

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

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REPORTS FROM S.C.A.O.'S
JULY 1943

Epp.

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

785015

MINUTE SHEET FOR ISAG/7872/CA.

Date	Ref.	From/to
15 Jul 43.	ISAG/7872/CA	

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MGOT

ISAC/7872/CA

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SECRETIMPORTANT
CIPHER MESSAGEFOLIO NO 16857

FROM: ADVANCED AMGOTDPORTRASE
 TO: FANTOX FOR AMGOT.
 ORIG NO ADV. AMGOT / 6^N

IN HEADQUARTERS
25 JUL 43

24 JULY 43

TCO 1630B/24

THI

TOR 1220B/25

FORCE 141

SECRET.

SUBMIT COPY HENSON'S FIRST REPORT DATED 17 JULY TO
 C INC 15 ARMY ON INSTRUCTIONS RENNELL

SMC DISTRIBUTION

CIVIL AFFAIRS 3 ACTION

Done
25/7/43

SMC 1340B/ 25

TT 1355B/ 25 JH

To SER

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25/7/43

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BY FAST AIR.

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SUBJECT - Reports from S.C.A.Os.

M.C.S.,
A.F.H.Q.

15AG/7872/CA.

21.Jul.43.

Herewith enclosed is a copy of the first report received this afternoon from Gp. Capt. Benson. A copy has been shown to Capt. Poore and Lieut. James (P.R.O's).

No report has yet been received from the 7th Army.

AUGOT H.Q.,
15 Army Group,
B.H.A.F.

Lt. Col.

Legal. Branch

Reference 2

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17 July, 1943.

TO Chief Civil Affairs Officer

AMGOT

15th Army Group
Tunis

Copin *hadd b:*

Civil Staff
Public Works
Public Supply
Finance

FROM Headquarters AMGOT

Region II

Syracuse

HEADQUARTERS	
Date 91 July 43	N 7872
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PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF CIVILIAN POSITION IN
OCCUPIED TERRITORY

1. This report covers a period from Saturday July 10th to Friday July 16th, inclusive.
2. (a) Towns entered immediately after capture on July 10th were as follows: Avola, Noto, Pachino, in each of which a civil affairs officer was installed. (b) Syracuse was captured on the night of 10/11th and in the early morning of the 11th three Civil Affairs Officers were installed. (c) Between July 12th and July 14th the following towns were entered and Civil Affairs Officers installed in them:
 Augusta
 Floridia (includes Melilli, Sortini and Solarino)
 Lentini
 Modica (includes Ispice)
 Ragusa
 Rosolini
 Palazzolo
- (d) On the afternoon of Friday July 16th 6 officers, who had arrived that day from North Africa, were despatched to reinforce MAG USA. and to proceed into VIZZINI and CALTAGIRONE which had just been captured.

3. CARABINIERI & POLICE

- (a) In Syracuse and the towns in the surrounding country, namely NOTO, AVOLA, PACHINO, FLORIDIA, AUGUSTA, the Carabinieri have cooperated and have been kept armed.
- (b) In RAGUSA, MODICA, ISPICA and ROSOLINI the Carabinieri had been originally disarmed and were not functioning. They have since been rearmed and are cooperating.

4. BANKS

1. This report covers a period from Saturday July 10th to Friday July 16th, inclusive.

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(b) In Ragusa, Modica, Ispica and Rosolini the Carabinieri had been originally disarmed and were not functioning. They have since been rearmed and are cooperating.

4. BANKS

All banks have been closed, and though it has not been possible as yet to ascertain the total amount of money which has been left, it can be taken as a certainty that the amounts will not be large as instructions were given in every case for lire notes to be burnt. The only place where any considerable sum was found and seized in time was in Syracuse, where 50,000,000 lire have been secured.

5. HEALTH

(a) In general the health of the civilian population is good and there doesn't appear to be a threat of any epidemic despite the overcrowding in the country towns due to refugees from the bigger cities.

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6 copies being made for
from all concerned 2/17

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(b) In Syracuse, the health is good and the chief difficulty is dealing with some 8,000 persons living in cottages without sanitary facilities, and the sanitation of 42 air raid shelters in the town.

(c) There are 17 Italian doctors in Syracuse at this time.

(d) It has not been possible to obtain any detailed reports from the RAGUSA area, but a medical officer was despatched to take over this province on July 16th.

(e) The worst position is to be found in Rizzolzo, which had been very severely bombed and where a considerable number of dead bodies are still lying about. The CAO in the town has the matter in hand, however, and is organizing local labour from the surrounding country to get the bodies buried. Most of the inhabitants have left so that the fear of epidemics starting there is unlikely.

