Finally, in November, 1945, the Liberals precipitated a crisis which, added to the others, drove Parri to resignation. The subject this time concerned the purge. As was pointed out earlier, Togliatti had been appointed Minister of Justice in the Parri cabinet. A common practice of "defascistization" under his administration was imprisonment without trial.⁹⁶ The Liberals chose to make an issue of this, and in November they demanded that this arbitrary action be curbed and required further that to accomplish this Parri should draft into his cabinet some older statesman who had no ties with the CLN and who opposed the purge to the extent it was currently being enacted. When Parri refused to take action on their demands, the Liberal ministers resigned. "Though De Gasperi piously called for continuation of the CLN hexarchy, he knew well that the PLI would not change its mind. Soon he associated the DC with the PLI boycotters of Parri."⁹⁷ With the Christian Democrats' support of the Liberals and their resignation, Parri could no longer hope to survive. On November 24, 1945 he resigned.

The fact that the actions of the Liberals and the Christian Democrats caused the fall of Parri is without contention, but it is misleading to end with blame only directed toward them. The villains of the piece have not been identified in total. Norman Kogan maintains that "The Communists helped the Christian Democrats undermine the Parri government, the only one in postwar Italy really serious about social progress."⁹⁸ This is probably true, as astonishing as it may be (for

⁹⁶Hilton-Young, p. 183.

⁹⁷Delzell, p. 566.

⁹⁸Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 184.

there is inherent contradiction without Mr. Kogan's thought). It is correct, for instance, that throughout the crises that occurred during the Parri five month government, the leftists, including the Communists, openly supported Parri's plan for change in postwar Italian society. To demonstrate their antipathy towards the slowness with which the purge was being carried out, the Communists organized and led a series of riots. When Parri's fall was imminent, they activated the people into demonstrations against his loss. Nonetheless, the fact cannot be overlooked that although the PCI supported Parri and his Actionists on the surface of things, they did not support him vigorously. The real intent of Togliatti and the PCI was once again, as in the previous governments, to retain at all costs the positions in the government that they had thus far gained.

Togliatti and the PCI were very much aware of what they were doing and what consequences would probably be precipitated by their actions. Togliatti's motivation during the Parri government was engineered in one direction: treading softly in an effort to gain political footholds wherever he was able. With concern chiefly for the survivability of the PCI in government--letting by-product consequences fall as they might--he accomplished his goal in several ways. First, because he believed that an open revolution was not possible in Italy at that time--there were Anglo-American troops and no Red Army--he did not indulge in leftist, fiery impassioned speeches; instead behind the scenes he aimed at suppressing the fears of the conservative elements.⁹⁹ Second, he utilized his energies to create a powerful workers' party by gaining and forging a strong position within the CGIL, the Italian

⁹⁹ Delzell, p. 563.

General Confederation of Labor, and organization which represented the resurrection of labor unions along pre-Fascist lines, and whose leadership was composed of the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Communists. Third, and most significant politically, Togliatti maneuvered to maintain, and thereby succeeded, a working relationship with Nenni and the PSIUP. The Unity of Action Pact first arrived at in 1934 as part of the Popular Front was renewed. Though this would result in the future subordination of the Socialist Party to the Communist Party, it was certainly short of fusion of the two parties, something which had come close to happening except for the efforts of Saragat and Silone, both moderates in the Socialist Party. The important point to be noted is that the renewal of the Unity of Action Pact signaled the demise of the Action Party. The Actionists and the revisionist element of the Socialist Party had envisioned a coalition between them. The renewal of coalition. With the Togliatti-Nenni Alliance, there was no "enduring place" for the PdA; they had always been a very small party of intellectuals with little popular support, and now they had no place to go.

History was repeating itself: just as Carlo Rosselli's Giustizia e Libertà had been overtaken by the Social-Communist bloc in the era of the Popular Front and Spanish Civil War, [See Chapter II, The Communist Party in Italy 1921-1941] so Parri's Action Party was being outmaneuvered by Togliatti's brilliant tactics, the realities of Anglo-American power, and the mistakes of its won hotspurs.¹⁰⁰

In shedding even more light on this issue of the decline of the Action Party, one might consider the idea, put forth by Mammarella for one, that worked towards the downfall of Parri because it feared both him and the Action Party. This fear rested on the supposition that if his plan for change had been successful then the PdA might have become

¹⁰⁰ Delzell, pp. 564-565.

the moving force for the masses instead of the PCI. The Action Party, for the Communists, represented a "potentially dangerous competitor" who might be able to gain the allegiance of the people because of Parri's glorious leadership in the Resistance and because of his dauntless unwillingness to compromise.

In the last analysis, the PCI was acutely aware of which way the political wind was blowing. They recognized the discontent in the conservative upper and middle classes which had been generated by the ideas fostered in the Parri government. They knew that this discontent was the reason why the Christian Democrats had chosen to cease their support of Parri, and they reasoned that the swing back--towards the traditional vested interests--was going to continue for the foreseeable future.

There was a progressive return to the old mental habits which were not openly Fascist any longer but paternalistic and authoritarian. Democracy was realized in the structures and the institutions but not in spirit; the fundamental freedoms were formally guaranteed but their meaning was partially negated by the favoring of vested interests.¹⁰¹

With this awareness present, Togliatti, "one of the shrewdest politicians of the century," chose to "blow" as harmoniously as possible with the wind. The PCI's survivability as a viable member of the government depended on this move.

¹⁰¹Mammarella, p. 103.

CHAPTER V

THE PCI AND THE RESISTANCE SEPTEMBER, 1943-MAY, 1945: A TIME FOR AGGRESSION

I. THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

September 8, 1943, marked the birth of the Resistenza Armata in the half of Italy under the German heel. The void left in Rome and the North by the fugitive royal-military government and the disintegrating Italian armies in the face of ruthless German attack, followed by the shocking news of Mussolini's rescue, helped induce thousands of Italian patriots to join the partisan movement. This struggle, undertaken against heavy odds, climaxed two decades of clandestine opposition to Fascism and in no small degree helped to redeem Italy's all-but-shattered moral and military reputation.¹

During the period when the Italian Peninsula was divided in two, the people who lived in the South and the people who inhabited the North and Central portions lived two quite different experiences. In the South, the Italians had been liberated from the Fascists and the Germans; in practice they were free and could go about their business. Technically, they were subjects of the Allies and as such were "scorned, misunderstood, and suffering from every kind of shortage and privation..."² The war was over for the southerners; yet, the period of almost two years which followed the landing of the Anglo-American troops was one in which they felt little self-esteem and certainly not much a part of their

¹Charles F. Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies The Italian Anti-Fascist Resistance (Princeton, 1961), p. 261.

²H. Stuart Hughes, The United States and Italy (Cambridge, 1953), p. 137.

destinies. For those Italians who lived on the other side of the battle lines, particularly in the North, the post armistice period was quite another experience. In their arena, whether they chose it or not, a war was raging, and it was a war not only against an invader but also against fellow Italians.

Though it is probably accurate that a good many of the people were passive and apathetic, nonetheless a large number of persons, "a considerable minority which consciously and positively refused to accept Mussolini's doctrines,"³ worked actively towards liberating themselves from their oppressors. As was true of movements elsewhere in Europe, the Resistance movement in Italy was comprised of many different elements. There were workers and industrialists who lowered their rate of production in an effort to hurt German war production. Many public officials refused to obey German orders and secretly gave aid to anti-German fighters. Some simply went into hiding rather than work for the Germans. Peasants were yet another element who aided in the Resistance; many would not supply farm products to the enemy, and whenever they were able they hid prisoners of war or partisans. Finally there were the armed guerrillas and saboteurs themselves who formed the backbone of the Resistance.⁴ These elements of the population at one time or another gave help, each in its own specific way, towards driving the enemy out of Italy.

³Massimo Salvadori-Paleotti, "The Patriot Movement in Italy," Foreign Affairs, April, 1946, p. 539.

⁴Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 539.

The Italian Resistance was composed of two major elements. One was political and the other military.⁵ The former was comprised of local Committees of National Liberation (CLNs). These CLNs were clandestine counterparts to the Central CLN in Rome which had evolved from Ivanoe Bonomi's Anti-Fascist Committee formed on 9 September, 1943.⁶ During the latter part of 1943 and in 1944, northern and central area CLNs were formed in every regional capital, in most of the provincial capitals, and in many of the towns and villages.⁷ Usually they were, like the Central CLN, composed of representatives from the major political parties.⁸ Milan's underground organization met soon after the armistice was announced on September 8, and at this meeting it decided to follow in the footsteps of the CCLN by transforming itself into a CLN. Because of its competent leadership and its strategic location, the Milan CLN developed into the most important Committee for the North.⁹ In fact it later created the CLN dell'Alta Italia (CLNAI) which communicated

⁵Muriel Grindrod, The New Italy Transition From War to Peace (London, 1947), p. 16.

⁶See Chapter IV, "The PCI and Politics," the section on the CLNs.

⁷Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 541.

⁸See Chapter IV, "The PCI and Politics," keeping in mind that in the South the CLNs had representatives from six political parties while in the North they were comprised of representatives from five major parties. The Labor Democrats were not represented in the Northern CLNs.

Also Salvatore-Paleotti indicates that "sometimes only three or four of the major anti-Fascist parties were represented [in the North]; sometimes the committees included smaller organizations which had local political significance, such as Italian Republicans, Social Christians and Anarcho-Syndicalists." (Salvadore-Paleotti, p. 541.)

⁹Delzell, p. 278.

with Allied Force Headquarters and for all practical purposes controlled both the political and military Resistance in the North.¹⁰ The CLNAI "had more or less parallel status with the Rome CCLN."¹¹ In the city of Turin the Comitato Piemontese di Liberazione Nazionale (CPLN) evolved from the Committee of the Opposition, the underground organization which had existed there from early 1943. Like its sister CLNs in the North, the Torinese group functioned in virtual secrecy. Its members were very careful about outsiders, and they moved their meeting places continuously.

Gatherings out of doors preferably were restricted to two or three persons and were confined usually to outlying streets. While walking, the conspirators might exchange a few important documents, though a basic rule was to keep written material at a minimum and in code whenever feasible.¹²

In Florence the Comitato Toscano di Liberazione Nazionale (CTLN) also was born from an earlier underground organ. In 1943 and 1944, then, all over the North, in Genoa, Bologna, Padua, Trent, and Trieste, in the wake of Milan and Turin and Florence, more Comitati were "mushrooming".

The CLNs were extremely important to the total Resistance movement. They were the lifeline of the military segment; everywhere they were organized as "centers for communication, supply, and political propaganda."¹³

¹⁰ Grindrod, The New Italy, p. 16.

