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REPORT ON ERUPTION OF MT. VESUVIUS
MAR. 1944

37pp

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ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
HEADQUARTERS NAPLES PROVINCE

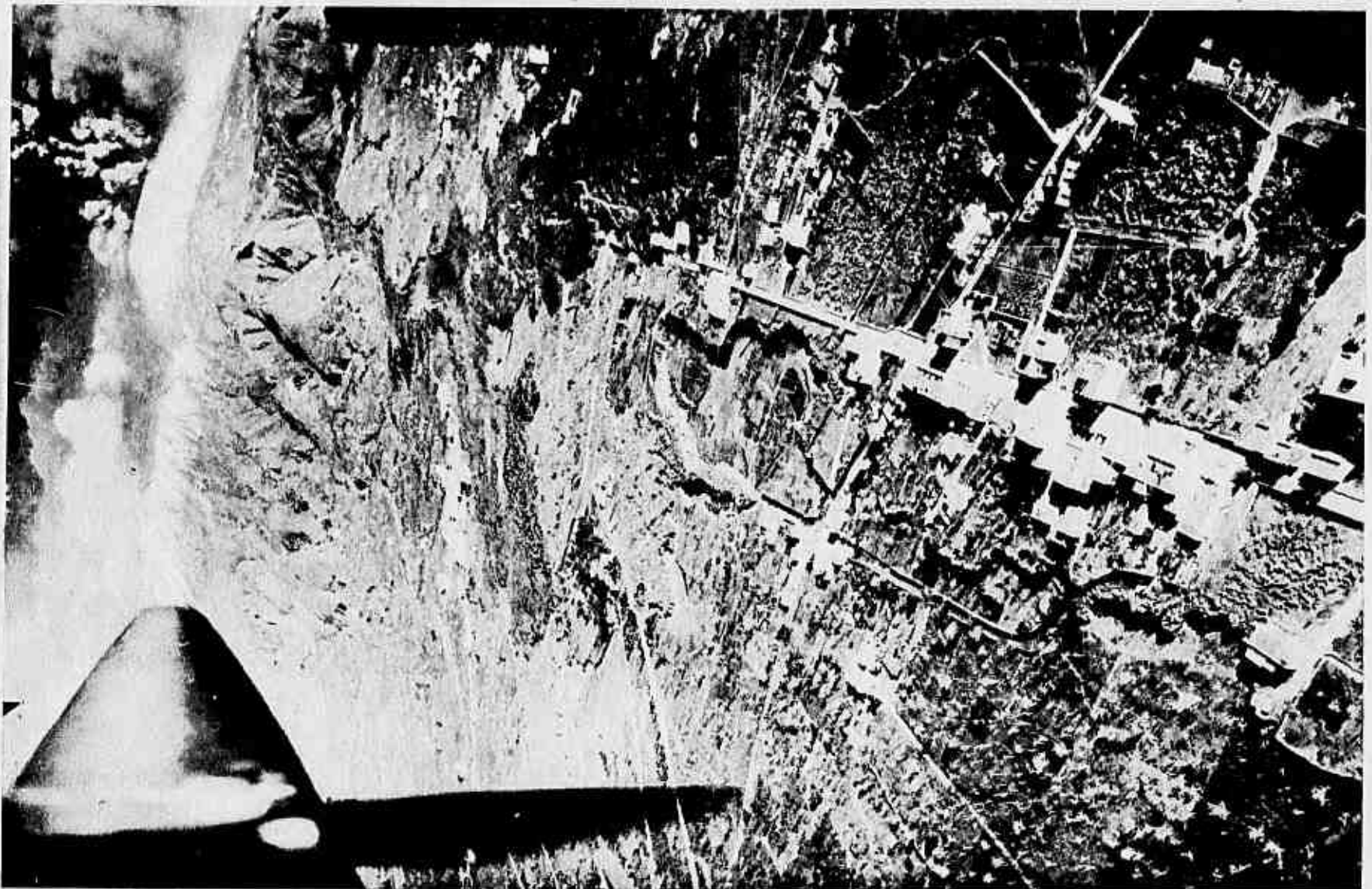
FINAL REPORT
ON THE
VESUVIUS EMERGENCY OPERATION



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000.922- Description of the Vesuvius (1944)

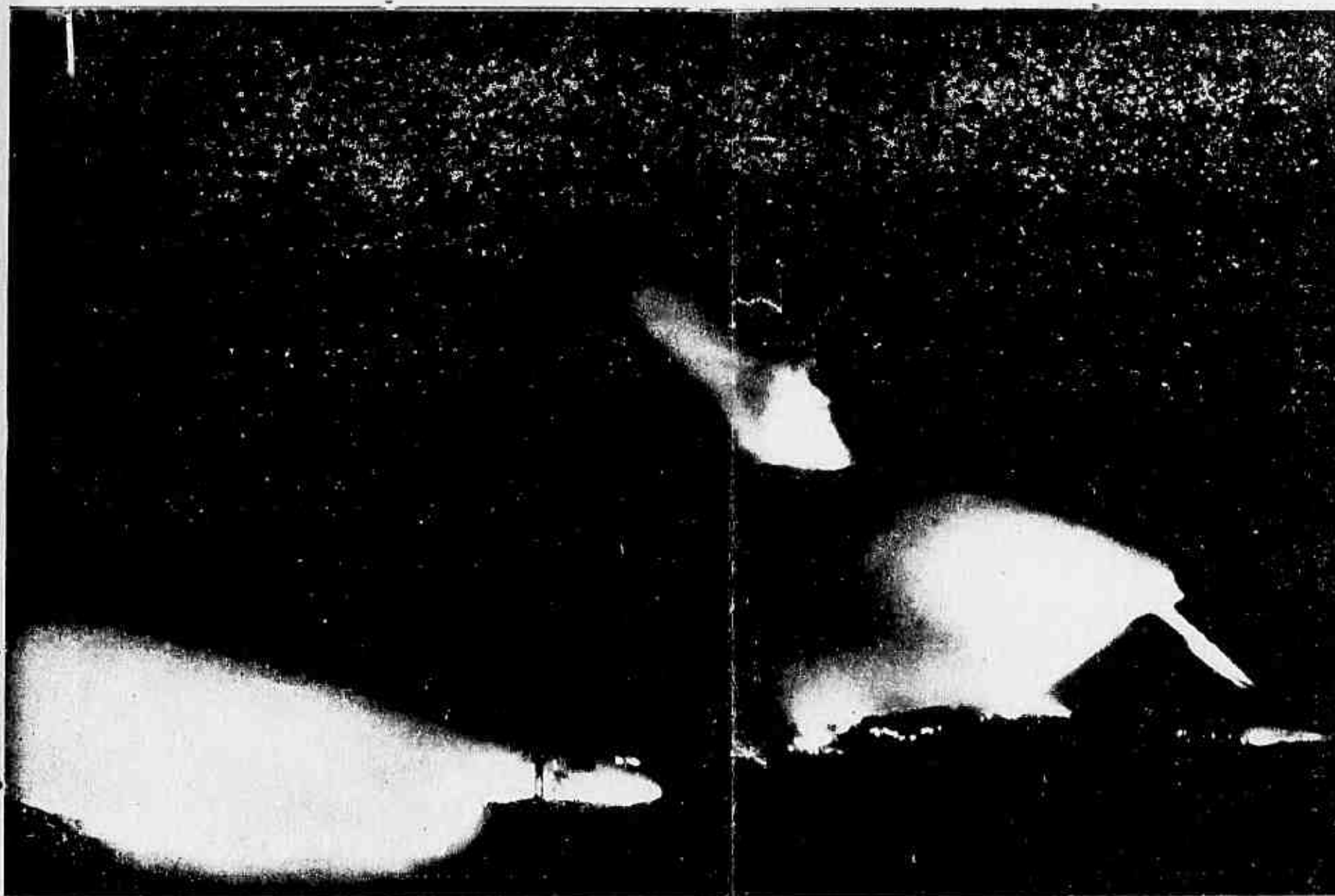
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Air view of the main lava flow seen from above Cercola, showing the semi-submerged towns of S. Sebastiano and Massa di Somma.

