

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

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10000/100/83

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785015

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USE & DISPOSITION OF ITALIAN
ARMED FORCES, AIR FORCE
SEPT. 1943; SEPT. 1944

257

Corfu

*Duplicate of
10000/100/82*

1772

24th September 1943

MOST IMMEDIATE

MOST SECRET

Ref No. R.M.F./38

TO : M.A.C. COMMAND POST (FREEDOM pass in cypher held)
FROM: Fatima. REPEAT 15th Army Group for A.O.C.
N.A.T.A.F.

EXTRACT

Further Italian fighter bomber sorties up to maximum capacity being undertaken throughout day (.) Italians state no bombers available (.)

Considered here that CORFU is likely to fall unless we give air assistance at once (.) Thereafter Italians will be pressed to send reinforcements by sea (.)

Action today important (.) If A.O.C. N.A.T.A.F. decides to assist, suggest sorties should start from Brindisi where latest information is available.

R.M.FOSTER.
Air Commodore

OUTGOING SIGNAL

24th September 1943

Ref No. FME/39

MOST SECRET

TO : A.F.H.Q. for M.A.C. REPEAT M2A.C. Command Post.
(FREEDOM pass in cypher held)

FROM: FATIMA

EXTRACT

Co-operation between Italian naval, land and air forces is
completely lacking (.) There is now little expectation COMFU
holding out (.)

OUTGOING SIGNAL

25th September 1943.

Ref No. RMT/42

TO : MEDITERRANEAN AIR COMMAND REPEAT N.A.T.A.F.
(FREEDOM passin cypher held)

FROM: FATIMA.

MOST SECRET

MOST IMMEDIATE

Personal for Air C in C from Foster (.)

Position today in CORFU is that enemy holds whole Southern
isthmus below lat.N. 39° 29' (.)

After examining position in detail with Italian Chief of Staff
I consider garrison unlikely to hold out for more than 48 hours
from today without Allied air support (.)

Enemy resources in that area are limited and air action on
moderate scale should prevent build up (.)

Enemy using JU.87 and 88 but no fighters (.) Italian air effort
has not been bad but is now falling rapidly owing lack of aircraft
and spares (.)

I have explained that I am waiting your decision as to whether
operations to retain CORFU are important enough to divert forces
from main effort for them (.)

May I have your reply earliest possible (.)

R.M. FOSTER
Air Commodore

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM: FREEDOM (McGREGOR)

DATE: 260059Z 1943 Sep

TO : FATIMA (For FOSTER)

CLASS : MOST SECRET

REF NO. A818

PRIOR : ROUTINE

Will try help you if you can give suitable target for MEDIUMS.

Reference your 42. 25 September. Address answer Air Command
Post.

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM : AIR COMMAND POST (via FREEDOM)

DATE: 26 September 1943

TO : FATIMA

CLASS: SECRET

REF NO. A247

PREC : URGENT

(Personal for FOSTER from MCGREGOR) No reply received to my request for targets. You will appreciate we have virtually no information of what is happening in CORFU and it would be wrong to divert efforts unless diversion is going to be used effectively. Weather and time factors make action today impossible. May be able provide one group P38's tomorrow if you can indicate employment.

OUTGOING SIGNAL

26th September 1943

RMF/46

TO : MEDITERRANEAN AIR COMMAND POST
(FREEDOM pass in cypher held)

FROM: FATMA

Most Secret

Most Immediate

For McGregor from Foster (.)

Your A.467 of 25/9 (.)

No action now required (.) CORFU has capitulated (.)

R.M. FOSTER,
Air Commodore

1766

6 September 1944.

I saw S/L De Haan at Hq ACC Rome, and informed him of the work at present being done by Archives in connection with a historical summary of the early activities of the Allied Military Mission at Brindisi.

I explained that my only source of information so far as Air Sub-Commission is concerned, was the Brindisi Diary and the Brindisi Master files. I showed him the papers affecting the Air Sub-Commission for the period 16 - 30 Sept 49 approx.

