

HARRISBURG TELEGRAPH, Monday, April 30, 1945

Italians Vent Wrath on Duce's Body

(Continued From Page 1)

...-old former dictator was hung by the heels in the Piazza Quindici Martiri in Milan. By his side was the body of his mistress, blood oozed across her breast. Flanking them on both sides were the bodies of five other Fascist leaders.

Split Upon Body

An angry Milan citizen pushed and shoved against the Partisans guarding the bodies. Some succeeded in breaking through and spitting upon Il Duce's body. One man emptied the clip of his automatic pistol into the lifeless form. Another punched the once-famed jetting jaw.

Rome, April 29 (P)—The Italian government, through its commissions for the punishment of Fascist crimes, endorsed today the action of Italian patriots in executing Benito Mussolini immediately after his capture.

Mussolini was shot through the head by the Partisans after he was captured Friday by a sergeant approaching the Swiss border. He and the other Fascist leaders were fleeing in a truck convoy.

Mussolini was garbed in a German officer's coat and was driving north when the sergeant spotted him.

He spent Friday night in a cell at San Domingo prison in Como. He was reported in a terrible state of agitation, and made attempts to strike up conversations with his guards.

"Why is no one here to defend me?" he was quoted as saying.

Begs For Mercy

Later he was reported to have told the men who ordered him shot, "Save my life and I will give you an empire."

He died shouting "Not me!" to the firing squad, eyewitnesses recounted. The bullet that killed him entered from the back in the manner prescribed by Italian tradition for dishonored persons.

Grasiani, held prisoner by an American captain and a strong Partisan guard in a hotel, was quoted as saying Mussolini and his cabinet left Milan April 25—last Wednesday—for Como.

Grasiani said he attempted to make contact with Milan's Partisan chief and offer his surrender, but was told to surrender at Como. Unable to communicate with them, he surrendered to an American liaison captain, who took him to Milan.

The square in which the bodies were dumped was one in which 13 Partisans were executed a year ago.

Others Executed

Besides Mussolini and his mistress, the others reported executed included:

Alessandro Pavolini, secretary of state in Mussolini's puppet regime; Lt. Gen. Achille Starace, a former vice-secretary of the Fascist party; Francesco Baracca, vice-president of the state's council of ministers; Paolo Zerbino, minister of the interior; Ferruccio Mezzanone, minister of popular culture.

Ruggiero Romano, minister of public works; Augusto Liverani, minister of communications; Paolo Porta, Fascist party inspector for Lombardy; Luigi Galati, a prefect; Gottredo Coppa, president of the Institute of Fascist Culture; Ernesto Dacquanno, director of the Stefani News Agency.

Mario Nudi, president of the Fascist Agriculture Association; Col. Vito Casalmorova, of the Fascist Republican National Guard; Nicola Bombacci, described as one-time Communist leader who turned Fascist; Gen. Attilio Trezzani, former chief of the Fascist militia; Watermayer, a propagandist; Geormini, described as a head of the Fascist youth organization.

Also reported slain were Marcello Pavesi, brother of Mussolini's mistress, and Capt. Pietro Salasini, his personal pilot.

Baltimore, April 30, (P)—Howard M. Norton, Baltimore Sunpapers war correspondent who was among the first newspapermen to see the bodies of Benito Mussolini and others executed by Italian Partisans at Milan, said the forms: Duce had been shot twice in the head and the bodies of all were covered with bullet holes and gashes.

"It was a sickening sight," Norton wrote.

"Though the Partisans claimed that they shot all through the chest, there were bullet holes and gashes all over the bodies. Many had eyes gouged out."

"There were two bullet holes through the top of Il Duce's head. His right hand was bristled across his stomach, his other twisted under him. He was dressed in the uniform of the Fascist militia, and traugled in the mud beside him was a militia banner. His eyes were closed."

Norton said the correspondents talked with the Partisan commander whose men executed the former dictator.

"The only name the commander would give was Eduardo, which is what Partisans call a battle name. He's 30 years old, appears well educated and speaks English haltingly."

Norton said Eduardo told him he was in command of all Partisans in Favia province, totaling more than 2000 men, and that when he heard that Mussolini was in Dongo, attempting to flee to Switzerland, he sent 10 men and an officer there from Milan to capture the Duce.

Norton quoted Eduardo:


"Mussolini was in a cottage on a hill outside the village of Dongo with his mistress. Then he saw the Italian officers coming toward him, he embraced his mistress. But he was deeply shaken when he understood he was to be tried."

The committee with the 13th Garibaldi Brigade and an officer from the Milan Partisan command then examined the men with Mussolini and found them all guilty, so my men arranged the execution."

"Mussolini and Clara Petacci were shot together at the cottage. I don't know whether inside or out. He was not blind-sided but as the soldiers were about to fire, he cried: 'No, no, no.' Those were his last words. He was hit in the chest, but not in the face."

(Other reports were that Mussolini had been shot in the back.)

"What'll Y



1945-04-30 Il Duce's body on display PART TWO

Clipped By:



criswest

Tue, Dec 5, 2017