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World War: BALKAN THEATRE: Growing Counter

Last week initiative in Albania passed to the Axis. Each day Greek communiques spoke of Italian counterattacks, fiercer and better planned than any that had gone before. The biggest Italian effort seemed to be aimed at Corizza, on the northern sector of the front, which the Greeks occupied when the war was a month old.

Fresh Italian divisions were reported massed behind the front lines.

The Greeks claimed continuing success against these counterattacks. They said they had taken, and turned against the Italians, "highly impressive" new enemy fortifications near Corizza. At a mountain pass, a bomb dislodged a huge boulder, blocked a highway and trapped a convoy of 100 trucks, which the Greeks said they bombed to destruction. The Greeks still had things to laugh about: they heard that the new Italian Commander in Chief, Ugo Cavallero, had chosen to go to Albania the safe way—by land through neutral Yugoslavia, disguised as an engineer.

But for the first time since the beginning of the war, an Italian offensive was being attempted. And there was an even more ominous sound than the crescendo of Italian guns. It came from Rome. It was a hint that the main thing Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini discussed in their meeting on Jan. 20 was a joint general staff. This might mean substantial German help in Albania.

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