¹¹ Delzell, p. 278.

¹² Delzell, p. 279.

¹³ Hughes, p. 139. Elizabeth Wiskemann also adds, as another major task of the CLNs in the cities, the sabotage of industrial production. Both industrialists and workmen were willing to carry this out. Enrico Falck of the Falck steel works in Milan worked with his own men to decrease production to the minimum. Factory workers in Milan and Turin "excelled in short sit-down strikes on some plausible economic pretext." And of course there were the big strikes of 1943 and 1944. (Elizabeth Wiskemann, "The Italian Resistance Movements," Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946, ed. Arnold and Veronica M. Toynbee, Vol.: Hitler's Europe (London, 1954), p. 329.

The Resistance fighters, those actually in the field carrying on guerrilla warfare and sabotage against the Germans and the Fascists, soon realized how important their function was. The number of men who could be fed and clothed and maintained in any valley was limited. "The peasants were usually willing to share what food they had, but not to the point of starving themselves."¹⁴ In order to meet the extreme need for food and arms and money, the leaders of Resistance groups which were living in the mountains appealed to and relied upon the CLNs in the local towns and villages to supply their requirements. "Thus they were brought to accept, at least partly, the authority of the underground centralized organizations."¹⁵

The second major division of the Resistance was the military branch. This was the armed segment of the movement, and its members were called partisans or patriots. Though in recent years Italy had had really no established precedent for revolutionary or guerrilla warfare, there were and had been forces existent within the peninsula which accounted for the rise of the militancy exhibited during the twenty months of German-Fascist occupation. First, many Italians with leftist political affiliations, from the PCI, the PSIUP, and the PdA, had gained first hand experience in guerrilla tactics during the Spanish Civil War.¹⁶ These same men and others knew of and followed the movements of the Resistance in France, Yugoslavia and eastern Europe.

¹⁴Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 542.

¹⁵Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 542.

¹⁶See Chapter II, "The Communist Party in Italy," the section concerning the Togliatti leadership from abroad.

With this background the leaders in the Italian movement began to set the stage for the fighting in the occupied areas. Togliatti, even before returning to Italy in March, 1944, had broadcast from Moscow to his fellow Italians that they must be strong in the forthcoming underground fight. The Communists of Rome and the Actionists of Florence had both "anticipated the task" of preparing for the armed underground struggle, and both had set "precise military plans" into motion well before the actual fighting had begun.¹⁷ A second reason, and one worth mentioning, which possibly accounts for the rapid rise of the partisan movement in northern Italy is the fact that in Italy which was the poorest country in Europe with the lowest standard of living for the masses of people, industry was located mainly in the North, "and in the northern cities were the most active democratic movement and the strongest trade unionism before the advent of Fascism."¹⁸ The heritage of Socialism and Communism cannot be overlooked when considering the strikes and the sabotage to industrial production which took place in northern cities as part of the Resistenza Armata.

The greatest number of partisans lived and fought from the mountains, either those that bordered the Po valley or the Apennines located in central Italy.¹⁹ The reasons for their mountainous existence

¹⁷ Delzell, p. 286.

¹⁸ Lord Strabolgi, The Conquest of Italy (London, 1944), p. 65.

¹⁹ Delzell, p. 285. The partisans who operated from towns were not as numerous as those existing in the mountains and hills. They were, however, in the beginning better organized and "had a more definite political character." (Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 540.)

deal, of course, with tactics. They had to be in range of the enemy, and concomitantly able to reach land which was either forested or mountainous so that they could hide from him. Also, as was hinted at above, partisans tended to gather in locations where they could quickly add to their numbers, that is near towns and cities. Added to these considerations, they had to be ever concerned about refurbishing their food and clothing supply and their arms supply; consequently, "logistics restricted their range of operations to zones where supplies might readily be acquired."²⁰ Thus, they could not be too far from towns as well as from farm areas because they needed to eat, and warmth during the winter was essential. They had to be prepared to make strategic raids on supply depots or outposts in order to ensure possession of enough weaponry to continue fighting.

The basic unit in the partisan organization was a detachment which contained about fifty men. This detachment was further divided into three or four squads. Detachments of fifty men comprised a battalion, and three battalions formed a brigade, with an average concentration of about 450 men. In actuality, the numbers in a brigade were anywhere from 250 to 600 men. Finally, three brigades equalled a division. In each detachment battalion, brigade and division the chief leaders were the commander and the political commissar.²¹

As the Resistance movement was composed of two major divisions, the political and the military, so the military division was further broken down into yet two other chief branches. There were many men who had served in the Italian Army who chose to join partisan bands.

²⁰ Delzell, p. 285.

²¹ Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 542.

These men who came from disbanded army groupings came to be known as Autonomi because they formed "autonomous" patriot groups which claimed to be without political bias towards any of the political parties, including those major ones represented in the CLNs.²² They eschewed any and all political questions, making it clear that such questions should be settled only when the struggle at hand was ended.²³

The second major branch of the military Resistance was formed by the political partisan bands. These bands differed from the Autonomi in that they did not eschew political allegiance; in fact, they were closely connected to political parties, their leadership usually drawn from party activists.²⁴ The political partisans were more numerous than the Autonomi, and the three Leftist parties formed more bands than did the other political parties.

A careful Allied liaison officer and investigator has estimated that in the North (including upper Tuscany) political bands accounted for three fourth of the guerrillas, and in central Italy about two-thirds.²⁵

The PCI had the best organized and the greatest number of partisan bands. These bands were called the Garibaldini, and they made up from fifty to fifty-five per cent of the whole partisan army.²⁶ They were

²² They were also called "badogliani", a derisive term describing them as persons who had collaborated with Marshal Badoglio in the period of the "forty-five days."

²³ Delzell, p. 287.

²⁴ Giuseppe Mammarella, Italy After Fascism A Political History 1943-1965 (Notre Dame, 1966), p. 81.

²⁵ Delzell, p. 290.

²⁶ Mammarella, p. 81.

most efficiently organized, and though by far not all the members of their ranks were Communists, it was an absolute must that the leadership in the groups always be from the Communist cadres.²⁷

The second most numerous units after those controlled by the Communists were the forces under the leadership of the Action Party. Their bands known as the Giustizia e Liberta and the Rosselli brigades probably made up about one fourth the entire number of political bands.²⁸ The Actionist leadership had a deep sense of commitment and provided considerable competition to the Communists in terms of this commitment, and also in the publication of and spreading of propaganda.²⁹

Though on a smaller basis, other political parties also formed groups of partisans to fight in the Armed Resistance. The Christian Democrats and the Liberals, preferring to lend their support to Autonomi who already existed, entered into the scene relatively late. Only in 1944, and again in 1945, did the Christian Democrats initiate their own partisan groups; the Liberals did likewise. The Socialists eventually created the Matteotti brigades which operated mainly in the uplands of Lombard and Piedmont. Finally, there were a few local, small parties which sporadically created fighting groups in sundry locations or joined with one or another of those groups sponsored by the main parties.³⁰

²⁷ Delzell, p. 290.

²⁸ Delzell, p. 292.

²⁹ Delzell, p. 292.

³⁰ Delzell, pp. 294-295.

During the first winter of the Resistance, 1943-1944, the two major groupings of the Armed Resistance, the members of the political bands and the Autonomi or Badogliani as they were called, were, in a sense, at odds with each other. At this point in time the CLNs had not yet joined the Badoglio government, and this caused much internal tension. After April, 1944 when a new cabinet had been formed by Badoglio which did include representatives from the major political parties, tension was decreased among the partisans.³¹ This is important because the acceptance of Marshal Badoglio as Prime Minister by the Central CLN "laid the foundations for cooperation among the various elements of the Patriot movement."³²

The Italian Resistance movement, then, was a national movement and a popular uprising. It was national in character because it was nourished by an anti-German sentiment the roots of which reached back to the Risorgimento and the First World War. It was a popular movement in that individuals from all social strata became at one time or another involved in it. The Church, the army, the middle classes, the upper classes, the working classes in the cities, and the peasants in the countryside all contributed in their own fashion to the success of struggle against the Germans and the Fascists.³³

The motives which led such various and different types of people to partake in the same fight are, to say the least, interesting to

³¹ See Chapter IV, "The PCI and Politics," the section on the Badoglio governments.

³² Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 542.

³³ Shepard B. Clough and Salvatore Saladino, A History of Modern Italy Documents, Readings, and Commentary (New York, 1968), p. 526.

contemplate. Perhaps the statement that these motives were "a mixture of patriotic, ideological, idealistic reasons, intertwined with self-interest" is the most accurate that can be offered.³⁴ For many of the ex-Army men who joined the Armed Resistance, commitment was based on feelings of patriotism and idealism. These men felt a deep sense of loyalty to the oath they had sworn in allegiance to their King. In their minds Victor Emmanuel continued to stand for the Italian state; in fact, he was the only man who legally had the right to lead the country. These ex-soldiers, in point of fact, viewed themselves as the legal representatives of the King and the Italian government; they were intent upon loyalty to their oath and were prepared to fight to this end.³⁵

Certainly ideological reasons for fighting in the Resistance were also prevalent. These were found chiefly among the ranks of the political partisans, as opposed to the Autonomi. Though the bulk of the Christian Democrats and the Liberals viewed the Armed Resistance basically as a means to rid the country of the Germans and the Fascists, the Leftist parties saw the entire movement as vastly more important than merely ending the war as swiftly as possible. Most of them believed passionately that the underground "also represented the armed force of a revolutionary movement which was to reshape the political and social structure of the country at the end of the war."³⁶ They trusted in the idea that the Resistance would be the springboard from which change in

³⁴ Delzell, p. 286.

³⁵ Clough, Saladino, pp. 527-528.

³⁶ Mammarella, p. 81.

Italian society would begin. The old traditional elements so strongly woven into the society would be rooted out, and the working classes would refashion the state along lines fair and just for the people.

Also ideologically, there were those who took part in the Resistance because they thought of Fascism as nothing but Evil personified. A certain set of situations and circumstances had allowed this "Evil" to beset Italian life, but once it was cut out of the body of the state all would be well. As Croce had dictated it was like a tumor that "would never return."³⁷

Idealistic motivation was not absent from the ranks of the Resistance.

...the historian cannot deny the presence of a substantial measure of tough-fibered idealism and discipline among the underground fighters if he is to explain satisfactorily the readiness of the hard core of volunteers to face up month after month to the handicaps of that kind of warfare and the cruel tortures, if not death itself, that almost certainly became their lot when captured.³⁸

There is considerable evidence to support the existence of this laudible idealism. Many of the partisans were captured by the Germans and then were sentenced to die; "last letters" from many of these men attest to the fact that they sincerely and passionately believed in what they had fought for and were, indeed, willing to die for the same cause. The tone of these letters reveals "a sense of political vision and of calm, and moral fortitude..."³⁹ No better example of this can be offered than to quote a line from a letter of Duccio Galimberti (affiliated with the

³⁷ Clough, Saladino, p. 527.

