Italy, with plenty to keep her occupied in the last week, has not made serious efforts to justify her annexation of Albania, except on the basis of Albanian 'mistake' and the Albanians' "request" to be taken over. This oversight has not been rectified by the Catholic press which explains that the Italian action was a "defensive" measure against "encirclement" by Britain and France.

In its weekly department, "The New Behind the News, the Brooklyn Tablet of April 15 devotes three and a half columns to a discussion of "Italy and Albania" in which we learn that Communist agitators among the Albanians were responsible for the deaths of "innocent Italian soldiers," that the "warmakers of London, Paris and Washington" are responsible for this bloodshed on Good Friday and that the Italian bombing of Albanian villages is excused because its purpose was "to break the resistance with the least possible loss of life."

The tone of the article is set in one of the opening sentences which reveals that "The Albanians were the savage backward pagan Ethiopians of Europe." (No doubt the Catholics are "pagans" to the Albanians who are good Mohammedans.)

The following are excerpts from the article:

"Italy had good reason to believe that Zog had double-crossed her. Mussolini had determined that Albania would not join the anti-Fascist bloc of Rumania, Jugoslavia and perhaps Hungary (sic) so he decided to break through the encircling ring of steel that Britain and France were fashioning around Germany, Italy and Nationalist Spain. When Italy's troops began to move into Albania, Nationalist Spain understood that she too was to be isolated in the anti-Fascist ring of steel. Franco therefore officially joined the anti-Comintern entente. (Franco joined the anti-Comintern Pact on March 27, ten days before Italy invaded Albania).

"Italy's move into Albania was a direct result of Britain's attempt to isolate Germany, Italy and Spain and thus slowly starve them into subjection. . . . Italy had to move fast to keep the band of steel from being clasped around her throat. The move was planned by Germany and Italy as a defensive move to counteract the British,
French and Polish encircling move. . .

"No one could condone the bombing of civilian populations; but the Italian planes first flew over the cities of Albania "bombing" the inhabitants with proclamations calling for peaceful surrender and non-resistance. The Italian army landed from battleships and airplanes and expected to march through Albania and to reestablish the status quo of an Italian protectorate; but they were met with fierce resistance. Then the battleships opened fire on the cities, while the airplanes dropped incendiary bombs -- the purpose was to break the resistance with the least possible loss of life. . . But communist agitators had implanted in the minds and hearts of Albanians fear and hatred of "fascist" Italians. (Notice that the word Fascist, which is the official designation used by the Italians themselves, is written in quotation marks while the word Communist, applying to mythical persons, is not). (Communist agit-prop (sic) produced the desired results -- open warfare and the useless foolish slaughter of innocent Italian soldiers and Albanian tribesmen.

Their bloodshed on Good Friday can be demanded of the "peacemakers" of Versailles and the "warmakers" of London, Paris and Washington. . .

"Italy was interested in keeping anti-fascism out of Albania and not in annexing the territory or in subjugating her people."

No one can miss in this version of the Albanian incident the remarkable identity of the arguments --- a defensive measure against Angle-French encirclement; saving Albania was anti-fascism; blame traced to Versaille and the democratic "warmakers" --- with those used by Germany and Italy. Should anyone be searching for the American end of the Axis he need look no farther than the Brooklyn Tablet and those it represents.
Jay Allen thought the enclosed would be of interest to you.