These papers give a very brief picture of the work of the Air Sub-Commission. I added that Air Sub-Commission did not have early records, I would carry on with the work up to the point at which the Sub-Commission files opened.

S/L De Haan took me see F/Sgt Brown who was with A/C Foster from the commencement. Brown said that he himself had opened the necessary files and these were subsequently taken to Bari. Before A/C Foster left for Malta, he (the A/C) examined the files and destroyed certain documents, particulars being placed in the files concerned. Brown is of the opinion that there is no necessity for Archives to continue with a reconstruction from the Brindisi Diary and Master files. The story is to be found in the files in the custody of the Sub-Commissions Headquarters at Bari.

all
Archivist.

OUTGOING SIGNAL

22nd September 1943

Ref No. RMF/21.

MOST SECRET

TO : Mediterranean Air Command.

FROM : Patima.

In accordance with Air C. in C.'s instructions that all Italian aircraft now in N.Africa and Sicily are to be concentrated in S.Italy, please despatch these aircraft to LECCE (.) Before despatch aircraft should if possible be marked with red white and green roundels on wings and fuselage as ordered by Air C. in C. (.) It would greatly help if small quantity of paint to mark aircraft already here could be sent with them (.) There are practically no paint supplies here (.)

R.M. FOSTER.

Air Commodore

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM: MEDITERRANEAN AIR COMMAND

DATE: 22 September 1943

TO : FATMA (Attention Air Cmdr Foster)

CLASS: MOST SECRET

REF NO. 8242

PREC:

Message received this headquarters reference A-227, 22 September passed for your action *understood from A. G-in-C that you are prepared to take all I.A.F. aircraft now in Allied hands with the exception of those in Sardinia. Does this include float planes and transports. Where do you desire locate these and when and in what numbers per day do you want them to arrive. (From MACGREGOR SIGNED EISENHOWER). Request early reply so that concentration aircraft in North Africa can be stopped forth-with; can you accept these aircraft immediately"

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM: FREEDOM

DATE: 231834Z 1943 Sep

TO : ITALIA (For Foster)

CLASS: SECRET

Ref. No. 8586

PRIORITY

Italian planes following are now in Tunisia:

Cant 2 506 with 5 crew
Cant 2 501 with 4 crew
S 79 with 5 crew
S 79 with 9 crew
CA 509 with 6 crew

General Castellano proposes that these aircraft and personnel with the exception of the cant 506 and 501 be returned to Sardinia or Puglia to augment personnel and equipment in Italian Air Force already in that area. He further proposes that the two cant aircraft, which are seaplanes, be sent to the seaplane base at Taranto or Brindisi in view of the fact that Sardinian seaplane bases have been entirely destroyed.

please advise us of the disposition you wish made of these aircraft and crews.

NOTE: Completed message (SVC 1732)

OUTGOING SIGNAL

REF NO. RMF/39

TO : MEDITERRANEAN AIR COMMAND

FROM: FATIMA

24 Sep 43

Understand Brindisi has been selected as main R.A.F. base for
S. Italy (.) Army authorities have agreed reserved area which was
represented by me as adequate for R.A.F. needs (.)
Would welcome early visit by competent officer to plan lay out (.)

R.M. FOSTER

Air Commodore

U.S. SECRET Equals British MOST SECRET

OUTGOING SIGNAL

TO : Mediterranean Air Command.
FROM : Fatima.

24th September 1943.

Most Secret.

Your S.242 dated 22/9 (.) Both transports and floatplanes should be sent (.)
landplanes to be delivered LECCE floatplanes to BRINDISI (.) Can receive
50 per day or more if desired (.) Request aircraft are marked with red
white green roundels before despatch (.) Grateful for earliest notification
of probable date of arrival here of first party (.)

R.M. FOSTER.