³⁸ Delzell, p. 289.

³⁹ Delzell, p. 289.

Action Party) written to his family after he has been condemned to death as a prisoner of war: "I acted with good intentions for an ideal: for this I am serene, and so must you also be."⁴⁰

Finally, there were those who entered the ranks of the Resistance with self-preservation as their primary motive. They went into the Resistance in an effort to escape being recruited by the Germans for labor in Germany as quasi-prisoners of war or by the Fascists for military service against their own people. They reasoned that it was better to escape from a pressing and sure problem, while hoping that the war would somehow come to a speedy conclusion. And, of course, there was that minority of individuals who figured that sooner or later membership in the Resistance rank and file would provide "indispensable credentials" in the future rebuilding of the state.⁴¹ Whatever the motives were for those who participated in the Resistance, and seemingly they were varied, the movement itself worked; it had its glory and it was successful. Perhaps it is enough to conclude this section concerning the motivation on the part of those who involved themselves in the Resistance by repeating the sentiment of Paolo Treves which he expressed in June, 1944:

Many figures have been put forth about the strength of the patriots' ranks, and it seems that the most conservative estimates reckon with 300,000 men. Obviously not every single man in the patriot formations is a politically minded anti-Fascist. That cannot be so, but it is, I submit, permissible to say that the recovery of Italy will be very largely the work of her own sons.⁴²

⁴⁰ Delzell, p. 289.

⁴¹ Clough, Saladino, p. 528.

⁴² Paolo Treves, "The Underground in Italy," International Postwar Problems, June, 1944, p. 421.

The Armed Resistance took place chiefly in the northern and central portions of Italy. No partisans organized themselves in Sicily or in Sardinia; this was due in part because the Allies landed there first, but it was also attributed to the dearth of political and social awareness endemic to the islands' populations. An identical lack of consciousness was to be found in most of southern Italy, with the exception of the city of Naples.⁴³ In that city in the fall of 1943 there occurred a small spontaneous rebellion against the Germans which perhaps provided the one creditable southern contribution to the Armed Resistance. The quattro giornate (the four glorious days, as the rebellion came to be called) happened during the four days between September 27 and 30, 1943.

Shortly after Marshal Badoglio had made public the armistice between the Allies and his government, the Germans with little resistance took over the city of Naples. There was a committee of anti-Fascist parties active in the city, but they seemed unable to rally the citizens against the enemy. Nonetheless as time passed, hostility built up between the population and the Germans who were anything but kind overseers.⁴⁴ In addition to their problems with the interloper, the inhabitants of the port city suffered both from food and water shortages and from continuous Allied aerial bombardments. Under these potentially explosive circumstances violence finally materialized. On the 27th of September the Germans shot five persons and imprisoned fifty more as a reprisal for the killing of one of their motorcyclists. The Italians--mainly some very young persons from the lower classes--decided to fight

⁴³ Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 542.

⁴⁴ Delzell, p. 283.

back, and their revolt spread rather quickly.⁴⁵ Their insurrection continued for four days, though there was apparently no specific organization or goal on the part of the rioters.

The quattro giornate was not representative of the partisan warfare of the Armed Resistance; "...it attained neither the degree of political purpose nor mass support that characterized the struggle in the North."⁴⁶ But though it was not fighting that emulated the caliber of that executed in the North, it did make a contribution to the Resistance movement. Those Neapolitans who took part in the quattro giornate "unwittingly" showed their fellow countrymen that the Germans (with the threat of imminent Allied help) could be defeated by the Italians and their own efforts. "It is possible that the rioting...was one of the factors which induced the Nazis to abandon the city."⁴⁷ The Neapolitan rebellion, then, provided the Northern partisans with an example worth imitating.

In central Italy resistance activity, though it was only moderately extensive, was more clearly evident than in the South. During the time period between October, 1943 and June, 1944 when the Allies began their drive to liberate the remaining part of the peninsula from Rome northward, the Resistance movement in central Italy took form and as it developed caused serious problems for the Germans and the Fascist Social Republic. It has been estimated that there were 8,000 members of the underground in Rome itself; whether because of conflict or for other reasons, however,

⁴⁵Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 542.

⁴⁶Delzell, p. 283.

⁴⁷Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 542.

the efforts of this Roman contingent were poorly coordinated and amounted to little.⁴⁸ There were large groups of partisans located in central Italy, and they were found chiefly in the main range of the Apennines; just to the East of this main range there were also present fairly large bands of guerrillas, though they were not as concentrated as the former. In the sparsely inhabited areas of the Lazio, northern Abruzzi, and southern Tuscany smaller partisan bands existed.⁴⁹

It was in the northern sector of central Italy, in such areas as Tuscany and Romagna, that the real strength of the central segment of the Armed Resistance demonstrated itself. In these areas the partisans were more numerous, more active, and better prepared.

They operated all along the main range of the Apennines and also in the secondary mountainous regions: Alpe di Catenaiola and Casentino, southeast and east of Florence; Pratomagno, Mugello and Monte Pisano a little further north. Some bands, although very small, led an independent existence. Others were grouped, making up as many as 2,000 Patriots.⁵⁰

Finally, the city of Florence and the partisan effort demonstrated there provided the Resistance in central Italy with its apogee. Before the Allies had entered the Tuscan city in August, 1944, the partisans there had already liberated an entire quarter; they went on to help the British and the Americans take the remainder of the city.⁵¹

The best partisan bands of the Armed Resistance, in terms of organization, discipline, and effectiveness, were in the North. It was

⁴⁸ Hughes, p. 139.

⁴⁹ Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 543.

⁵⁰ Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 544.

⁵¹ Hughes, p. 139.

in this area, in the mountains of Piedmont and Lombardy, that armed guerrillas had first emerged. Shortly after, other partisans fanned out over the northern landscape, clandestinely surfacing in Emilia, Liguria, and the mountains of the Veneto. Some of the finest northern Italian partisan groups, mostly Garibaldini, occupied the mountains in Modena and Reggio. These groups were well-supplied by the Allies with arms and ammunition, and they posed an effective threat to the Germans. Finally, in the Lombard-Emilian Apennines, particularly, there were partisans west of Piacenza and southwest of Pavia and elsewhere in Lombardy and at least until September, 1944, many survived in valleys east of Lake Como.⁵² As far as the cities and towns of northern Italy were concerned, they sheltered fewer partisans than did the mountains.

Turin had probably the largest percentage of Patriots relative to its population, and they were the best organized. Second came the industrial area of greater Genoa, with Bologna third. The Resistance movement in Milan, Venice and Trieste could rely on a certain number of Patriots, though the number in these cities was not large considering their size. Patriot groups were found in some smaller towns, although their activities were limited.⁵³

II. THE ROLE OF THE PCI IN THE RESISTANCE

The Communists who participated in the Resistance were idealistic, disciplined, and committed to what they believed the movement stood for. Giaime Pintor was a young poet and a member of the Communist Party. His decision to join the ranks of the Armed Resistance epitomizes the idealism which prompted many of the leftist oriented partisans to leave their homes and take to the mountains. These Resistance soldiers

⁵² Salvadori-Paleotti, pp. 544-545.

⁵³ Salvadori-Paleotti, p. 545.

looked upon the fight to drive the Germans and the Fascists from Italy as another Risorgimento. Pintor's decision, as the decision of others, was fired by the zealous ideal of liberty and justice for all classes of society; they were no longer willing to accept the status quo of the rigidly ordered, traditionalist Italian society. In the words of Pintor:

Today the possibilities of the Risorgimento are reopened for the Italians: no gesture is useless provided it does not become an end in itself. As for me, I assure you that the idea of going to be a partisan in this season gives me very little pleasure; I have never appreciated as now the comforts of civilized life and I feel sure that I would become an excellent translator and a good diplomat, but according to every likelihood a mediocre partisan. Nevertheless, it is the only possibility open and I accept it.⁵⁴

The party activists who organized and led the Garibaldini were highly disciplined in their attitude, as well as idealistic. They were obedient and dedicated to the Party; in fact their allegiance was fervent, almost religious in character. They established an attitude in their bands in which all was subordinated to the cause of the Resistance. No one expected any privileges. If anyone were even offered a plate of spaghetti by a peasant, the food was refused. There were even the "saints," those who suffered quietly and gladly. There was one man who preferred to sleep on the ground rather than in a bed in order to be "closer to humility;" there was also a man who had sold his teeth so he could give some money to his family.⁵⁵ The tone set by the party leadership for their partisan bands was one inherently

⁵⁴ Delzell, p. 289.

⁵⁵ Giorgio Bocca, Storia Dell'Italia Partigiana (Bari, 1966), p. 99. Bocca ends his paragraph with this statement: "Un grande partito una grande rivoluzione che ha cambiato la faccia del mondo, ma i bigotti restano bigotti, il fanatismo fanatismo e la religione puo degradare a superstizione." His view of the Communists is a sardonic one. (Bocca, p. 99.)

disciplined. These leaders were men who had already proved their toughness and their commitment to the Party and to the struggle; their dedication was predicated on having spent time in prison for their beliefs and/or having fought in the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War.

The most important description of the role played by the Communists in the Resistance is that dealing with their commitment. Unlike the Christian Democrats and the Liberals who viewed participation in the Resistance only for the purpose of ridding the country of the undesirable opponents, the PCI considered the participation dual in purpose. The first goal for them was the obvious one, and the one they shared with the non-leftist parties. The second aim of the PCI was the more long range of the two; for the Communists "the Resistance was not only a national and patriotic force organized to oust the Germans from the country, but also represented...a movement which was to reshape the political and social structure of the country..."⁵⁶ The performance of the Communists in carrying out their first goal receives a high mark; they were extremely effective in their organizational abilities and as leaders, not only in the Garibaldini, but as an example to all the other partisan bands, Autonomi and political. In evaluating the success of their second goal, perhaps the most accurate statement is that their attempt was an astute one. This evaluation is important, because though they did not succeed in bringing about the change that they desired, during the Resistance period they were continuously aware of the forces working for them and against them, and they constantly attempted to manipulate these forces

⁵⁶ Mammarella, p. 81.

to their advantage. Because of this awareness and this aggressiveness, their endeavors, historically, cannot be taken lightly.

