

DECLASSIFIED

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By VR NARA Date 8/7

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22 April 1943. My dear Betty: I'm still worrying about your health and wish you could do something energetic about it. I am trying to work and forget the misery of life, like they do in romantic novels. Since coming back I have had a few conversations with various people on themes which we have discussed together, perhaps it's a good idea if I tell you about them. One man I met in the train, who seems to follow the newspapers rather closely, has ferreted out symptoms of an attempt at capitulation, in which Grandi would play the intermediary. His opinion was that this is likely to happen only when Italy is absolutely on her last military legs, so that the only prudent and indeed the only honourable course open to the Allies would be to accept the capitulation unconditionally, according to the principle enounced by the President at Casablanca. "Unconditionally" naturally doesn't exclude such purely technical conditions as military occupation by the Allied troops, the resignation of Mussolini's government, the legalisation of the various antifascist political movements, with the ensuing trial of those responsible for the war which the antifascists would immediately begin. On the other hand, a capitulation involving the recognition and consolidation of the fascist dictatorship (even though perhaps no longer led by Mussolini but by Grandi) would be the worst piece of treachery which the United Nations could possibly perpetrate. And it would be a short-lived treachery. Because the antifascist revolution is, in Italy, a force which no one can stop now. These are the opinions of the man I met in the train.

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I had another conversation, this time with one of my fellow school-maams in the Institute for Young Ladies, about territorial claims. To my objections on the subject of Fiume and the Dodecanese this person, who isn't as stupid as she looks, suggested the following answer: "For all zones inhabited by a non-Italian ethnical majority, and likely to be claimed by another democratic government, a plebiscite convoked under the aegis of the international community will decide."

Could you possibly deliver the enclosed note to your architecture-loving namesake? Don't take any notice of it as far as you are concerned, write to me when you like, nothing had happened but I just don't want to have the rag of answering all her letters. Let me know if you could possibly transmit brief communications to our family in London also, as we can very well do without the services of the lady in question. We are expecting a visit from the Locarno lawyer what's-his-name, and have already written to him telling him to come whenever he likes. I shall probably be in Zürich the week-end after Easter, May 2nd. I shall drop in to Hank's place to know if you or any of your friends are also in town, I would rather see them Sunday but can arrive Saturday or stop over Monday if they can't manage Sunday. The coal-waggon arrangement sounds delightful but I have found several other ways for corresponding with my friends and so shan't require the services of your coal-heaving friend after all.

RUSCA

sounds

If you are cabling Hal could you add this message for me: Received thanks Trieste Leica.

Times are hard, old girl, and likely to be harder. I'm trying to brace myself for whatever's coming but somehow am not optimistic. However, perhaps tomorrow the sun will shine and things will look different. If you hear anything funny, for the Lord's sake tell me, I need to laugh but my facial muscles are getting out of practice.

Love

D.

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