

For 6/14/40

'Fifth Column' Activities Of Italian Consulates Exposed

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New York, June 13.—Italian consuls general in this country, working under orders from Premier Mussolini, it became known today, are seeking to promote Fascism in this country by ideological propaganda, in schools, newspapers, magazines and through radio. A campaign to enroll members in Fascist and pro-Fascist organizations of various kinds, open and camouflaged, is being conducted as part of the consuls' activities.

These activities became known as Police Commissioner Lewis J. Valentine distributed this morning copies of a 25-page mimeographed confidential memorandum to the borough commanders, inspectors of the criminal alien, sabotage and bomb squads. The distribution of the memorandum, with instructions to act and make arrests wherever and whenever necessary, was made at a conference of the police officials in the office of Assistant Chief Inspector John J. Ryan at police headquarters, immediately after the regular lineup.

Inspector Ryan warned each of his

subordinates against making contents of the memorandum public.

Police action here was said to be part of a Nation-wide drive to check anti-national defense moves.

The memorandum gave in detail the results of a lengthy investigation into Fascist activities carried on in this city and elsewhere. According to the authorities these activities were carried on with the approval of the Italian consulate officers, the latter working under the mantle of diplomatic immunity.

It was said the investigators were able to obtain copies of governmental instructions to the consulates to disseminate propaganda.

Italian organizations were instructed to preach fascism, enlist all possible aid for it, and try as effectively as possible to bring in new members in sympathy with the cause.

The memorandum was headed "The Fascist Fifth Column in New York," with the subtitle, "This survey is founded on documentary evidence; rumor, hearsay and unverified statements rigidly excluded."