The most meaningful experience in the formation of a leadership cadre in the Italian Communist Party was their long period of clandestine activity and the Resistance movement they directed against the Germans.⁵⁷

The Communists were indeed the leaders and the organizers in the Resistance. There is much evidence to support the contention that they provided a model for other underground groups. Early in the winter of 1944 the Communists introduced the concept of the political commissar.⁵⁸ The Garibaldini had one commissar for about every fifty men. The chief task of this man was to inculcate discipline in his grouping. He achieved this by setting aside a certain number of hours each day, or almost every day, during which discussions and lectures of a political nature were held. An example of the commissar's discipline system is reflected in instructions handed down in 1944:

Wherever Communists find themselves--in factories, villages, offices, partisan formations--they have the duty to organize themselves and carry on activity. In the absence of this, they cease for practical purpose to function in the party. There is weakness and lack of discipline wherever Communists are not present, and the Communists are an element of force only if they are organized.⁵⁹

Further, the commissar was responsible for coordinating PCI work between his partisan group and the Party. He had to supervise one

⁵⁷Sidney Tarrow, Peasant Communism in Southern Italy (New Haven, 1967), p. 227.

⁵⁸The employment of political commissars was not a new idea. The Communists had used commissars at different times in the Russian Red Army, the International Brigades of the Spanish Civil War, and the Balkan partisan movements.

⁵⁹Delzell, p. 349.

person from his band who would report to the "federal committee" (of the Party) in each province. The "federal committee" coordinated the functioning of all the cells in the partisan bands which existed in its province. If cells were non-existent where they should be present, the commissar was responsible for their immediate formation.⁶⁰

The Communists were most serious about the organizational quality of their partisan bands, and in introducing the office of the political commissar they provided the tight discipline and excellent coordination that was needed. The salient point is that they saw the need, and they provided the solution through their leadership. It was not long before many of the other partisan groups (political partisans) followed their lead, though it was "with some reluctance, and perhaps in self-defense, that certain other formations also adopted the system."⁶¹ There were, in fact, strong rivalries among the political partisans. It is important to note, also, that when other groups did finally copy the commissar idea of organization within their partisan formations, the evershrewd Communists did their utmost to place their men in these strategic positions.

Both the Communists and the Actionists shared the spotlight when it came to advertising the glorious ideals of the Resistance. Both entered the Resistance with backgrounds rich in the experience of publishing in the clandestine press. They had, unlike the other Italian political parties, operated in the underground movement against Mussolini almost from the beginning. Though many of the partisan groups produced newspapers, pamphlets, poems, bulletins, and the like, gradually the PCI emerged as

⁶⁰ Delzell, pp. 348-349.

⁶¹ Delzell, p. 348.

a leader of this movement within a movement. Early in the Resistance the PCI, along with the PdA, published more material than any group.⁶² They put out regularly an underground paper in Rome and in Milan, and they also produced periodicals for the partisan bands on a regular basis. The main purpose for the publications was to maintain the morale of the Resistance and to make known its ideals. PCI political theory and information was expounded in its La nostra lotta and L'Unita.⁶³

As the Resistance movement progressed, the Supreme Headquarters of the Resistance "issued a decree" calling upon all those fighting in the movement to turn out propaganda literature. The Supreme Headquarters of the Resistance was part of the CLNAI, and the CLNAI was dominated by the leftist parties, particularly the Communist Party. Thus, this decree was in effect issued by the PCI; by the middle of September, 1944, when the edict was given, the Communists had indeed assumed a posture of leadership concerning the operations of the clandestine press. The decree also included further instructions, not surprisingly along the organizational lines introduced by the Communists. Political commissars were suggested as those persons who should organize and supervise the writing of the material for publication. More than one person should contribute to the writing. "Articles should take up topics of local interest, and be educative and critical of concrete things--'concepts of discipline, democracy, brotherhood toward other formations and the people.'"⁶⁴

⁶²The Actionist L'Italia Libera had a circulation of 20,000; the L'Unita, 30,000; the Socialist Avanti!, 15,000; the Liberal Risorgimento Liberale, 10,000; the Christian Democrat Il Popolo, 10,000. (Bocca, p. 267.)

⁶³Delzell, pp. 351-352.

⁶⁴Delzell, p 351.

Finally, the decree suggested that political commissars learn the art of bulletin board use.⁶⁵

The Communists realized the value of continuously harassing the enemy. This meant that fighting, and fighting whenever possible, was a necessity. The Communists hated the concept of attesismo ("watchful waiting").⁶⁶ This posture of caution was anathema to them; the only way to win was to be aggressive and to push for "all-out fighting." As their organizational and leadership qualities had come to the fore before, once again it surfaced in the Communist created Gappisti and later the Sappisti. The Gappisti (GAP, Gruppi di Azione Popolare) were urban guerrilla units who used hit-and-run tactics to cause as much damage as possible whenever possible to the Germans and the Fascists. They were a counterpart to those men who lived in and fought from the mountains. They were first introduced by the Communists in early 1943, and as a tactic their value was proved as the Resistance progressed. A GAP group usually consisted of three or four boys in their teens who operated in the large industrial cities under the supervision of a PCI activist. They moved swiftly and secretly, hitting the enemy and running; they blew up command posts, assassinated Fascist leaders, and killed enemy

⁶⁵ Delzell, p. 351.

⁶⁶ This was a policy adopted by "some right-wing anti-Fascists early in the partisan campaigns. Because it was often true that in direct military encounters the partisans were not successful against German artillery, these anti-Fascists advocated a more cautious policy, opposed to fighting. They encouraged attesismo or "watchful waiting" until the Allies' approach was imminent, in the hope of avoiding unnecessary reprisals against civilians. Before very long, the Communists came to view this policy as one antithetic to their political goals; consequently, they publically, through the press denounced attesismo and called for an all-out fight.

sentries. They gloried in the art of surprise and the constant harassment and erosion of the enemy forces. Though the Gappisti mortality rate was high--the risk was great--the PCI created and continued to utilize this tactic, as did other partisan groups. For the aggressive Communists, it was one more effective element in the fight against the Germans and Fascists; they felt "that the resultant danger of reprisals was worth the price if it imbued the city folk with the spirit of recklessness necessary for a more successful insurrection."⁶⁷

The Sappisti were yet another innovative and effective creation of the Communists. They first appeared in the Po Valley where their main task in fighting the enemy was to make sure that the harvest of grain did not fall into the hands of the Germans and Fascists. Their theatre was the valley and if they could not hide the grain, they destroyed it. Later in 1944 the PCI integrated the Sappisti and Gappisti forces so that both functioned within the urban areas. The Sappisti, however, were usually involved in the protection of factories from sabotage while the Gappisti continued to be the urban attack force against the enemy.⁶⁸ In conclusion, the Gappisti and the Sappisti were introduced by and sponsored by the PCI. Like the role of the political commissar, also introduced and expanded by the Party, they provided another "useful 'capillary organ' of the underground."

In addition to introducing organizational methods as well as tactical innovations, the PCI provided leadership among the factory workers in the industrial centers. Though the workers in the factories were not technically a part of the Resistance as it is defined in this

⁶⁷ Delzell, p. 304.

⁶⁸ Delzell, p. 419.

work, they were a large force to be reckoned with and to be utilized in the fight against the enemy. More importantly, to the PCI, they were the proletariat who would help effect the political, economic, and social change of Italian society in the postwar period. Partly to demonstrate their potential political power, but also for the immediate value to the Resistance movement, the Communist Party planned, through the CLNAI, and executed the widely based general strike of March, 1944 (another general strike occurred in December of the same year).⁶⁹

Through careful and secret planning the strike was executed; it began on March 1 when several thousand workers in the northern cities stopped work. The strike was more extensive in some cities than in others. In Milan and in Turin, to a slightly lesser degree, almost all production was halted for an entire week. In the city of Florence streetcar workers struck along side the factory workers; the city's newspaper was not printed for three days. In Bologna groups of peasants also demonstrated, and in Florence the Fascist headquarters was burned to the ground by roaming strikers. Finally, in such cities as Trieste, Genoa, and Biella, the strike never really materialized "partly because of prior wage boosts, fear, and hastily called 'preventive holidays' ascribed to alleged 'electric' power shortages."⁷⁰

In general the strike of March, 1944 was a success; in many of the cities due to the superior organization and planning skills of the Communists and to their aggressive ability to agitate, the operation involved masses of people and functioned smoothly.⁷¹ But its real success

⁶⁹ Delzell, p. 371.

⁷⁰ Delzell, p. 372.

⁷¹ Delzell, p. 372.

was that it accomplished two things that the PCI had argued it would accomplish, when they had initially introduced their strike plan to the CLNAI. First, the strike did succeed in slowing down war production for Germany; in some of the larger plants production was at a standstill for a week.⁷² Second, and more important to the Party's goals, the strike "signaled the onset of greater popular hostility to neo-Fascism" and it appeared to strengthen an attitude of working together to defeat the enemy.⁷³

Though the Communists demonstrated that they were effective leaders, perhaps the leaders, in the Resistance movement, not all that can be written about them is entirely positive. There are those who judge that at times they were too aggressive, too rash and that by being so they caused more harm than good. Their actions which precipitated the infamous Ardeatine Cave massacre is one such incidence. In the early spring of 1944 the Gappisti stepped up their terroristic activities in several cities. In Rome in particular the Communists felt that the population was not doing enough to harass the enemy; the citizens seemed to be apathetic, waiting for the Allied troops to liberate them from the Germans. To combat this the Gappisti planned a new series of violent hit-and-run tactics intended to both damage the Germans and to stir up the Roman population. On the afternoon of March 23, a squad of GAP students executed an attack against a detachment of German security police. Every afternoon the police marched down a certain street. The disguised students were present at their marching time; one of them

⁷²See page 98.

⁷³Delzell, p. 372.

posing as a street cleaner rolled a cart filled with explosives directly into the marching soldiers, while at the same time his fellow Gappisti who were hidden began shooting at them. Thirty-three of the enemy were killed and many of the others were wounded.

The Germans were furious and determined to take their revenge. After consultation with many of their leaders, including Hitler, they decided that they would kill ten Italians for every one German soldier who had died.

The German Command has decided to put a stop to the activity of these villainous outlaws. No one ought to be able to sabotage with impunity the newly affirmed Italian-German collaboration. The German Command, thus, has ordered that for each German assassinated ten Communist and Badoglio criminals will be shot. This order has already been executed.⁷⁴

In the end the number scheduled to die as indicated by the German Command was not accurate. 335 instead of 320 Italians were executed as a result of the GAP killing of German police. Also, not only Communists and Badogliani died; men from all parties were included in those who died as a result of the Germans' reprisal. The victims were chosen from the prison cells of Regina Coeli and police headquarters, Via Tasso (An Italian police official aided in the selection from the prisons), and also from the neighborhood where the GAP students had attacked and killed the Germans. On the night of March 24-25, the Italian reprisal victims were taken to a cave on the outskirts of Rome; there they were slaughtered. The Germans shot each of their victims in the neck, left their bodies in the cave, mining and then sealing the entrance.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Bocca, p. 333.