(f) Medical supplies are extremely short and are urgently needed.

6. WATER

(a) Water supply is curtailed in nearly every city. In Syracuse there is no water in the houses and in all the water supply available can give no more than a maximum of about 4 gallons per head per day.

This is based on the pre-invasion population, but the numbers are no doubt considerably reduced owing to refugees going out into the country. The position is improving and does not give cause for any great anxiety.

(b) The water supply in the Noto area is plentiful and good.

(c) The water supply in the Ragusa area is poor, owing to the electricity supply being damaged. Water is being drawn from a reservoir which cannot last long. It is essential to get the electricity supply going.

(d) In the Floridia region the water supply is good.

7. ELECTRICITY

There is no electrical current available in any of the occupied part of the island. It is hoped that current will be available in a limited way by July 18th, sufficient to work the docks and produce current for running the flour mills. There will not be enough as yet available for lighting. The Ragusa area will still be without

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(d) In the Florida region the water supply is good.

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8. CIVILIAN ATTITUDE

In every town the civilian attitude has been friendly and in fact welcoming. In particular at Noto where the civil affairs officer, who had organized an official reading of the Proclamation setting up military government, and the C-in-C's proclamation, from the steps of the town hall, was carried shoulder high by the crowd.

In only one place has there been any sign of rioting and this was in Florida, where it appeared to be aimed chiefly against the Fascist administration. It was quickly suppressed and Florida is now normal.

5973

MOST SECRET

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9. ARREST OF FASCIST OFFICIALS

Very few arrests have been made, chiefly owing to the fact that the Fascist officials have fled. They are probably in the town or in the country side, but up to date it has not been possible to locate them. Instructions have been given for the arrest of the Prefect and the Vice-Prefect of Ragusa and the Questore of Modica, who are all avowed Fascists. It may be necessary to arrest the Prefect of Syracuse.

10. ANTI-BRITISH PROPAGANDA

There has been no sign of this as yet and no indications have come to light of any organized body of people left behind for sabotage or other reasons. There are undoubtedly large numbers of Italian soldiers who have put on plain clothes to avoid capture, but more in fear than for any other reason.

Just before the invasion a certain amount of agricultural leave had been granted. In one place, Modica, these soldiers gave in their arms and asked for instructions. They have temporarily been left on the land.

11. CHURCH

Contact has been made with the Archbishop of Syracuse and with the Bishop of Noto. Both are very cooperative. The Bishop of Noto laid on a special mass in honor of the arrival of the Civil Affairs Officer, and entertained him to lunch. This may have been because the Civil Affairs Officer is a Roman Catholic.

12. LOOTING, ETC.

Looting by the civilian population will be dealt with under SUPPLY. There have been a few unfortunate cases of looting and wanton destruction. In particular, the Post and Telegraph office in Syracuse was wrecked, and all records scattered and valuables stolen, this reportedly by the first invading troops. Matters were made more difficult by the breaking open of the city jail, and the release of all prisoners, only two of whom were political prisoners. Whether this last act was done by troops or others is not yet made clear. On the whole looting (apart from the requisitioning of Transport) has been on the bad side.

13. SUPPLY

The most difficult problem is the question of food supply for the civilian population. Before the arrival of the troops most of the Amessi

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The position of the principle places is as follows:

5972

MOST SECRET

(a) SYRACUSE --) No stocks were found in the Amessi, which had been looted by the civil population. The people had been on short rations for several months and an immediate supply of bread was available for one day and of rice for two days. Combining likely hiding places and the posting of an order to bring in any hoarded food supplies will enable the civil population in the city to be fed until approximately July 19th.

(2) There are doubtless certain stocks still to be found and this year's harvest to be collected and milled. These factors are militating against the collection and milling of the harvest.

Firstly, the lack of electricity. Most of the flour mills are run on electricity and until this has been reinstated, the mills are inoperative. It is hoped to have sufficient electric current available by July 18th to start certain units running.

Secondly, the fear that the civil population have of bringing in foodstuffs from the country owing to having their carts seized. Seizure of carts and mules on a large scale has been carried out by the troops, which though possibly operationally necessary or convenient, has served to dislocate and make extremely difficult the very serious problem of feeding a foodless population. It is hoped that the carts may be returned and steps are being taken by 86 Area to this effect.

Thirdly, the location of supplies of wheat in the country side.

(3) Olive oil has not been given to the population for the last two ~~xxxxx~~ months. There would appear to be stocks in the country, but they have not yet been located in any large quantity.

(4) Vegetables and fruit are fairly plentiful and arrangements have been made for collection and for distribution to the civil population and the troops through 86 Area.