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The river of lava flowing down the Valley of the Tuffanos reaches S. Sebastiano.

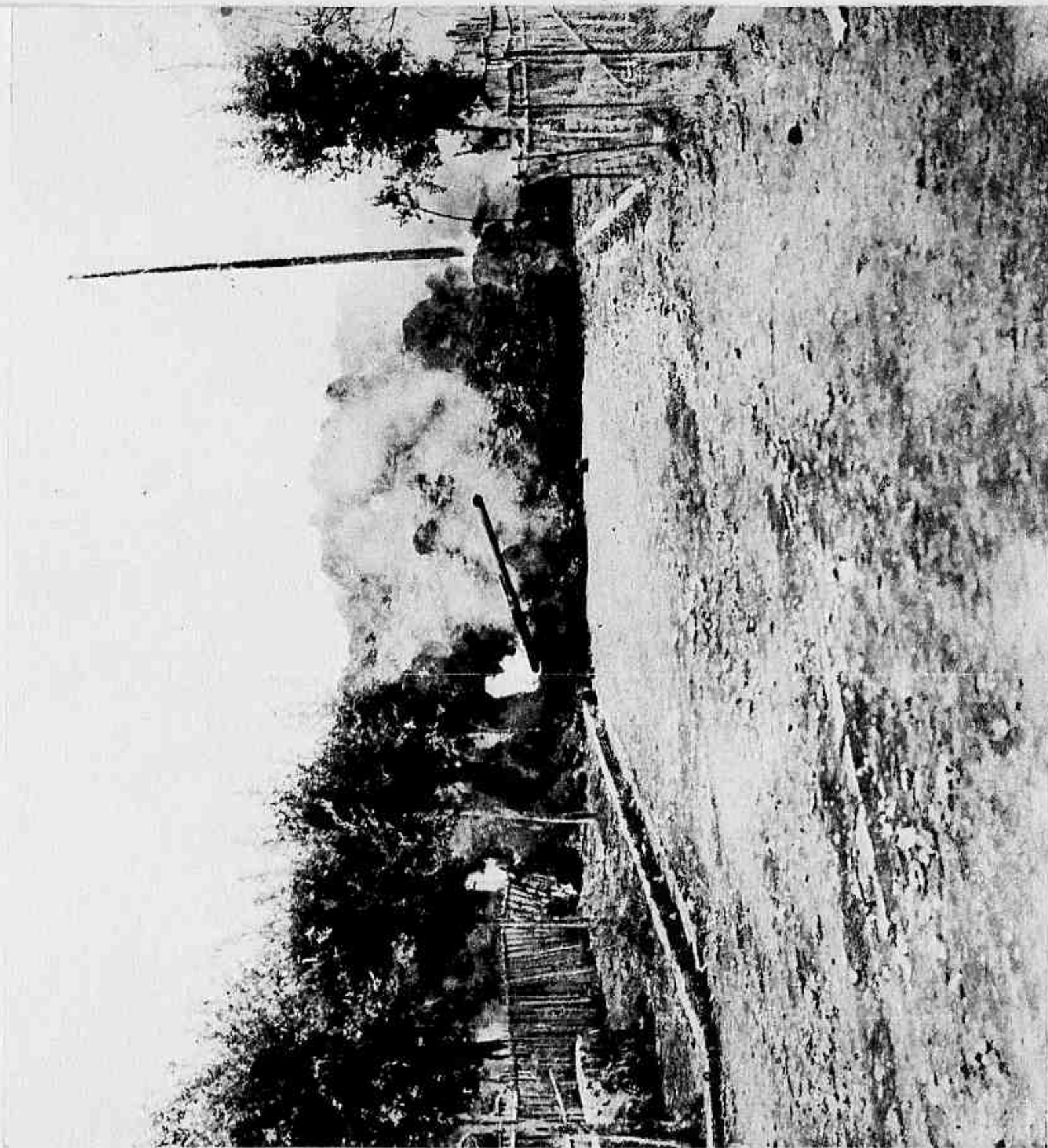
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The wall of lava blazes a trail through forest plantings above S. Sebastian.