⁷⁵Bocca, p. 333.

⁷⁶Delzell, p. 374.

The Communists, of course, defended their action. Almost immediately they turned out a fiery "comunicato" which denounced the "hard, thick morass" of attesismo. They stressed that the guerrilla partisan actions in Rome would not cease until the Germans had all been driven out of the city. They would continue until the Germans were banished from all of Italy, until Fascism was utterly and completely destroyed, and until independence and liberty were achieved.⁷⁷ Publically the PCI told the people that

- (1) it had not known the Germans would react so brutally;
- (2) the Germans did not dare to repeat in Florence or Bologna such acts of vengeance as those displayed at the Ardeatine Caves; and (3) the only way to check German violence was to intensify the underground struggle.⁷⁸

Once again the Party emphasized for the people what was for it a most important part of Resistance strategy: always fight, always aggress against the enemy.

Unfortunately for the PCI, though the Ardeatine massacre served to harden the hearts of a good many Italians towards the Germans and the Italian Social Republic, it also caused repercussions for the Party. There were those who maintained that the action on the part of the Gappisti which resulted in the terrible German revenge exacerbated the very attesismo which they had intended to eradicate. Politically, the

⁷⁷ Bocca, p. 334.

⁷⁸ Delzell, p. 375. After the Ardeatine massacre, the terrorist attacks continued in other cities. In Florence on April 15, Giovanni Gentile, the Fascist idealist-philosopher of education, was shot and killed by unidentified youths in a public street. In Bologna the local commissioner of the Fascist Federation was assassinated.

March 23 Rome incident was another element which increased the tension already existent within the CCLN, "so that henceforth the leftist parties were on the defensive in the Rome committee."⁷⁹

Another criticism of the Communist Party ironically arose out of a demonstration of their leadership and organizational capability. In November of 1943 the High Command of the Garibaldini initiated the idea of model assault detachments. A sheet was circulated which explained the function of such detachments.

Why model detachments? They are created for armed action, for assault, for bold attack. [There are] assault detachments because they provide an organization and an iron discipline suitable to the tasks before us. [There are] assault detachments because their tradition is inscribed in the best popular and national traditions, from the Garibaldini of the Risorgimento to the glorious Garibaldi brigade of Spain.⁸⁰

This circular most certainly responded to the ardent spirit of the period, but its tone was typical of all Garibaldini propaganda: it tended towards being pompous; it succeeded in ignoring the conditions of the real struggle; finally, it encouraged Garibaldini to sing their own praises and to tell inflated stories of their accomplishments.⁸¹ The Communists would also exhort their fellow fighters to steal arms from the enemy because they were needed in order to continue the war effort: "Le armi sono quelle che ha il nemico, a cui bisogna strapparle."⁸²

Such passionate words were perhaps needed for many of those who were

⁷⁹ Delzell, p. 375. Concerning tensions within the CCLN, see Chapter IV, "The PCI and Politics," the section on the Bonomi ministries.

⁸⁰ Bocca, p. 101.

⁸¹ Bocca, p. 101.

⁸² Bocca, p. 102.

reluctant to fight the enemy, but they also were an over-simplification. They demonstrated an excessive faith in commandments or rules, though this was quite understandable coming from a party whose members were religious-like in their allegiance.⁸³ Thus, though the Communists demonstrated exceptional leadership and organizational qualities during the Resistance movement, they were not always acclaimed. There were those who felt, and they documented their feelings, that at times they pushed too hard and too much, often to the detriment of others in the overall Resistance movement.

PCI participation in the Resistance was successful in that the Germans and the Fascists went down to defeat. It was not successful in that the party's second purpose for participating in the movement was not realized. It was not able to effect the political, economic, and social change it had hoped for. Because of the strength of the conservative, traditional elements in Italian society and because of the presence of Allied troops on Italian soil, the Communists and their plans for a new order were effectively neutralized. An examination of exactly why they failed goes beyond present purposes. What is being asserted here, and examined, is the fact that the PCI was oriented politically as well as militarily in its participation in the Resistance. A study of the PCI and its political movements during the period 1943-1945 offers ample evidence that the Party utilized every opportunity to broaden its base of power: it was intent upon reinforcing its position in the northern CLNs and in employing that position to "reshape the patterns of Italy's public life."⁸⁴ Concomitantly, the actions of the

⁸³ Bocca, p. 102.

⁸⁴ Delzell, p. 555.

Allies towards the Communists also implied that they feared the potential power of the PCI.

When the CLNAI was created in January, 1944, it was quickly apparent that it was dominated by the leftist parties, and in particular by the Communist Party. Because of this, from the beginning it, like most northern CLNs posited a revolutionary program.⁸⁵ One of the first directives dispatched by the CLNAI was at the instigation of the PCI, and it left no doubt as to the Party's future political intentions.

There will be no place tomorrow among us for a reactionary regime, however masked, nor for a limp democracy. The new political, social, and economic system will not be other than a clear and effective democracy. The CLN of today is a pre-figuration of the government of tomorrow. In tomorrow's government this is certain: workers, peasants, artisans, all the popular classes will have a determining weight, and a place adequate to this weight;...⁸⁶

The PCI was saying plainly and publicly that the old order would have to be destroyed. The rigid privileged class structure would have to give way to a society in which all classes had equal say. The Party hinted at the concept that the uncorrupted CLNs would be the vehicles by which the necessary social, economic, and political change would be wrought. In its CLNAI order the PCI revealed how seriously it "dreamed of the regeneration of the nation by its own new 'democratic elite'."⁸⁷

In addition to the above declaration of the PCI via the CLNAI apparatus, the same directive issued by the Milan organ also stated the following:

⁸⁵ Clough, Saladino, p. 527.

⁸⁶ Norman Kogan, Italy and the Allies (Cambridge, 1956), p. 103.

⁸⁷ Delzell, p. 555.

...and a place adequate to this weight will be held by the parties which represent them. Among these is the Communist Party, which is included in the CLN on a plane of perfect parity with the other parties, with equal fulness of authority today and of power tomorrow...Against the affirmations of anti-Communist proposals...we must reaffirm the unity...that links the five parties. Whoever works against this union of them works against the Nation. We direct this warning especially to certain industrial and financial circles.⁸⁸

Thus, the Communists used the CLNAI to their advantage. It was a base from which they could operate to publicize and to organize their political objectives for the reshaping of Italian society. It also provided a forum where they could reinforce their party position, and therefore their power. In terms of numbers alone the leftist parties in the CLNAI "overawed" the Christian Democrats and the Liberals, and custom in the Po Valley region did not dictate unanimity in CLN voting as was the case in the CCLN.⁸⁹

Another way in which the Communists demonstrated their political orientation throughout the Resistance was their activity through the CLNs to set up local governments wherever the Germans had been successfully driven out. Through this process they were establishing models for self-government which would be workable and useful towards their aims in the postwar rebuilding period. When the partisans succeeded in liberating an area such as an Apennine valley, they set about administering the area basing their methods on those utilized by the Yugoslavian partisans. They attempted to set up two sets of forces. One was designed to be on the alert for any enemy counterattack. The other was responsible for fashioning some form of government or administration for

⁸⁸ Delzell, p. 356.

⁸⁹ Delzell, p. 356.

the population. These partisan republics, as they can be termed, provided the local citizens with "their first experience in partial self-government in more than two decades."⁹⁰

In order to facilitate the organization of a workable governing situation CLNs located in the area, or at times the patriot band which had liberated the valley, set up giunte popolari amministrative (popular administrative juntas). These juntas supplanted any military regulatory body.⁹¹ The PCI was as much as possible a present and an integral part of this process of establishing self-government. The Garibaldini usually sent into the area "civil delegates;" these were individuals who were skilled in organizational methods like the political commissars, but who, unlike the commissars, had no military duties. These delegates would lay the groundwork for elections. According to the Communists, the composition of the juntas was such that they were representative of the social class make-up of the area in which they functioned. Thus, the PCI established a pattern whereby the selection of candidates for office gave the majority of seats "to the poorest classes who were in the majority in the countryside."⁹² In addition to mapping out the political complexion of the liberated areas, the juntas also dealt with the distribution of food, tried to hold down prices, and issued commercial licenses. It is interesting to note that one of the more successful republics was that of the Republic of Carnia located in the Venetia-Julia. Here, from the beginning, the Communists were the "propelling force" in the local CLN.

⁹⁰Delzell, p. 417.

⁹¹Delzell, p. 417.

⁹²Delzell, p. 417.

Once again their aggressiveness and serious intent was demonstrated. They vigorously set about to organize their administrative unit. Immediately they broadened the base of the CLN by inviting "youth fronts, defense of women groups, and other fringe mass agencies" to join the Committee in establishing a "popular progressive democracy." Also, in keeping with the PCI line, the purge was enacted in Carnia, with people's tribunals set up to carry out the cleansing process.⁹³

The importance of the establishment of the republics by the partisans in northern Italy did not go unnoticed by the Allies. In fact, they viewed them as an "implied threat to the authority of the recognized government in liberated Italy..."⁹⁴ The particular case of the creation of the Republic of Domodossola in the Alps points out the seriousness with which the Allies regarded this leftist venture concerning the republics. In October, 1944, Val d'Ossola located in the Alps fell to the partisans. They proceeded to establish headquarters at Domodossola, the most populous center in the area. They declared the creation of the Republic of Domodossola, but the partisans did not stop there. They publicized their intentions of extending the Republic until it was the Republic of Italy. Though the Communists were not the prime movers in Domodossola--there was considerable conflict between the leftist and the rightists over the setting up of an administrative agency--their presence and the incident itself serve to illustrate that "there were some political misgivings regarding the future behavior of the Communists developing in the minds of Churchill and other British officials (and some American

⁹³ Delzell, p. 430.

⁹⁴ Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 106.

ones too) in Italy..."⁹⁵ They were becoming particularly nervous as events in Poland, Greece, and other places in eastern Europe unfolded; therefore the Allies did not hesitate to react to what they regarded as a threat to their policy being enacted in Italy. At an Allied Control Council meeting, shortly after the announcement promulgating the Republic of Domodossola, it was announced that "publicity on Patriot activities would now be definitely played down particularly behind the Allied lines."⁹⁶ Future policy dictated that more of the spotlight be given to those in the Italian army instead of showering the partisans with glorious publicity.

