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LISA SERGIO

Lisa Sergio, born in Florence, Italy, the daughter of Baron Agostino Sergio and the former Margaret Fitzgerald of Baltimore, is an American by choice and is recognized on both sides of the Atlantic as one of the ablest and best-informed analysts of international affairs. In the United States, of which she has been a citizen many years, as abroad, she enjoys wide recognition as a news commentator, lecturer and writer on national and foreign questions, and has a constantly growing following among high school, college and university students as among adult audiences of every kind.

Her rise to international prominence occurred through an unique chain of events which led her from archaeological research at Ostia and Pompeii, to radio at the suggestion of Marconi. She became the first woman radio commentator in Europe and was heard broadcasting regularly in French and English. These duties she combined with those of official English and French interpreter for Mussolini. Internationally recognized as the "golden voice of Rome", her close association with the Italian dictator soon opened her eyes to the true nature of the seemingly "beneficent" Blackshirt regime. More and more daringly, she used her unique position to reveal the truth about Fascism. Finally caught, it was again through the aid of Guglielmo Marconi that she was able to evade arrest and escape to the United States.

A few days after her arrival she was broadcasting over NBC, then establishing herself as one of the country's leading news commentators, she became associated with New York's famous WQXR and also with the ABC network. The recipient of many honors and awards for her radio work, she began to make a way for herself in the lecture field and presently her slim, chic figure and her dark, brilliant eyes became as well known as her velvety voice.

At least once a year, Miss Sergio takes time out from her professional and civic activities to dash to some area of the world where headlines are in the making. Her international background has enriched her with a chain of personal contacts which keep her supplied with first-hand information and open doors to her that others in her field might find it difficult to penetrate.

A believer in the active participation of trained women in public affairs, Lisa Sergio devotes much of her spare time to the International Federation of Business and Professional Women and also edits the organization's official magazine, "Widening Horizons." The American Women's Association in giving her an award cited her as "a woman who through her keen and comprehensive interpretation of world events knows how to stimulate women to assume their share in weaving a world pattern."

Miss Sergio is a member of the Board of Managers of the Broadcasting and Films Commission of the National Council of Churches, a member of the Public Relations Committee of United Church Women, Chairman of Legislation for Vermont Church Women and member of the Legislative Council of the State of Vermont. Several terms as Lecturer in Sociology at Columbia University caused her to deepen her own studies in the field of psychological warfare and mass reactions. This, added to her own experience with the Fascist Dictatorship, has provided her with a realistic approach to the current problems of Communist drives and of Soviet power.

Her fundamental belief is that the battle for freedom and self-determination cannot be won with military weapons or the threat of nuclear warfare. It must be won by enabling all peoples to rise to higher standards of education, and to achieve always richer social and economic gains. "Freedom and the full practice of democracy are a question of better thinking, not of better bombs" says this courageous news analyst.

A completely extemporaneous speaker, who never even uses notes, Miss Sergio finds question-and-answer periods particularly enjoyable and encourages audiences to debate with her from the floor.

She has just returned from a four week visit to the Soviet Union, where as a tourist rather than as a reporter or commentator, she had the opportunity of mixing freely with all manner of Soviet citizens, from journalists and top-ranking government officials, to farm hands in the cooperatives, sales men and women in the city shops, students of varying ages, musicians, writers, intellectuals and ordinary people in whose simple homes she was often entertained.

Lisa Sergio is as skilled with her fingers as she is with words and enjoys a variety of extra-curricular activities such as designing and making clothes, carpentry, upholstering, gardening and, following in the wake of the late Ann Batchelder of the Ladies' Home Journal, who was her adopted mother, she is quite a hand at cooking. She makes her home in Vermont.

Asked by an inquisitive reporter which were her most treasured possessions she mentioned these: the red ribbon of the French Legion of Honor, the photograph of a loving-cup which was given to her American forbears by Lafayette in appreciation of the hospitality given to him in their Virginia home during the Revolutionary War, and the miniature reproduction of the ancient Roman Arch which still stands at Pola on the Adriatic coast of Italy, and which was erected there nearly 2000 years ago in honor of Sergii, two Roman heroes from whom her Italian family was descended.