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Person carrying
wheelbarrow in
street in
Koblenz

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ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
HEADQUARTERS NAPLES PROVINCE

FINAL REPORT
ON THE
VESUVIUS EMERGENCY OPERATION

Tip. M. V. MASULA
Monteroduni 24 - Napoli

FOREWORD

*As a token of his appreciation,
Lt. Col. James L. Kincaid, D. S. C.,
D. S. O., Provincial Commissioner,
Naples Province, A. C. C., presents
this copy of the Final Report on
the Vesuvius Emergency Operation,
as a memento to all officers and
men who participated in the operation.*

*Naples Province HQ.
March 1944.*

On the 13th March 1944, an incident took place which was to have redoubtable consequences, and in the opinion of Professor Imbo, the Director of Vesuvius Observatory, was to become the immediate cause of the recent eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. On that day, the inner cone which rose to some 300 feet above the outer crater partly collapsed, and fell into the throat of the volcano.

This choking of the natural safety valve of the volcano caused its normal activity to cease, and to all outer appearances, it became inactive.

This phenomenon did not presage any good, and caused a certain amount of uneasiness to be felt amongst the inhabitants of small towns and hamlets on the lower slopes of the mountain. Many persons who had passed their lives in the shadow of the mountain, and were accu-

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stomed to its vagaries, looked upon this quiescence with foreboding.

18th. March.

Vesuvius still showed no outward signs of life. The Observatory staff had already observed a great deal of suppressed activity which was going on in the bowels of the volcano, also that the height of the magma in the vent had risen, due to the increased tension brought about by the pent up gases. They were now constantly on the look out for any signs of an impending eruption.

Suddenly, at 1630 hours, Vesuvius erupted, belching immense quantities of lava, which cascaded over the rim of the crater and poured down the upper slopes of the mountain. The natural contours of the ground diverted the course of the lava into certain well defined declivities and formed two main streams, which followed the flows of the previous eruption.

The main flow, at that time, sped down the south-west side of the mountain, and

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moved in the direction of Camaldoli between Torre del Greco and Torre Annunziata whilst the second followed the course of a deep ravine in the general direction of Cercola. Small secondary flows were also formed.

By day, the course of the lava was revealed by smoke rising from burning vegetation and forest plantings, whilst by night, the incandescent flows looked like long rivers of fire. The undersides of the smoke clouds, which hovered above the summit, were lit up by the fiery glow from the crater.

In view of the potentialities of a dangerous situation, developing Lt. Col. James L. Kincaid, Provincial Commissioner, Naples Province, A.C.C. convened a meeting of his staff, and tentative measures to cope with any emergency likely to arise were discussed.

19th March.

In order to get a true picture of the situation, Lt. Col. Kincaid instructed Lt.

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Col. Guy Warren and Capt. Lummus to proceed to the area above Torre del Greco and Torre Annunziata and make a report on the situation. He and Lt. Col. John A. Warner were to proceed up the northwest slope of the mountain in the neighbourhood of the observatory, and report on conditions in that area.

It was agreed that the two inspecting parties would meet in the afternoon and discuss their findings.

Lt. Col. Kincaid and Lt. Col. Warner reported that they went up the mountain, above the level of the observatory, and had contacted the flow heading in the general direction of Cercola. At 1000 hours, this flow was about 500 feet wide, from 12 to 15 feet high, and slowly creeping forward at about 15 feet an hour. It was moving down a broad depression and following the line of flow of the 1872 eruption. San Sebastiano appeared to be in the probable line of flow.

Lt. Col. Warren and Capt. Lummus reported that they had proceeded up the Vesuvius mountain road, but that it was

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impossible to go beyond a point about two thirds of the way up, on account of falling clinker and lapilli. However, they left their car and made their way across country until they contacted the flow which was descending in the general direction of Torre del Greco and Torre Anunziata.

The lava was then flowing down the upper slope and filling a sort of natural basin at the foot of the slope, it was about 10 feet high, and moving at an estimated speed of approximately 1,000 feet an hour. It was considered that Torre del Greco would be endangered in about 15 hours, if that rate of flow was maintained.

At the joint discussion, it was considered that the flows did not constitute an immediate danger to any inhabited localities.

26th March.

At 0125 hours, Lt. Col. Kincaid received a 'phone call stating that increased activity of the eruption was imperilling Torre del Greco. He immediately proceeded

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to that area and met Lt. Col. Francis, Regional Public Safety Officer. A section of the Naples City Fire Dept. was also present, but later on returned to Naples. However, after a thorough investigation, he was satisfied that there was no imminent danger, and decided to go to San Sebastiano and the sister town of Massa di Somma, both of which lay in the probable line of flow.

By this time, a relief organisation, consisting of all available officers and men in Naples Province, and a large number of officers drafted into the Province for temporary duty, had been set up. Officers and men were allotted to various sectors, with instructions to handle any problems in connection with the possible evacuation, feeding, and housing of refugees.

At 0600 hours, Lt. Col. Kincaid established his Emergency HQ. at the iron bridge near San Sebastiano.

The fear of impending disaster was beginning to spread through the threatened towns. Some people were parading the statue of San Gennaro through the streets and imploring the Saint's protec-

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tion. Many were tearfully asking for help to save their belongings.

A series of violent eruptions now shook the mountain, and a huge secondary stream was seen rushing down the upper slope in the direction of the original flow, which had also increased both in volume and speed. The great avalanche of lava was now advancing down the so called "Valley of the Inferno". At 1030 hours, it reached a precipitous slope, and literally swept over it like an enormous cataract of fire.

This spectacle increased the alarm of the population, but they calmed down on being assured that A.C.C. would provide transportation for the evacuation of the two towns should danger become imminent.

As a precautionary measure, Lt. Col. Kincaid instructed the Sindaco of San Sebastiano to make preliminary plans for the evacuation of the two towns, and instruct all civilians, in possession of any form of animal transport to start removing their furniture and personal belongings to the homes of friends or relatives in nearby

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towns. Some peasants, who lived on the fringe of the town, were already moving their belongings from houses almost sure to be engulfed.

At 1100 hours, Lt. Col. Kincaid notified his H.Q. that the evacuation of San Sebastiano and Massa di Somma had become imminent, and ordered the immediate dispatch of at least fifteen trucks to these towns. The trucks were to stand by in case of an emergency. He also instructed Lt. Col. Warner, Chief of Public Safety, Naples Province, to report to him with a detachment of Royal Carabinieri.

In the meantime, the new stream had joined the original flow, and the speed of the greatly increased mass was constantly accelerating. Its height had risen to about 30 feet, and its probable rate of flow about 150 feet an hour.