It is useful to note at this juncture that from the beginning (autumn of 1943) there was conflict between the Allies and the partisans centering on each group's ideas of what the role and the objectives of the partisans should be. The disagreement was political in nature. On the one side the partisans wanted to organize large contingents of men so that their campaigns would be successful and they would be able to keep control of the territory they had captured. The allies, on the other hand, clearly did not approve of this. They suspected the leftist partisan elements, which after all provided the leadership of the Resistance movement. They saw in their demands for large armies a direct threat to the Italian government already established in the South and supported by the Allies as the only legitimate government now and in the future.⁹⁷ They did not want to allow a situation in Italy

⁹⁵ Delzell, p. 432.

⁹⁶ Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 106.

⁹⁷ Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 102.

whereby the partisans in capturing territories would establish their own governments in the areas, and in the end would use these governments to defy the authority of the Italian government already set up in the liberated portion of the country.

The establishment of the CLNAI by the Milan CLN in January, 1944 in effect brought about the political unity of the Resistance. There was, however, no real mechanism in existence which could coordinate the military activities of the movement. The partisans groups continued to function as individual entities until military consolidation took place in the spring of the same year. At that time some organization among the units was instituted. Detachments (about fifty men) were organized into brigades (about 450 men) and brigades into divisions (about 1350men).⁹⁸ Though this organizational activity was a beginning, it was not enough; there was too much competition between different political groupings, and at times actual fighting broke out among them. In order to stop this useless internal conflict, and in an effort to streamline military operations, the CLNAI created its own organ for the task in June, 1944. On the 9th of June it launched the General Headquarters, Corps of Volunteers of Liberty (CG/CVL) in Milan.⁹⁹

A hierarchical military structure embracing all partisan units associated with the political parties, by this time the great majority, was thus established. Regional military commands were set up to work with the regional CLNs.¹⁰⁰

The conflict which evolved between General Raffaele Cadorna, the man appointed by Premier Bonomi to serve as military advisor to the CG/CVL,

⁹⁸ Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 104.

⁹⁹ Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 104.

¹⁰⁰ Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 104.

and the PCI (along with other leftists) offers another illustration of the Communists' determination to maintain its leadership position in the Resistance. When General Cadorna arrived in Milan to take up his position, there developed a long period of misunderstandings and disagreements between him and the CLNAI concerning his duties and "perogatives."

...the general argued that he could not serve very helpfully as 'technical consultant' in irregular guerrilla warfare; what he hoped to do was transform the Resistenza Armata into an efficient fighting force that would be loyal to the government in Rome and have no political overtones of its own.¹⁰¹

He further indicated that it was his task, at the behest of the Allied Supreme Headquarters, to take over the command of the northern military forces. From the beginning Cadorna's plans were supported by the parties of the right, the PLI and the DC, as well as by the Autonomi leadership. The PCI, on the other hand, stood in direct opposition to him and to his proposed role. Fundamentally, they distrusted Cadorna and his possible future actions. They noted that he was accompanied by a British major, Major Churchill, who make no secret of his anti-CLNAI sentiments. They suspected that if Cadorna actually took over the direction of the northern forces, officers loyal to the King, and to what the King stood for, would then "infiltrate CVL headquarters and compromise the political autonomy of the entire underground."¹⁰² Thus, the PCI dragged its feet concerning Cadorna's interpretation of his role. In fact, the Party was able to win in this particular conflict. The disagreement itself lasted for a long time; it was not until February of 1945, through many ups and downs for Cadorna including an attempted

¹⁰¹ Delzell, p. 414.

¹⁰² Delzell, p. 415.

resignation on his part, that an agreement was finally reached. In that agreement Cadorna acquiesced to the fact that his role was subordinate to that of the CLNAI as long as he was not issued orders in conflict with those issued by the Allies or the CCLN. Cadorna had finally succumbed to the hard line maintained by the CLNAI since the beginning of the conflict in June, 1944. The Committee for the Liberation of Upper Italy had made clear to him its stance. The CG/CVL was a

working section of the CLNAI. It is evident, therefore, that where the Command must take decisions and issue orders having political character, it is impossible to proceed except through the collegial consultation of all its members who at that moment represent the CLNAI, which is the body from which their power derives...¹⁰³

There is no question that the Communists wanted power and that they continually agitated to achieve that status and to extend it. Throughout the Resistance to the very eve of the liberation in 1945, they continually prodded and pushed to be recognized in their goals. In August, 1944 a notice was circulated by the CLNAI in occupied Italy which stated that it, the CLNAI, was the representative of the Italian government and in being so possessed the powers of the government. The notice went a step further by giving the authority to the CLNs of the regions and provinces to act likewise.¹⁰⁴ Pushing their actions further, the following month the Upper Northern Committee sent a representative directly to the Allies to obtain their recognition as the representative of the Italian government in occupied territory. The Allies of course denied the request. Since they habitually became the governmental authority

¹⁰³ Delzell, p. 484.

¹⁰⁴ Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 106.

in just liberated regions, they did not want to be interfered with by local CLNs who injected and demanded their own priorities.¹⁰⁵

Because the partisan effort was of meaningful value to the Allies, an agreement as to their status was eventually achieved, though it was not to their long-range advantage. When in December, 1944 Premier Bonomi agreed to recognize the CLNAI as the Italian government's delegate with full powers to that part of Italy which was occupied, it looked like a victory for the leftists and the Communists. In effect it was not, for the terms of the armistice precluded that possibility. The terms had already dictated that the Italian government seated in Rome was held by the Allied Governments to be "the sole successor of the Government...and...the only legitimate authority in that part of Italy which has been, or will later be restored to the Italian Government by the Allied Military Government."¹⁰⁶

On May Day, the eve of the surrender of the German armies in Italy, the political movements of the PCI were still in high gear. It continued to prod the Italian leaders and the Italian people into radically changing the structure of their society. On that first day of May, Luigi Longo, the long-time clandestine Communist leader and veteran of the Spanish Civil War, exhorted the people to demand of the Roman government that the direction for the new popular progressive democracy begin now. He charged the Italians with making clear to Rome the following:

(1) The northern patriots are not at all pleased with the wishy-washy way in which the purge was proceeding in the South.

¹⁰⁵Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 106.

¹⁰⁶Kogan, Italy and the Allies, p. 107.

(2) A new, 'popular' government must be placed in the hands of 'energetic, determined' men who never have compromised with Fascism and who have known how 'to accomplish the miracle of liberating their country.' 'It must be tied solidly to the masses and popular organizations arising out of the fire of the insurrection.' (3) There must be wide participation by workers in factory administration. 'We demand...that workers, clerks, and technicians participate in the manner set forth by the CLNAI in its decree regarding the administration of production on a level of absolute equality with the owners.'¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Delze:11, p. 557.

CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE

Though politically they prodded here and pushed there throughout the Resistance, gaining ground at times, losing it at others, the Communists were not able to succeed in their program to revolutionize Italian society. In 1945 the situation in Italy seemed to be one of imminent political and social revolution. The working classes, agitated by the experience of fighting a war through a decisive role in the Resistance and impressed with the success of the Communists in Eastern Europe seemed impatient and eager to better their lives through a radical reform of their society.¹ But nothing happened in Italy.

...the revolution failed to occur. Three years after the revolutionary high tide of May and June 1945, the forces of conservatism won an overwhelming electoral victory. In exactly the same length of time as it had taken the earlier wave of protest to spend itself, [referring to the post World War I atmosphere in Italy] the second flood of Italian revolutionary consciousness had ended in frustration and disillusionment.²

For the PCI, on the eve of the liberation from the Germans, Luigi Longo had expressed the highest of hopes.³ The difficulty, however, "of sustaining a revolutionary politics in an arena--parliament

¹H. Stuart Hughes, The United States and Italy (Cambridge, 1953), p. 143.

²Hughes, p. 143.

³See Chapter V, "The PCI and the Resistance."

that deals primarily in a politics of interest..." proved too complex.⁴

It took only two, very short years, until May, 1947, for the PCI, accused of not promoting "solidarity within the state administration and in the legislation on public matters," to lose its well-cultivated representation in the government, a position it has not retrieved for some twenty-nine years.⁵ In viewing briefly the period from 1945, when the PCI still participated in the government as part of a six party coalition, to 1947 when it was "expelled," two factors are clear: Togliatti's party had failed in the realization of its economic objectives, and it had failed in maintaining its immediate political objective, that of participating in the government.

The "labor arm" of the Communist Party was the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL) which had been created in 1944 through the fusion of the Marxist-dominated General Confederation of Labor (CGL) and the Catholic Italian Confederation of Laborers, both pre-Fascist trade unions.⁶ In 1946 through the CGIL the PCI put forth its economic objectives:

⁴ Sidney Tarrow, Peasant Communism in Southern Italy (New Haven, 1967), p. 128.

⁵ Simon Serfaty, "An International Anomaly: The United States and the Communist Parties in France and Italy, 1945-1947," Studies in Comparative Communism An International Interdisciplinary Journal, VIII (Spring and Summer, 1975), p. 143.

⁶ When the CGIL was created by the Pact of Rome in 1944, the three mass parties, the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Communists shared in its leadership. From the beginning, however, the Communists, under the guiding hand of Giuseppe Di Vittorio, began to take over the leadership. In 1949 the Christian Democrats left the CGIL and formed their own Italian Confederation of Trade Unions called CSIL. (Maurice F. Neufeld, Italy: School for Awakening Countries (Ithaca, 1961), pp. 454-473.

In the industrial field, the party proposes the nationalization of large monopolistic combines, big banks and insurance companies; the institution of national planning and of a system of national control of production, the first step in which will be the general establishment and recognition of management councils.⁷

In effect the PCI was advocating a dual control of industry. As a first and necessary step towards the realization of their broader economic program the management councils would include both representatives of the workers and representatives of the factory owners. It was for the Party a major move towards the viability of the principle that workers as well as employers have the right to an input as to "how and according to what criteria the productive factors which they represented should be combined."⁸ During this early postwar period the PCI through its leadership role in the CGIL attempted to achieve this concept of dual control by establishing worker-management councils in industry, a modern form of Gramsci's Consigli of 1919-20. They were unsuccessful. To Italian private enterprise, the idea of sharing decisions with its employees was inconceivable; consequently, it exerted pressure on the government in Rome to veto the CGIL solution to economic recovery problems. Rome was quite responsive to this entrepreneurial pressure, as well as to foreign pressures from the West, and in the immediate postwar liberation period the government denied legal recognition to the existence of worker-management councils. As a result, the idea of councils, as well as a few which had in fact existed from pre-liberation days, disappeared

⁷ Fulvio Bellini, "The Italian CP Part II: The Transformation of a Party 1921-1945," Problems of Communism, V (January-February, 1956), p. 42.