Air Commodore

TO : M.A.C.COMMAND POST. (FREEDOM Pass in
Cypher Held)

Most Secret
IMPORTANT

FROM: FATIMA

24 September 1943

Ref. RMF/37

Two S.82 with appropriate technical parties are now ready to proceed Sicily to take first steps in salvage of spares and engines for I.A.F. (.) Suggest aircraft should proceed direct to Catania and be placed under direction R.A.F. base Commander there who would be instructed to authorise visits to all aerodromes where useful salvage exists (.) Important that Italian air party should receive encouragement and help otherwise our bona fides may be doubted (.)

R.M.FOSTER

Air Commodore

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM: AIR COMMAND POST

TO : NA AIR FORCE NAT AIR FORCE NAH AIR FORCE
NASOMAS AIR FORCE Rptd MAC FATIMA via
FREEDOM

DATE: 260245B 1943 Sep

CLASS: MOST SECRET

PREC: OPERATIONAL PRIORITY

REF NO. A240

Policy of employment of Italian Air Force aircraft making it essential that all spares and parts captured Italian aircraft which can be salvaged should be made available to I.A.F. Authority has been given for a storage we (?) with appropriate technical parties to proceed immediately to Sicily to take first steps in salvage of spares. Requested in Sicily and elsewhere these technical parties should be given all possible facilities and help.

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM: AIR COMMAND POST (via FREEDOM)

DATE: 25 September 43.

TO : FATIMA

CLASS: MOST SECRET

REF NO. A241

PRIORITY: OPERATIONAL PRIORITY

Request you take action to inform base attachments (Reference my A240
September 25th) RSU's ASP's etc. that spares for IAF aircraft including
those in mid-east should be collected for handing to Italian authorities.
Request you arrange for technical parties now being despatched Allied
Military Mission make contact suitable bases where spares are likely to
be obtained. Ant instructions you have on this matter should be signalled
to FATIMA for ERITMES.

OUTGOING SIGNAL

26th September 1943

REF No. RMV/44

TO : Mediterranean Air Command Post.
(FREEDOM passin cypher held)

FROM : Fatima

MOST SECRET

IMMEDIATE

For McGregor from Foster (.)

As agreed by Air C. in G. am despatching on 27/9, two S.82 to Catania
with authority to locate and collect spares essential to I.A.F.
in Sicily (.)

On same date one aircraft leaving Brindisi for DECIMO MANNU to
open tri-weekly courier service (.)

En route it will land Palermo for instructions (.)

Every aircraft will carry written authority for journey (.)

Please warn those concerned (.)

R.M. FOSTER
Air Commodore

1756

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM: AIR COMMAND POST

DATE: 25 September 1943

TO : NASC, IIASAC, MACAF, 242 group
rptd FATIMA

CLASS: MOST SECRET

PRED: OPERATIONAL PRIORITY

REF NO: A243

ALLIED MILITARY MISSION, FAIRFIELD AFHQ MAC NAAF NATAF Italian Air Force A/C and crews now on Allied bases are required for operations from Italy. All Italian aircraft at KOURBA NUNTH or elsewhere should be dispatched to LECCE except Float Planes which should fly to Brindisi. A/C are not to leave base till route, time and height have been agreed by MACAF who will give Allied Military Mission Brindisi 24 hours notice. Before dispatch A/C are to be marked with red, white and green ROUNDELS to RAF dimensions.

INCOMING MESSAGE

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

FROM : Air Command Post

DATE: 271355A 1943

TO : FREEDOM for MACAF, FATIMA,
MAC, MAAP.

CLASS: SECRET

REF. NO. A-249 (R 91/27)

PREG: OPERATIONAL PRIORITY

Courier service by Italian aircraft between BRINDISI and DUCIMONANNU (?)
has been given authority already by CINC AFHQ. This service to be
three times weekly. Reference second addressee, SPMF 3625 Sep.