As the emission of lava did not show any signs of subsiding, the Sindaco was instructed to make arrangements for the orderly evacuation of the population.

The oncoming wall of molten slag, which was imperilling the two towns, and devastating thousands of acres of gardens,

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orchards and vineyards, was now less than half a mile distant from San Sebastiano. Its forward crest was from 40 to 60 feet high, and it had fanned out over a front of over 500 yards. The destruction of the two towns was now inevitable, so Lt. Col. Kincaid ordered their immediate evacuation.

In addition to the fleet of trucks already ordered, all units under the command of P.B.S., 57 Area, and British and American Air Corps, supplied vehicles and guards to facilitate and expedite the evacuation. Army personnel helped civilians to load their furniture on the trucks, and the evacuation proceeded as quickly as was possible without jamming the narrow roads. The roads leading to Cercola, San Giorgio, and Pollena-Trocchia, were soon filled with a continuous stream of refugees and livestock, followed by trucks piled up with household furniture and bedding from the doomed houses.

At 2100 hours, Lt. Col. C. Poletti, Regional Commissioner, Region 3, A.C.C., arrived at the bridge near San Sebastiano and discussed the situation with Lt. Col.

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Kincaid. He considered that the encroaching mass of lava would later constitute a grave danger to Cercola, a little town of about 7,000 inhabitants, which lay directly in the path of the tidal wave of molten rock.

He ordered the evacuation of Cercola to begin at 0600 hours the following morning. Army trucks would be directed to the town for that purpose. Relief measures for the assistance of refugees were already functioning there under the direction of Major Hershenson.

21st. March.

During the night, the emissions from the volcano reached their maximum intensity. So great was the surge of molten fire that the flows took on a new intensity, and the flow down the south-west side again threatened Torre del Greco.

At about 0300 hours, the relentless mass reached the built up areas of San Sebastiano. By this time, all the inhabitants had been evacuated. Buildings along the main street, (via Roma) were soon engul-

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fed over a distance of four blocks. Three-story buildings would resist the flow for a few minutes and then collapse amid a cloud of dust and fire. Houses were also being submerged in the sister town of Massa di Somma. At 0330 hours, the iron girder bridge which linked the two towns crumpled under the enormous weight, and was carried away. Everything which lay in the path of the lava was overwhelmed and buried.

At 0600 hours when the evacuation of the town of Cercola began, the lava flow was about 2,000 yards away from the main street, and had spread over a front of nearly 1,000 yards. The evacuation of the town was directed by Lt. Col. Kincaid and his staff, with the help of more than 500 officers and men of the Allied Forces, and 60 Carabinieri. More than 200 trucks were used, and a large detachment of American Military Police from P.B.S. took over traffic control in the area.

At 1100 hours, Naples Province Emergency HQ. opened in the Municipio at Cercola. At that time, the streets were thronged with people from evacuated hou-

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ses, and energetic steps were being taken to distribute relief. The Civilian Supply Section of Naples Province, sent food to the stricken area, where it was distributed to the local population through Italian officials, under the supervision of A.C.C. officers. A communal soup kitchen was also set up at Cercola by the American Red Cross. Everything was done to alleviate distress.

Special arrangements had to be made for the reception and feeding of refugees. Food distributing centres were established at Pollena-Trocchia and San Giorgio, where communal soup kitchens were also set up under the American Red Cross. In San Giorgio, a local committee was formed to supervise the distribution of food, and emergency ration cards were issued. The majority of the refugees were evacuated to the homes of relatives or friends in towns in the immediate neighbourhood, but 125 persons had to spend the night of Monday 20th March in the moving-picture theatre at San Giorgio.

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22nd. March.

The torrent of lava which had buried two thirds of Massa di Somma and San Sebastiano now appeared to be subsiding amidst the vineyards and flowering orchards above Cercola. Movement had ceased, and the clinkery mass seemed to be cooling off. After passing these towns, the flow was divided into two long prongs; the right prong came to a standstill about 300 yards from Cercola cemetery, and the left one stopped at a point 1,500 yards away from the corner of Via Luca Giordano in Cercola. The salient between the prongs nearly reached the main street between Massa di Somma and San Sebastiano. Cercola appeared to be out of danger unless the lava flow took on new life.

The situation near the partly submerged towns now appeared to be static. The church at Massa di Somma, which was surrounded and partly crushed in the destructive embrace of the lava, marked the right flank of the flow. The height of the lava in front of the church was about 50

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feet. The left flank of the flow completely blocked the main street of San Sebastiano to a depth of about 40 feet. The atmosphere near the flow was filled with smoke and fumes rising from the black and smoldering mass. Over 600 people were rendered homeless in Massa di Somma and 2,150 in San Sebastiano.

The fury of the eruption still continued unabated. It was estimated that the mountain was still emitting about half a million cubic yards of volcanic matter an hour.

In the afternoon, the huge flow which was blazing a trail through the forest plantings above Torre del Greco, increased its rate of flow, especially in the direction of Camaldoli. Evacuation of the latter place was deemed advisable; 250 persons were carried in trucks to Castellammare, whilst almost 500 left by their own means of transport.

At 1715 hours, a great cloud of dense smoke and ash was forced upwards for thousands of feet into the air. This indicated that the explosive phase of the eruption had begun. Ashes and smoke were erupted in one continuous roar, and a gigantic

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cumulus of rolling, expanding smoke cloud rose above the volcano to a height of nearly, twenty thousand feet. The whole mass was frequently rent by electrical discharges like fork lightning, and the ground shook by small seismic disturbances.

Small clinkers, which had been blown skywards for thousands of feet, began to rain down on the eastern side of the mountain, whilst volcanic dust was carried farther afield by the wind.

The distribution of food to holders of ration cards was continued in the Cercola area, but no more furniture was removed as the situation did not appear to warrant it.

23rd. March.

The tremendous cloud of volcanic ash still continued to soar and billow above the cloud of smoke which enshrouded the top of the mountain.

This cloud was drifting towards the East, and huge quantities of black lapilli and dust were being deposited over a large area, especially in the communes of Ter-

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zigno, S. Giuseppe and Poggiomarino. A critical situation was beginning to develop in these districts.