(5) The normal channel of feeding the civil population through the existing machinery of the commune has not been functioning. All stocks of grain for flour have for the last four months been imported from the Mainland under army control and distributed by the army to the Amessi. Until very recently these grain imports have come in through Palermo and Messina and brought on to Syracuse by train. The result is that stocks here were never high and the location of what stocks there were was not known to the Municipal authorities. Army stocks have undoubtedly been destroyed, what little there were.

(6) The new crop is not up to standard owing to excessive rains.

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(6) The new crop is not up to standard owing to excessive rains. In addition the granary for this part of Sicily is the Lentini area, which at this time of writing is still a battle zone. A certain amount of crops have undoubtedly suffered through the incidence of battle.

(7) Up to date it is estimated that well over 1,000 tons of wheat has been located in the Avola ~~Noto~~ area and an organization has been set up to bring this in to the mills for conversion into flour as soon as electricity can be supplied again to run the mills. The time element, however, is a cause for anxiety.

(8) Though the position is definitely very serious, it is by ⁵⁹⁷ means insoluble and in fact is clarifying daily. It is, however, a day to day solution at the moment, and transport and electricity are vital

MOST SECRET

factors.

(b) NOTO, AVOLA and PACHINO. The position in these places is exactly the same as in Syracuse, particularly in regard to (a) (2) above.

(c) FLORIDIA. The same as in Syracuse. A certain amount of food has been collected and the situation is in hand.

(d) SORTINO. In fairly good shape and gives no cause for worry at the moment.

(e) SOLARINO. Food situation is poor but not really serious.

(f) MELILLI. This has been the scene of street fighting and the town (of about 8,000 inhabitants) is practically deserted and a complete shambles.

(g) There are certain mills in Florida which can be got running again on Haptha. Stocks of this have been located and sent to Florida. It is hoped to get the mills running in a short time which will relieve the pressure in that area.

(h) LENTINI. This has been too recently the scene of fighting to accurately ascertain the position, but in the main it is the same as in other places. There is, however, not as serious a food problem in this city or in CALENZANO.

(i) AUGUSTA. The situation is very bad. The town has been practically bombed out and is deserted. A problem will arise when the population begins to return.

(j) PALAZZOLO has been very severely bombed. (see Para (5) (a)) What food there was was all looted. There is wheat available in the countryside, and it can be collected. Arrangements are being made.

(k) RAGUSA. There is sufficient food in this city for a few days and a good supply of fats. Again the problem is the collection of wheat from the surrounding country.

(l) MODICA. Food position not as bad as in other cities, though still serious. Thirty tons of olive oil was found here and on the entry of the Civil Affairs Officer he was able to distribute a fortnight's supply of food.

(m) ISPIGA. Food situation bad but again collection from the

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(m) ISTICIA. Food situation bad but again collection from the country is being improvised.

(n) ROSOLINI. This city is in fairly good condition and the food supply can be kept going for a month.

(o) POZZALLO. Very bad indeed owing to the large numbers of refugees that have come in.

(p) At the time of this report no information is available about CALFAGIRONE or ENNA, both captured on July 16th.

14. SUMMARY OF FOOD SITUATION.

There is no doubt that the food situation is one of extreme

5970

MOST SECRET

PAGE 6

seriousness. What food there was has been looted and collections of grain from the country side are hampered by lack of transport and by fear of the populace. The reopening of the mills is urgent. All these matters are being attended to, but the operational necessities of the Army must necessarily dislocate attempts to reinstate an economic life. The removal of transport in the shape of carts has been very serious and has aggravated the position enormously.

It is still too early to say whether it will be possible to carry on without asking for supplies, but there is no doubt that the position is better. The most difficult area is the Ragusa area, which geographically presents transport difficulties and where the speed of advance has been most accentuated, with the result that the towns have necessarily been left without troops. This has thrown a very heavy additional burden on the limited number of Civil Affairs Officers available.

Referring to p. 1.

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Agfenn Sept.

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SPARE (1)

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COPY HELD BY CIV SURV

ISAC/7872/CA.

Major General Lord Rennell,
C.O.A.O.
H.Q. 15th Army Group,
B.N.A.F.

15th July, 1945.

My Dear

Let me have and tell your Officers to let you have a political sitrep by telegram as soon as possible. They have now been in the island for 4 days and I don't even know whether they have posted up the Proclamations. I must get something down to AFHQ at once, as London and Washington will begin to howl.

Political sitrep should be sent as soon as any large town is entered by C.A.Os and they should then write you a brief note about what they are doing for you to forward with your comments in proper form to 15th Army Group for C.O.A.O. AFHQ.

Group Captain C.E. Benson.
AFHQ.
H.Q. 8th Army.

File

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A.2 15/4
PA [signature]