⁸ Bellini, Part II, p. 43.

in 1945 and 1946, and though the Constitution of 1947 affirmed their right to exist, they never flourished.

In general, the revolutionary consigli di gestione [management councils] were superseded by less pretentious commissioni interne ('internal commissions,' or shop-stewards' committees), which had originated early in the century as liaison agencies between management and labor for the settlement of disputes over labor contracts...In their postwar incarnation these shop-stewards' committees operated chiefly as conciliatory and liaison bodies between management and labor, and were consulted in certain disciplinary and purge cases, in modifying hours of labor, and in administration of social-security funds.

Thus, by the end of the year 1947, it was clear that the ideas of the Communists in the economic sphere had not succeeded even at the initial stage. Instead of an economy which offered an environment in which the worker could have his say concerning production, to the contrary, the Italian economy was being restructured in the old, pre-Fascist mold of private enterprise with the owners of industry being in firm and absolute control.

Shortly after returning to Italy in 1944, Togliatti had made it very clear to Italians in general and to his fellow party members that "We are no longer a sect of agitators but have assumed the responsibility of a great party."¹⁰ Implicit in his words was the overriding desire for the PCI to participate in the government and in this they succeeded, but only for a very brief period. When the Parri government fell in November, 1945, Alcide De Gasperi the leader of the Christian Democrats was chosen as the best hope to form a new government. (Between 1945 and 1953 he would head eight Italian cabinets.) From the beginning

⁹ Charles F. Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies The Italian Anti-Fascist Resistance (Princeton, 1961), p. 558.

¹⁰ Bellini, Part II, p. 42.

tension grew between the Right and Center and the Left. This first De Gasperi government still consisted of the six party coalition which had existed throughout the 1943-1945 war years, but it was the last time that all the parties would work together.

During his first term in office two major acts carried out by De Gasperi indicated a move to the right politically. First he began the removal of local administrators who had been appointed by the CLNs in the northern provinces immediately after the Liberation. He replaced them with officials who had been the very bureaucrats before and during Fascism that the Communists wanted no part of in the restructuring of Italian society.¹¹ Second, he endorsed an indefinite termination of the purge trials. This again was in direct opposition to the insistence of the Communists and other leftists that Italy must be cleansed of those elements which had made it possible for Fascism to exist. Further, they were adamant that these same elements not be allowed to hold office or other responsible positions in society, a factor which did not receive support through De Gasperi's termination act. Though during this same time period the PCI was able to demonstrate strength among the people--out of 7,572 administrative districts the joint Socialist-Communist ticket received 2,256 in the administrative elections of March 10, 1946, and in the elections to the Constituent Assembly of June 2, 1946, the Communists received 104 seats along with the Socialists' 115--tension caused by disagreement in policy continued to mount among the parties serving in the government.¹²

¹¹Giuseppe Mammarella, Italy After Fascism A Political History 1943-1965 (Notre Dame, 1966), p. 107.

¹²Mammarella, pp. 108 and 116.

The second De Gasperi government inaugurated in July, 1946, ushered in the "tripartite coalition." In actuality there were four parties represented in this cabinet. In addition to the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Communists, the Republican Party had also entered the coalition. They remained, however, isolated from the other three parties; their political clout was miniscule in comparison to them. During this round of government the conflict between the Christian Democrats on one hand, and the Communists and the Socialists on the other hand, which had begun to come into sharp focus during the initial months of De Gasperi's leadership became even more apparent. For one, in their efforts to begin work on rebuilding Italy economically, the Christian Democrats chose to support an economic policy which openly favored and encouraged private enterprise while the Communists promulgated eradication of monopolistic methods, the institution of national control of production, and the establishment of national planning (discussed above). For another, De Gasperi continued in his campaign to dismiss CLN appointed officials. The prefects who had been designated by the CLNs after Liberation were either discharged from their duties or forced to submit their resignations. The plan of the PCI to restructure Italian society with new and forward looking party advocates failed. De Gasperi replaced the CLN prefects with "career functionaries of conservative, anti-Communist sentiment."¹³

Perhaps the most damaging action, as far as the Communists and their program was concerned, was De Gasperi's conscious move to keep the important Foreign and Interior ministries' portfolios from them.

¹³ Mammarella, p. 136.

In substance, the aim of De Gasperi and the DC was to deprive the left-wing parties of their most effective weapon, that of political pressure exercised through their control of the masses. The right maintained that it was only by reestablishing an atmosphere of security that conditions favorable to the development of private initiative and the reconstruction could be created. With this goal in view, De Gasperi, who in addition to the tasks of Prime Minister also held the portfolio of the Minister of the Interior and as such was responsible for public order, undertook to reinforce the police organs in order to reconstitute the weapon traditionally at the service of the state and the political forces in power.¹⁴

Within the same framework De Gasperi also launched a program, beginning in Emilia, of searching for and rounding up arms caches left over from the Resistance movement. The searches for weapons which continued for several years and which spread to other sections in northern and central Italy netted a vast store of arms material. The salient point is that many of the weapons gathered were found in the hands of Communist party members, and the Christian Democrats along with right wing elements in the society utilized this fact to their political advantage: they preyed on the fears of the Italian upper and middle classes by insisting that the presence of weapons affirmed the "existence of a paramilitary organization supported by the Communist Party," and they piously condemned the threat that it posed to Italian democracy.¹⁵

The PCI expressed adamant opposition to De Gasperi and his tactics. They answered his accusations by denouncing him and his actions in the cabinet and stirring up the population to resist his course of action which they assured the people was a ploy to restore power to those who had condoned and supported the Fascist regime.

Because of a shake-up in the Socialist Party--it split into two factions at its national congress in January, 1947--and the consequent

¹⁴Mammarella, p. 135.

¹⁵Mammarella, p. 136.

resignations it triggered in the Italian government, De Gasperi dissolved his second government in January of 1947.¹⁶ He formed a new cabinet in February. The Communists and the Nenni Socialists, plus two independents joined him. During this short government--from February to May--"the open political conflict between the Communists and the Christian Democrats...had by now reached the breaking point."¹⁷ For the parties in power more problems awaited solution, and the process did not invite agreement. The two parties were unable to come to an accord on the immediate problem of inflation. One wanted to freeze salaries and cut public spending. The other met this proposal with unyielding opposition. At the international level tension increased as a result of the Truman doctrine.

The Communists, in line with Moscow policy, condemned the Truman Doctrine and compared its aims to 'ideological political motivations analogical to those habitual to German imperialism.' The Christian Democrats and the entire moderate and conservative opinion extolled Truman's decision, seeing in it as well a guarantee for the security of Italy.¹⁸

All of these factors which had been putting stress upon the coalition governments causing friction between the Right and the Left, between the Christian Democrats and the Communists, finally came to

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On January 9, Giuseppe Saragat and Matteo Matteotti, the moderates of the PSIUP, walked out of the national congress and formed the Socialist Party of the Italian Workers (PSLI). They opposed the wing of the PSIUP which wanted continued collaboration with the PCI. The part of the party left under the leadership of Nenni re-adopted the original name of the Socialist Party, Partitio Socialista Italiano (PSI).

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Mammarella, p. 144.

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Mammarella, p. 145.

¹⁹rupture. In late April, 1947, De Gasperi publically denounced the PCI as being uncooperative and disloyal to the solidarity of the government. He appealed for someone, some group to work with him in "concrete collaboration." On May 12 he resigned from his third government. When he was charged to form his fourth, he did not ask the PCI to join. In fact, on the last day of May, 1947, he formed the first postwar one-party government.

De Gasperi's fourth government marked the end of a period which had existed since 1943. The collaboration between the anti-Fascist parties was a thing of the past. More importantly, the position for which the PCI had compromised and maneuvered was lost to it: it no longer was a participant in the government.

During the next year the Christian Democrats were able to make the gains they needed to stay in power. Their most important objective of combating inflation and stabilizing the lira bore results within months of initiation of their program. Further, the Party was able to withstand two non-confidence votes in the Constituent Assembly. In

¹⁹During De Gasperi's second government (which began in July, 1946) UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) assistance to Italy ended. In December of 1946 De Gasperi traveled to the United States, and the question of U.S. post-UNRRA aid for Italy was discussed. Though the U.S. Government did not explicitly state that it would not give aid to the Italians if the Communists were allowed to continue as participants in the government of De Gasperi, in Senator Vandenberg's words, the United States did "not want to waste [its] resources aiding tendencies that are contrary to [its] principles and [its] goal of internal and international democracy." In the latter part of 1947, after the Communists had in fact been dropped from De Gasperi's fourth cabinet, the U.S. Ambassador to Italy sent the following Top Secret communique to Washington: "Now that a government has been formed by the Christian Democrats....with outside experts but without Communists or their affiliates I recommend most strongly that our government take whatever steps may be possible to demonstrate our support and readiness to aid in their efforts to save the lira and secure their economy." Pressure from the United States, then, was yet another factor leading up to De Gasperi's PCI policy. (Serfaty, pp. 137-144.)

fact, it became clear that the Christian Democratic experiment in government, without the Communists participating, was working. Consequently, in the middle of December, 1946, the Republicans and the Social Democrats agreed to work with the Christian Democrats, and a new government of four parties was formed which was to last for almost five years, and was to provide a reasonably long period of political stability and which was to make reconstruction a reality. Having been unable to discredit the viability of the Christian Democrats, the Communists, now having been out of the government for almost a year, prepared for the all important general political elections to be held in April, 1948. They had failed to produce revolution in Italy, and these elections were the last chance for the Communists to take the lead from the consolidation forces of the Christian Democrats and the Republicans and the Social Democrats.

Psychologically, in terms of the improved economic situation, the Christian Democrats had an edge. The middle and upper classes felt better about the ways things were going in Italy. During the period before the elections, the international situation caused considerable concern and posed an issue which the De Gasperi government was able to use to its advantage. The gradual absorption of Eastern European countries into the orbit of Soviet control and the build-up of Soviet troops along East-West borders was made into a campaign issue, and the Christian Democrats hammered away at the fact that this election would decide whether Italy would be free to decide her own political destiny or whether she also would succumb to Communism. With the East-West Cold War in its initial stages, both the Soviet Union and the United States watched the Italian election with interest; in fact, each did

more. Both major powers contributed to the campaign which would enhance the prospect of an Italy firmly tied to an alliance with them.

For the Communists the elections of 1948 produced a bitter aftermath for all the energies they had expended against Fascism and for the restructuring and rebuilding of Italy. The Christian Democrats won a decisive victory with a little over 48 percent of the vote while the Communists and the Socialists, on a combined Popular Front ticket, gathered only 31 percent of the vote, almost one million fewer votes than they had received in the 1946 elections.²⁰ It appeared that the Christian Democratic decision to rule without the PCI had been confirmed.