The lava flow down the north-western side of the mountain had definitely ceased to endanger Cercola, and many residents were returning to their homes. Lt. Col. Kincaid, from his Emergency H.Q., announced that people wishing to return would receive every assistance from A.C.C. to transport their household effects. He also issued instructions for the water supply to be turned on again the following morning.

The large flow above Torre del Greco was still slowly advancing in the direction of the town, but the town was not considered to be in immediate danger. However, elaborate preparations had been made for the evacuation of the population should such a step be deemed necessary.

24th March.

Former residents of Cercola, with the assistance of A.C.C. officers, were joyfully returning to their homes. The water supply

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had been turned on, shops were beginning to re-open, and life in the small community was slowly returning to normal. People were very thankful for the town having been spared, and many were profuse in their expressions of appreciation for the help given them during the crisis by the A.C.C.

A sprinkling of former inhabitants had also returned to San Sebastiano and Massa di Somma, some to find their homes destroyed or buried, others to find them still standing near the edge of the flow. Drinking water had to be transported to the town by water trucks, and food distributed to the inhabitants by local officials. Rehabilitation of former residents continued with the help of A.C.C. officers.

Vast clouds of volcanic ash were still being forced out of the volcano, but nevertheless, the eruption was diminishing in intensity. The lava flow in the wooded country above Torre del Greco, had apparently come to a halt just short of the edge of the flow from the 1906 eruption. The threat to Camaldoli was over, but it was impossible to return the evacuated

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people to their homes on account of the heavy fall of clinker, which had partially blocked some of the roads.

Concluding Phase

During the succeeding days, the activity of the volcano continued with decreasing intensity, and on 28th March, finally died out. Danger from lava had ceased, but a very different, and equally grave situation, had been created by the enormous volumes of ash and volcanic dust which had been deposited over vast stretches of country.

The whole countryside, to the east of the mountain, was buried under a thick mantle of small clinker and ashes of varying depth, whilst dust had been carried as far away as Sorrento and Salerno, giving a spectre-like appearance to the whole landscape.

Damage was greatest in the Communes of Terzigno, San Giuseppe, and Poggiomarino, where destruction to both houses and crops was particularly great. Newly

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planted gardens and fields were laid waste, vegetable crops and forage buried, and inestimable damage done to vineyards and orchards. Damage had also been done to many houses, and roads made unusable.

The depth of black lapillo varied from 1 to 4 feet, drifts had been formed along some of the highways, rendering them impassable to civilian transport. Piles of ashes had accumulated in the streets, dumped from the roofs of adjoining houses. Roofs which were unable to bear the weight had collapsed, in some cases with fatal consequences.

A.C.C. was also faced with the problem of highway clearance, and getting food through to the distressed population. Emergency food supplies were required for about 20,000 people, especially green vegetables, as local supplies were no longer obtainable. Animal forage was also urgently required for the large numbers of live stock in the area.

Lt. Col. Kincaid at once set up a relief organisation, and emergency feeding arrangements were established in the affected communes. Food was sent from Na-

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ples by the Civilian Supply Dept., and distributed to the inhabitants under the supervision of A.C.C. officers, who had been specially drafted into the area.

Sums of money were also advanced to those communes faced with financial difficulties, after officers from the Finance Dept. had visited the area to decide what amount of monetary assistance was required. Medical supplies were supplied to the communes in need of them.

15 trucks of animal forage were purchased by Naples Province, and delivered to the communes for distribution to owners of live-stock. The plight of the farming population was particularly acute. Agricultural experts were sent to investigate the amount of damage to crops and land, and advise on measures to be taken to alleviate the situation. Supplies of seeds and seed potatoes were sent to the area, and distributed by A.C.C. officers, for planting wherever possible.

The work of street clearance was also undertaken by A.C.C. 57 Area supplied 30 trucks, also bulldozers and mechanical scrapers, which rendered invaluable assi-

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stance to the civilian authorities. The work was expeditiously carried out, and very soon tracks had been made through the streets, enabling civilian transport to circulate.

The eruption was not without its toll of victims, over 20 persons are reported to have lost their lives when the roofs of houses collapsed under the weight of ashes. The emergency period is over, and civilian authorities are endeavouring to restore normal conditions as quickly as possible in the distressed areas.

During the whole crisis, both local authorities and charitable organisation worked with tireless devotion to alleviate distress, and succour the needy. Tribute must also be paid to the homeless, who bore their misfortunes and shared their sufferings with great fortitude, demonstrating the great democratic principle of "human solidarity".

This report would be incomplete without commenting on the invaluable assistance, rendered during the initial phase, and subsequent thereto, by the various Commands and Headquarters of the Allied

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Forces, who supplied the essential personnel and equipment which made it possible for Naples Province A. C. C. to cope with the emergency.

In this operation, the entire staff of Naples Province HQ. was used to excellent advantage. In addition 89 British and American officers were temporarily loaned to this HQ. for the period of the operation. Of this number, 17 were employed in the Cercola area, and 72 were stationed in the South and East of Portici, including the "dust bowl" area.

During this operation, the Portici-Terzigno sector was in charge of Major J. Cantor, and the San Giuseppe-San Giorgio sector was in charge of Lt. Col. Guy Warren.

Major H. Hershenson, Assistant Provincial Commissioner, acted as Deputy to Lt. Col. Kincaid during the operation, and Capt. H. Crippen as Personal Assistant.

The co-operation received from all Allied units stationed in the neighbourhood, from P.B.S., 57 Area, and Group Capt. Culley's HQ. was inestimable. Every request for help was promptly and willingly

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complied with. Great initiative was shown, not only by the Commanders of the Military Police of both armies, and by the Commanders of Truck Companies, but also by the enlisted men and other ranks.

An outstanding proof of the splendid control exhibited by the British and American Military Police, is shown by the fact that there was practically no looting, although opportunities for same existed all over the area. Serving for long periods without relief, the Military Police from P.B.S., 57 Area. and from Group Capt. Culley's HQ. R.A.F. did splendid service.

The area covered was large. It was not an operation capable of being directed in too great detail from any one point. After general policies were decided upon, and orders issued, the control of the traffic, the situation at busy cross roads, the loading of trucks, and the control of details passed down to the junior officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted men or other ranks at that particular point.

The work exhibited was superb, and the Provincial Commissioner wishes to

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personally extend his thanks and appreciation to every officer and man who participated in the operation.