ALLIED MILITARY MISSION - INCOMING MESSAGE

SVC/RELAY NR: R 476/27

M/C NR: N 24/28

CLASS: SECRET

REF. NO. T.Q. 931

PREC: ROUTINE

FILED: 271745A 1943 Sep

FROM: FREEDOM

REC'D

TO: FATIMA

Reference A 240 and A 243 both September 25. Guidance required re Policy on responsibility for and extent of support to be given to Italian Air Force operating with Allies. Operating formation of types and quantities Aircraft involved. For action RE responses seen active Q 297 of 27 September.

Consider petrol and lubricants can be provided but invite attention to restricted port facilities which may impose limitation on quantity in view own large commitments.

Are sufficient quantities Italian ammunition and bombs available. If Allied to be supplied will aircraft be modified and Allied type guns and bomb racks be supplied and fitted

Understand Allied Armistice Commission arranging feeding - request confirmation. Will assistance re clothing equipment be ALLIED responsibility - if so by British or American.

Assume supply of RAF specialist vehicles not contemplated. None available.

ALLIED MILITARY MISSION - INCOMING MESSAGE

SVC/RELAY NR: R 471/27

CLASS : SECRET

PREC : PRIORITY

FROM : FREEDOM

TO : FATIMA

M/C NR: N 4/28

REF. NO. A 254

FILED: 271229A 1943 Sep

REC'D:

Request you coordinate with MACFARLANE NATAF to ensure that I.A.F.
AIR/SEA rescue and transport aircraft are fully employed and are made
available as far as possible to meet our requirements. If necessary
call on NACAF, NATAF and 216 group for this is A 254 from Air Command
Post relayed by FREEDOM. Representatives to organize as required.

1752

ALLIED MILITARY MISSION - INCOMING MESSAGE

SVC/RELAY NR:

CLASS : MOST SECRET

PREC : OPERATIONAL PRIORITY

FROM : AIR COMMAND POST

TO : FATIMA (pass by FREEDOM

RPTD NACAF NATAF)

M/C NR: # 8/28

REF NO. A 251

FILED: 27 September 1943

REC'D: 28 September 1943

Personal for FOSTER from MCGREGOR . Army state very necessary that they be permitted to use seaplane station outer harbour BRINDISI as lighter discharge quay. Will this be required use by I.A.F. Seaplanes. If not possible release whole quay could any part be used by Army for stores.

1751

ALLIED MILITARY MISSION - INCOMING MESSAGE

SVC/RELAY NR: R 576/29

CLASS: SECRET

PREC: ROUTINE

FROM: FREEDOM

TO: FATIMA for FOSTER.

M/C NR: 9/30

REF NO.

FILED: 291830A 1943cSep

REC'D:

All spares for Italian Aircraft are to be collected for handing over to Allied Military Mission now in Italy. Technical parties now being despatched by Mission to make contact with suitable bases where spares likely to be obtained. If you are aware of stocks of these spares request you signal FATIMA for FOSTER giving location, description of items in general terms and estimate of quantities.

1750

OUTGOING SIGNAL

28th September 1943.

Ref No. FMT/59

TO : Mediterranean Air Command post.
(FREEDOM pass in cypher held)

FROM: FATMA

MOST SECRET

URGENT.

For McGregor from Foster (.)

One C.47 and one S.79 proceeding Malta 29/9 with some of
Italian representatives for conference with Allied C. in C. (.)
E.T.A. Malta 0800 hrs G.M.T. (.) Course will be Brindisi to
point 5 miles E. of Cala FRANCA - FILFILA Island • Luqa (.)
Height 1500 feet (.) Italians will be in plain clothes and
accompanied by Air Commodore Foster (.) Please warn Malta (.)

1749

R.M. FOSTER.
Air Commodore

OUTGOING SIGNAL

30th September 1943

REF NO. RMF/72

TO : Mediterranean Air Command Post.
(FREEDOM pass in cypher held)

FROM : FATIMA

For MacGregor from Foster (.)

Italian returns show total of 43 I.A.F. aircraft now in Sicily (.)

Please inform me when these aircraft will be coming here (.)

H.M. FOSTER
Air Commodore

1748

U.S. SECRET Equals British MOST SECRET

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