²⁰ Mammarella, p. 194.

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APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS JANUARY, 1943-DECEMBER, 1946

1943

10 July	Allies land in Sicily.
17 July	AMGOT begins to function in Sicily.
19 July	First bombing of Rome
	Hitler and Mussolini meet at Feltre.
24 July	Meeting of the Fascist Grand Council.
	Grandi's motion accepted by a two-thirds majority.
25 July	Mussolini dismissed and arrested.
	Marshal Badoglio becomes Prime Minister.
26 July	Martial Law proclaimed in Italy.
	Badoglio forms a Cabinet Fascist Party dissolved.
5 August	Capture of Catania.
17 August	End of resistance in Sicily.
3 September	Armistice signed in Sicily by General Castellano, but not announced.
	First Allied landing on Italian mainland, in Calabria.
8 September	Announcement of armistice. Italy surrenders unconditionally.
9 September	Allied landing at Salerno.
10 September	Rome occupied by German troops.
	Italian fleet makes formal surrender at Malta.
	King Victor Emmanuel and Badoglio withdraw to Bari.
11 September	Mussolini set free by the Germans.
15 September	Mussolini organizes the Republican Fascist Party and assumes supreme direction of Fascism in Italy.
	Pavolini appointed temporary Secretary.
18 September	Mussolini makes statement on German radio.
19 September	Germans evacuate Sardinia.
23 September	Formation of the neo-Fascist Government announced.
24 September	Offensive by Fifth Army from Salerno opens.
29 September	Full armistice terms signed by Badoglio at Malta.
30 September	Badoglio forms preliminary Cabinet.
1 October	Allies enter Naples.
7 October	Count Sforza arrives in Italy.
13 October	Italy declares war on Germany and becomes a co-belligerent of the Allies.
1 November	Broadcast of declaration of Moscow Conference (19-30 October) on Italy.
10 November	Formation of Allied Control Commission for Italy.
12 November	General Roatta removed from post of Chief of Staff, Italian Army.

1943

- 14 November First National Assembly of the Republican Fascist Party at Verona, Manifesto embodying draft Constitution of Italian Social Republic issued.
- 16 November Badoglio forms Cabinet.
- 28 December Ortona captured by Eighth Army.

1944

- 8 January Trial of Ciano and other members of Fascist Grand Council opens at Verona.
- 11 January Ciano and four others shot.
- 22 January Allied forces land at Anzio.
- 28 January Bari Congress of the six parties represented on the Committees of National Liberation.
- 11 February Transfer of Allied-occupied territory to the Badoglio Government, i.e. of territory south of northern boundaries of Salerno, Potenza, and Bari provinces, and the islands of Sicily and Sardinia.
- 13 March Diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. resumed.
- 15 March Fifth Army launches offensive at Cassino.
- 23 March Fosse Ardeatine murders.
- 26 March Togliatti returns to Italy.
- 4 April Sir Noel Charles appointed High Commissioner for Italy.
- 17 April Badoglio resigns; asked by King to form new Government.
- 20 April Badoglio forms a new Ministry on a broader basis.
- 23 April Mussolini meets Hitler in Germany.
- 11 May Allies launch large offensive on Gustav Line.
- 18 May Capture of Cassino.
- 22 May General Alexander issues first Italian partisan communique.
- 25 May Fifth Army link up with Anzio beachhead.
- 4 June Allies enter Rome
- 5 June King of Italy signs a decree making Prince Umberto Lieutenant General of the Realm.
- 6 June D Day
- 7 June General Alexander makes first broadcast to Italian patriots in North Italy.
- 9 June Ivanoe Bonomi forms a new Government.
- 22 June Ministers take oath; Bonomi Cabinet's first meeting at Salerno.
- Early July Strikes in Northern towns; partisans active. Germans taking over authority (especially military) from neo-Fascists.
- 15 July Bonomi Government transfers from Salerno to Rome.
- 18 July Poles capture Ancona. Partisans to be incorporated in the Italian army organization.

1944

19 July U.S. forces occupy Leghorn.
 20 July Provinces of Foggia, Campobasso, Benevento, Avellino, and Naples (except commune of Naples) transferred to Italian Government jurisdiction
 21 July Mussolini received by Hitler (after attempt on Hitler's life on 20th).
 27 July Epuration law passed.
 2 August Graziani appointed C.-in-C. of new army of Italian and German divisions.
 5 August Eighth Army occupies Florence south of the Arno.
 8 August Communist-Socialist joint programme of action issued.
 10 August Mr. Churchill in Italy till 28th.
 13 August Florence clear of Germans.
 15 August Provinces of Littoria, Frosinone, and Rome, and town of Rome restored to Italian Government jurisdiction.
 End August Gothic Line reached.
 18 September Caruso's trial.
 27 September Churchill-Roosevelt declaration regarding status of Italy.
 4 October Mr. Eden's statement in House of Commons regarding Italian colonies.
 16 October Provinces of Viterbo, Rieti, Aquila, Chieti, Pescara, and Teramo pass under Italian Government jurisdiction.
 16 November General Roatta arrested
 20 November Count Carandini arrives in London as Italian representative
 26 November Cabinet crisis; Bonomi resigns.
 28 November British objections to Count Sforza's candidature as Foreign Minister.
 5 December Eighth Army occupies Ravenna.
 10 December Second Bonomi Government announced; Socialists and Action Party refuse to collaborate.
 14 December Canadian troops enter Faenza.

1945

15 January Allied direct control over Italian press ends.
 18 January Tarchiani appointed Italian Ambassador in Washington.
 24 February Mr. Harold MacMillan's announcement regarding relaxation of conditions hitherto limiting Italian Government's freedom of action.
 4 March General Roatta escapes during trial.
 8 March Agreement signed between Italian Government and U.N.R.R.A. representative in Italy.
 22 March Mussolini's speech on 26th anniversary of the foundation of Fasci di Combattimento.
 31 March Council of Ministers approves proposal for "Consulta."

1945

2 April	Eighth Army landing near Lake Comacchio.
10 April	Eighth Army crosses the Senio.
14 April	Fifth Army advancing on Bologna.
19 April	Strikes in Turin and Milan begin.
21 April	Capture of Bologna.
24 April	Eighth Army occupies Ferrara.
25 April	Fifth Army enters Mantua and Parma.
	Partisans attack and take over in Milan.
26 April	Fifth Army occupies Verona and crosses Adige.
	Germans surrender to partisans in Genoa; most of
	Turin in patriot hands.
	C.N.L.A.I. takes over control in North.
27 April	Fifth Army enters Genoa and Piacenza.
	Mussolini arrested at village on Lake Como.
28 April	Mussolini and other leading Fascists, including
	Pavolini and Farinacci, executed by patriots.
	Fifth Army takes Brescia and Bergamo, U.S.
	troops reach Como, Eighth Army reaches Venice and
	Mestre, New Zealand Division reaches the Piave.
29 April	Instrument of surrender of German armies in Italy
	signed at Caserta.
	Patriots liberate Turin.
30 April	Partisans fighting Germans in Trieste.
1 May	Graziani calls on Ligurian armies to lay down arms.
	New Zealand troops reach Udine and make contact
	with Marshal Tito's forces which have entered
	Trieste.
2 May	Surrender of German armies in Italy announced.
	New Zealanders enter Trieste.
3 May	Germans in Trieste surrender to New Zealanders;
	Yugoslavs occupy municipal buildings there.
5 May	C.N.L.A.I. representatives arrives in Rome.
8 May	General Morgan meets Tito in Belgrade and suggests
	withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Trieste area.
12 May	Field Marshal Alexander in Belgrade discussing
	Trieste question with Tito.
13 May	C.N.L.A.I. leaders return North.
16 May	Ministers go North for further discussions.
19 May	Field Marshal Alexander issues statement protesting
	against Tito's claims in Venezia Giulia.
22 May	Eighth Army takes over Trieste.
25 May	Six-party agreement reached in Milan as to pro-
	gramme for new Government; Ministers return to
	Rome.
28 May	"Cordon sanitaire" between North and South ends.
1 June	A.M.G. (Lombardy) issues order regarding end of
	C.N.L.A.I. authority in North; C.N.L.A.I. decrees
	to be replaced by A.M.G. orders.
2 June	Six-party agreement regarding powers of C.N.L.s.

1945

- 9 June Agreement signed in Belgrade between British, U.S., and Yugoslav Governments defining limits of A.M.G. control in Venezia Giulia.
- 12 June Bonomi resigns.
British and Americans take over in Trieste; Yugoslav troops withdraw.
- 17 June Ferruccio Parri asked to form Government.
- 19 June Provinces of Florence, Leghorn, and Pistoia transferred to Italian Government control.
Parri Government formed.
- 20 June Italo-Yugoslav agreement signed, completing that of 9 June, and defining limits of 'Morgan Line.'
- 14 July Italy declares war on Japan.
- 3 August Potsdam decisions announced; Italy to be admitted to U.N.O. after peace treaty concluded.
- 4 August Emilia, Apuania, Lucca, and town of Ancona handed back to Italian Government control.
- 9 August Val d'Aosta Autonomy Bill passed.
- 30 August Commission for preparation of electoral law set up.
- 15 September Lombardy, Veneto, Piedmont, and Liguria restored to Italian Government control, leaving Udine, Trento, Belluno, and Bolzano still under A.M.G.
- 17 September Italian Delegation to Council of Foreign Ministers, headed by De Gasperi, arrives in London.
- 18 September Council of Foreign Ministers discusses Italian colonies; Russian proposal for trusteeship over Tripolitania.
- 19 September Council of Foreign Ministers' decisions regarding Venezia Giulia--(i) line to be as nearly as possible the ethnic one; (ii) Trieste to be internationalized.
- 25 September Inaugural meeting of "Consulta." Sforza elected President. Separatist risings in Sicily.
- 2 October Sicilian Separatist leader Finocchiaro--Aprile arrested in Messina.
- 3 October Unification of purge measures throughout the country.
- 8 October Liberal criticisms of Government policy.
- 12 October Draft decree on Constituent Assembly prepared.
- 18 October Italy re-admitted to I.L.O.
- 6 November Armistice terms published.
- 9 November New epuration law passed.
- 15 November Allied Supreme Command restores control of Italian army to Government.
- 17 November Liberals propose widening of Government.
- 22 November Liberal Ministers resign from Government.
- 24 November Parri resigns.
- 1 December De Gasperi asked to form Government.

SOURCE: Muriel Grindrod, The New Italy Transition From War to Peace (London, 1947), pp. 104-109.