(Signed) James L. Kincaid. D.S.C., D.S.O.
Lt. Col. A.U.S.
Provincial Commissioner
Naples Province, A.C.C.

NAPLES,
12th. April 1944.

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

*This Report was prepared from
original sources by Captain H. Ben-
tley, Lancashire Fusiliers, and Major
J. R. Gregory, Royal Engineers.*

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LIST
OF
OFFICERS AND MEN
WHO PARTICIPATED

Colonel Martin H. Meaney

Lt. Col. J.S. Arnold

" " James L. Kincaid
" " Pickering
" " Charles D. Shields
" " John A. Warner
" " Guy I. Warren

Major F. Alker

" Beer
" T. G. Bergin
" J. Cantor
" C. J. Carrilio
" K. W. Fischer
" V. A. Gianelli
" J. R. Gregory
" Harry G. Hershenson
" G. W. A. Kayser
" Knight
" L. V. McCardle
" Robert A. Persell
" Sir J. E. T. Ritchie
" Rogers
" R. W. Rushmore
" W. J. Rutledge Jr.
" K. C. Shepherd
" P. D. Shriver
" Walter D. Stump

Capt.	C.A.P. Bertelli
"	Bender
"	H. Bentley
"	F. E. Brooks
"	R. W. Buckley
"	Arthur Carter
"	C. C. Case
"	Louis L. Cox
"	H. D. Crippen
"	Freeman
"	A. J. Hack
"	George H. Hewett
"	La Mar
"	John N. Lummus
"	Mackenzie
"	Nurnberger
"	L. K. Pawley
"	R. M. Ponder
"	W. J. Sampson
"	Paul S. Savage
"	E. E. Siveira
F/L.	G. E. Gilbert-Green
Lieut.	C. H. Ault
"	N. C. Baker
"	W. G. Bryce
"	Cairus A. Bongarzone
"	Cicala

Liéut. John C. Davenport
" E. C. Davies
" D. J. Demetropoulos
" L. V. Grottanelli
" Robert R. Johnson
" Nicholas L. Kolivas
" Richard Di Loretto
" Norwan F. McLaughlin
" L. Osmond
" G. K. Pratt
" T. C. Shanks
" Winterstein

W.O. Dominic G. Germane
" " David Pasquesi

T/Sgt. Baldo S. Lazzarini
S/Sgt. Aldo Bertoli
" " Ralph Bonomo
" " Hans P. Bush
" " Charles B. Moses
" " William Segal
Sgt. Lawrence J. Loconto
" Morris Rosenzweig
T/4 John J. Frascino
Corp. Edward A. Barsetti
" Bernard J. McKeon
" Paolin
" E. E. Robinson

T/5	Bernard J. Bolla
" "	Francis A. Caputo
" "	Vincent Faccetta
L/Cpl.	E. F. Freezer
Pfc.	Remo A. Allio
"	Orlando Di Biasi
"	Louis Kenig
"	Nick Di Laurentis
"	Robert G. Lelli
"	Charles R. Marchiando
"	Marcus M. Sammarcelli
Dvr.	Brooks
"	Holloway
Pvt.	Beecher
"	Bennet
"	Anthony Camarota
"	Joseph A. Campanella
"	Alfred J. Casamento
"	Bruno Cervelli
"	William J. Glassi
"	C. Hunter
"	Abram P. Miles
"	Napier
"	Owen
"	James P. Parrubba
"	Frederick S. Pearce
"	Sidgeley
"	Smith

Pvt. Frank Solitario
„ Joseph J. Tosca

American Red Cross

Harold V. Condict
J. B. Foley
Mary Rush
Mary Mulcahey
Robt. Hearshey
Louise Boie
C. Thompson
J. Silber
W. W. Jefferson
C. A. Lockie

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CORRESPONDENCE

TELEGRAM

Colonnello Poletti.
Capo Ufficio Regionale
Affari Civili
NAPOLI

24 3.44

Nella seduta odierna il Consiglio dei Ministri rendendosi interprete sentimenti popolo italiano ha unanimamente formulato voto gratitudine per opera svolta da Alleati sotto guida U. S. a favore popolazioni danneggiate eruzione Vesuvio. Nel dare comunicazione esprimole sensi mia personale considerazione.

Capo Governo

Badoglio

TRANSLATION
TELEGRAM

24.3.44

To:

Colonel Poletti,
Chief Regional Officer,
Civil Affairs,
NAPLES.

Cabinet Council at today's meeting, interpreting sentiments Italian people, unanimously expressed sense of gratitude for work accomplished by Allies under your leadership, in favour populations, victims Vesuvius eruption. In giving this communication, I express to you my personal appreciation.

Chief of Government
Badoglio

29 Marzo 1944.

A S. E.
il Cav. Pietro Badoglio
Maresciallo d'Italia,
Primo Ministro
SALERNO

Ho apprezzato molto la Sua cortesia nell'aver voluto informarmi telegraficamente della soddisfazione espressa dal Consiglio dei Ministri nei riguardi dell'assistenza data dagli Alleati ai sinistrati della recente eruzione del Vesuvio.

Mi è grato informarLa che tale assistenza è stata possibile, e si è resa effettiva, grazie alla completa cooperazione di tutte le Unità Combattenti con il Governo Militare Alleato. Infatti, tanto automezzi quanto forze della Polizia Militare, sono state largamente messe a disposizione del Governo Militare Alleato dalla Peninsular Base Section, dai Comandi della 57th Area, e 94th Area del Terzo Distretto, nonché dall'American Air Corps e dalla RAF.

Parimenti tutti gli Ufficiali del Governo Militare Alleato e principalmente i Ten. Col.li Kincaid, Warner e Warren, ed i Maggiori Cantor e Hershen-son, si sono prodigati con tutte le loro forze, e con il più fraterno animo, per alleviare le condizioni degli infortunati dal grave flagello.

Nel ringraziarLa della Sua comunicazione, La prego gradire, Eccellenza, i più distinti saluti.

CHARLES POLETTI
Lt. Colonel
Regional Commissioner.

TRANSLATION

29 March 1944

To H.E.
Cav. Pietro Badoglio
First Minister
SALERNO

I have greatly appreciated your kindness in having wanted to inform me telegraphically of the satisfaction expressed by the Cabinet Council in regard to the assistance given by the Allies to the victims of the recent eruption of Vesuvius.

I am happy to inform you that this assistance has been possible and has been rendered effective, thanks to the complete cooperation of all the Fighting Units, together with the Allied Military Government. In fact, both the auto-vehicles and the forces of the Military Police have been generously placed at the disposal of the Allied Military Government by the Peninsular Base Section, by the Commands of the 57th Area, and 94th Area of the third District, as also by the American Air Corps and by the RAF.

Likewise, all the officers of the Allied Military Government and principally,

Lt. Cols. Kincaid, Warner and Warren, and Majors Cantor and Hershenson have just worked heart and soul, with the most fraternal spirit, to allay the conditions of the victims of the grave scourge.

In thanking you for your communication, I beg you to accept my most distinguished greetings.

CHARLES POLETTI
Lt. Colonel
Regional Commissioner.

Salerno, li 2 Aprile 1944

Al Gen. Colonnello
JAMES L. KINCAID
Commissario Provinciale
Commissione Alleata di Controllo
NAPOLI

S. E. il Maresciallo Badoglio ha letto la sua interessante relazione e m'incarica di manifestarle il suo vivo elogio ed i ringraziamenti più sentiti per l'aiuto dato alle sventurate popolazioni, colpite dall'eruzione del Vesuvio.

Devoti ossequi.

Il Segretario Particolare
del Capo del Governo
(Ten. Col. G. VALENZANO)

TRANSLATION

Salerno 2 April 1944

*EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF THE CHIEF OF THE GOVERNMENT*

To: Lt. Col. James L. KINCAID
Provincial Commissioner, ACC, Naples

H.E. the Maresciallo Badoglio has read your interesting relation, and charges me to express to you his most sincere appreciation and the deepest thanks for the help given to the unfortunate population stricken by the Vesuvius Eruption.

I am, Sir, respectfully

(signed) G. VALENZANO
Lt. Colonel,
Personal Secretary of the
Chief of the Government

HEADQUARTERS
57 AREA

27 March 1944

To:

Lt. Col. J. Kincaid
SCAO Naples Province
ACC.

Dear Kincaid,

My PAD Controller has told me of the help you gave him in removing bombs from the vicinity of Cercola, on Wednesday.

I should like to say that I appreciate very much your prompt assistance at a time of considerable strain.

Yours Sincerely
(Signed) J. G. Bruxner-Randall

4 April, 1944

To :

Lt. Col. James L. Kincaid. DSC, DSO,
HQ. A. C. C., Province of Naples,
Municipio, Naples

H. Q. A. C. C. REGION 4

Dear Kincaid,

This is a D. O. letter acknowledging your letter of the 30th March. I can assure you that Region 4 was delighted to be of any assistance whatever to you and your team, in connection with the Vesuvius emergency operations.

May I pass on my own appreciation for the way in which you and your officers tackled the problem.

With all good wishes,

Yours faithfully

Brigadier J. K. Dunlop, OBE, MC, TD
Regional Commissioner

COMUNE DI CERCOLA
Provincia di Napoli

Addì 26 Marzo 1944
Al Comando Militare Alleato
CERCOLA

Oggetto: *Eruzione Vulcanica.*

Questa Amministrazione Comunale, nell'esprimere al superiore Comando Militare Alleato la viva riconoscenza ed i ringraziamenti della cittadinanza di Cercola per l'opera prestata a favore della popolazione durante la recente eruzione lavica del Vesuvio, ritiene doveroso porre in rilievo:

- a) il pronto intervento delle autorità e truppe alleate per il salvataggio di circa cinquecento famiglie, che furono trasportate altrove, insieme alle masserizie, con gli automezzi anglo-americani;*
- b) la larghissima assistenza alimentare fatta alla popolazione per circa una settimana con abbondante distribuzione di generi in natura (biscotti, formaggio, latte, polvere da zuppa, scatolame, pane, brodi, ecc.).*
- c) la distribuzione di sussidi in denaro ai sinistrati e sfollati bisognosi, per porli in grado di provvedere alle loro prime necessità e per poter riportare in Cercola le famiglie e masserizie;*
- d) l'assistenza sanitaria ai feriti ed ammalati;*

e) ed in genere il più amorevole e largo soccorso in cui si sono prodigati il Comando e le Truppe Alleate per ridurre al minimo le sofferenze ed i disagi sopportati da tutti gli abitanti, che hanno potuto constatare, anche in questa dolorosa circostanza, il vero spirito che anima i popoli e gli eserciti anglo-americani nei confronti della Nazione Italiana, così duramente colpita dagli effetti di una guerra contraria alla volontà generale.

IL SINDACO
M. Brancato

COMMUNE OF CERCOLA
Province of Naples

Subject: 26 March, 1944
Vesuvius Eruption

To:

A. M. G.

The Administration of this Commune, in expressing the gratitude and thanks of the citizens of Cercola for the work done for the public benefit during the recent eruption of Vesuvius, feels bound to mention in particular:

- (a) The prompt intervention of the Allied authorities and troops for the safety of about 500 families, who were transported with their household goods in Allied vehicles.
- (b) The supply of food to the public for about a week, with abundant distribution of rations (biscuits, cheese, milk, soup, canned food, bread, etc.).
- (c) The distribution of money to destitute refugees, to provide for their most urgent needs and to bring back their families and goods to Cercola.

- (d) Medical assistance to injured and sick.
- (e) In general the friendly help given by Allied Command and troops to reduce to a minimum the sufferings of the inhabitants, showing the true spirit of the Anglo-American people and armies towards the Italian nation, so hard hit by a war opposed to the general will.

(signed) M. BRANCATO
Sindaco

MUNICIPIO DI
SAN SEBASTIANO AL VESUVIO
Provincia di Napoli

li 5 aprile 1944

Oggetto: *Ringraziamento.*

*Al Comando Militare Alleato
Commissariato per la Provincia
NAPOLI*

Sento il dovere di esprimere a codesto Comando la riconoscenza di tutto il popolo di San Sebastiano per l'opera fattiva che, Ufficiali e militari tutti delle forze Alleate, hanno svolto a favore di questo Comune dal momento in cui si è delineato il pericolo di invasione della lava vulcanica sino a quando l'ira del vulcano si è totalmente pacata.

Con gli automezzi messi tempestivamente a disposizione fu, infatti, possibile evacuare ordinatamente ed in breve tutta la popolazione, salvando buona parte delle masserizie, mentre nelle località di afflusso i profughi tutti hanno trovato grande sollievo nella distribuzione di viveri e di danaro che codesto Comando in gran misura mise a disposizione.

Il popolo tutto che ha trovato, in questo mo-

*mento di sventura, il grande appoggio ed aiuto di
codesto A.M.G. porre a mio mezzo, al Col. Kincaid
agli Ufficiali ed ai militari tutti che si sono tanto
prodigati per il suo benessere, il ringraziamento af-
fettuoso e sincero, al quale aggiungo il mio personale
e quello dell'Amministrazione Comunale.*

*Il Sindaco
N. ANDRIANI*

*MUNICIPIO DI
SAN SEBASTIANO AL VESUVIO*

5 April, 1945

Subject: Expression of thanks.

To: The Provincial Commissioner, A.M.G.

It is my duty to express to your Command the gratitude of the whole population of San Sebastiano for the splendid work done for this Commune by Allied officers and troops, from the beginning of danger from the lava flow until the rage of the volcano ended.

By means of the motor vehicles made available so promptly, it was possible to evacuate the whole population rapidly and in good order, while in the reception areas all were helped by the distribution of food and money provided in generous measure.

The whole population who received the great help of A. M. G. at this time of misfortune send through me their sincere thanks to Lt. Colonel Kincaid and all the officers and troops concerned, to which I add my own, and those of the Administration of the Commune.

(Signed) N. ANDRIANI
Sindaco

dal "Risorgimento", del 26 Marzo 1944

Ringraziamenti al Comando Alleato
per la sua opera d'assistenza

Il prof. Giuseppe Tropeano ci scrive:

Preg.mo Direttore,

è doveroso segnalare all'amministrazione generale, oltre tutti gli energici provvedimenti presi dal Comando Alleato, in favore delle popolazioni circumvesuviane minacciate dalla lava, la particolare e generosa premura del Colonnello James L. Kincaid anche verso casi singoli e più importanti, oltre che per le numerose famiglie accorse per soccorsi largamente ottenuti ancora verso le convivenze di sede in quella zona, fra cui il mio Istituto. Tutti abbiamo avuto aiuti ed atti confortevoli da questo gagliardo Ufficiale che ha impresso una ondata di nobilissima gara di bene, informata ad una irresistibile nobilissima fraternità. Mi rendo perciò interprete della commossa anima collettiva così orribilmente scossa nella plaga vesuviana, rendendo le più vive, fervide, sentite pubbliche grazie agli Alleati ed al sig. Comandante Provinciale, in modo particolare.

Grazie ed ossequi

Dev.mo

Prof. Giuseppe Tropeano

Letter published in "RISORGIMENTO," of
26 March, 1944.

Professor Giuseppe Tropeano writes:
To the Editor.

Sir,

I feel bound to call the favourable attention of the public not only to the energetic measures taken by the Allied Command on behalf of the inhabitants of the Vesuvius area threatened by lava, but in particular to the zeal shown by Lt. Col. James L. Kincaid, even in individual cases of urgency, besides those of the many families helped on a large scale in this district, in which my Institute is situated. All have received help and comfort from this capable officer, who has directed this noble work. I offer myself, as the interpreter of the general sentiments of all who have been so terribly shaken in this area, in expressing the most sincere and fervent thanks to the Allies, and especially to the Provincial Commissioner.

Yours etc.,

(signed) Professor Giuseppe Tropeano

S. Giuseppe V., 3 Aprile 1944

Gentilissimo Signor Comandante
del Comando Alleato

*Il sottoscritto si onora portare a conoscenza di
cotesto Comando i vivi ringraziamenti e le benedi-
zioni di questo suo popolo della Parrocchia Casilli
per quanto ha fatto cotesto Comando nella eruzione
del Vesuvio.*

*Dissanguato da una guerra non sentita e non
voluta, il popolo nostro ha fiducia nella giustizia e
nella bontà del Comando Alleato che solo può sal-
varlo dalla catastrofe nella quale l'ha gettato il
Fascismo.*

*Ai ringraziamenti del popolo per gli abbondanti
soccorsi ricevuti in generi alimentari aggiunge i suoi
il sottoscritto*

Parroco Gaelano Ferraiolo

TRANSLATION

S. Giuseppe, 3 April 1944

To:

Lt. Col. Kincaid.

The undersigned presents to your Command the thanks and blessings of the whole population of the Parish of Casilli for what you have done during the Vesuvius Eruption.

Our people, ruined by a war they did not understand and did not want, are full of confidence in the Allies' justice and goodness, which alone can save them from the catastrophe provoked by the Fascismo.

I add my own personal thanks for the great help received in foodstuffs.

Yours etc.

(signed) Parroco Gaetano Ferraiuolo

TELEGRAM

Tenente Colonnello CHARLES POLETTI
Commissario Regionale
Regione III A. M. G.
NAPOLI

Interpreti degli unanimi vivissimi sentimenti di gratitudine e di devozione di questa cittadinanza vesuviana, che il generoso soccorso e l'amorevole assistenza Vostra e dei Vostri collaboratori hanno risollevata e beneficiata nella triste circostanza della eruzione, formuliamo i voti più fervidi pel trionfo immediato delle gloriose Armi Alleate, ed esprimiamo a Voi, Signor Colonnello, la nostra fede più salda ed il nostro omaggio devoto.

Sindaco S. Giuseppe Vesuviano
Dott. Alessandro Miranda
Avv. Mario D'Ambrosio

TRANSLATION
T E L E G R A M

To :

Lieut. Col. Charles Poletti,
Regional Commissioner,
Region III, A. M. G.
NAPLES

We convey to you the unanimous feeling of this town in the Vesuvius area, which has been generously helped by you and your staff on the unhappy occasion of the eruption. We offer you our heartiest wishes for the immediate victory of the Allied nations, and at the same time we express to you, Sir, our devotion and our best regards.

Dr. Alessandro Miranda
Avvocato Mario D'Ambrosio
The Mayor of S. Giuseppe Vesuviano

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Direzione Generale delle Associazioni Professionali

UFFICIO PER LA GESTIONE DEL FONDO SPECIALE

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