

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

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20 pp.

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ADMINISTRATION, USTICA
AUG, SEPT. 1943

20 pp.

FOLIO	DATE	REF.	TO/FROM
1	Aug 2	MA 344	From: Main 15 Army Gp
2	" 3	-	" " C-in-C Med
3	" 7	SA/11	" " Angot Syracuse
4	-	-	" " Maj Hickenbotham
5	Aug 10	24/HQ	To: GOC-in-C, 15 Army Gp
6	" 17	-	From: AMES 896, RAF, Ustica
7	" 21	-	Note by CSO
8	" 17	-	From: AMES 896
9	" 22	24/HQ	To: SCAO, Palermo
10	" 26	-	From: Palermo
11-14	" 23	-	" " CSOIC, 15 Army Gp
15	" 27	24/HQ	To: AMES 896
16	" 30	24/HQ	Minute by SCAO
17	Sep 2	-	Note for officers of Ustica Commission
18	" 4	24/HQ	To: SCAO Palermo
* 3A	Aug 5	-	from SCAO Ustica

FILE

2663-64

18

REC'D/24/80
REC'D H. S. GILLY
4 September 1943

Subject: Civilian Prisons

To : S.C.A.O., Palermo

Upon examination of the report on the Island of Ustica, A.I.O., C.S.D.I.O., 15 A.G., C.M.F., 23 August 1943, the S.C.A.O. has directed me to pass on to you the following suggestions as to personalities mentioned in the report for your information and action:

1. The following named persons at Ustica should be arrested and sent to Palermo for disposal, subject to a Court of Enquiry being held by the S.C.A.O. Ustica on Di Mauro's activities in connection with feeding internees:

Gastano Di Mauro.
Cav. Luigi Foresta, Commissario di Pubblica Sicurezza.
Podesta Lauricella.

2. Roberto Onori should be sent to Palermo and there released.

3. Paolina Rocchetti should be sent to Palermo pending disposal, unless she prefers to stay in Ustica until other arrangements have been made. If she stays in Ustica she should make the request in writing to the local S.C.A.O.

4. Local action should be taken regarding the following named. If necessary, they are to be arrested:

Alfiero Facenti, Guardia Scelta di P.S.
Antonino Nava, Guardia di P.S.
Matteo Roberti, Guardia di P.S.

5. In addition to the above the 14 internees, including:

Guglielmo Micheli,
Idno Merlini,

and 12 others should be sent to Palermo and either released or kept, pending charges, in Palermo jail. If there are others who have not been released the same procedure should apply to them.

Copies to: D.P.S.
C.L.O.

CHARLES M. SPOFFORD
Lt. Col., U. S. C.
Chief Staff Officer

870

PIA

650
Subject:- "Confinati" at Ustica.

Note for: The Officers of the Ustica Commission.

ALGOT/ /L.

2 Sept. 1943.

1. Capt. Maude, Municipio, after investigating on the spot the situation of 201 "confinati" at Ustica, has returned there and will come back on 3 Sept. 1943 bringing back 100 of them. The balance of prisoners and all wardens will be transferred to Palermo on next Thursday.

2. It has been arranged to house the "confinati" as follows:-

- (i) Prisoners in premises taken over by the Prison Section;
- (ii) Released men in premises supplied by questore - (as they may be material witnesses in wardens' case);
- (iii) Wardens in local Prison.

3. A Commission to investigate into:-

- (a) The criminal records of the "confinati" and
 - (b) The alleged atrocities and graft of which the wardens are accused,
- will start its functions as soon as the prisoners are in Palermo.

It will be composed of:

Major I.C. Campbell,
Capt. C. Maude,
A "Sostituto of the Procurator del Re" as an Italian
Assessor
plus an interpreter.

4. When all the prisoners have been examined, the Commission will take the following action:-

- (i) Release prisoners against whom there is no criminal evidence;
- (ii) Release prisoners who have already served a long sentence;
- (iii) Send before the Italian Courts those who have committed criminal offences at Ustica;
- (iv) If the evidence obtained reveals a "prima facie" case against the wardens, the Commission will recommend the appointment of a General Court to deal with their cases as the earliest opportunity;
- (v) Take the necessary steps to keep material witnesses available if they are released prisoners.

5. It is to be remembered that "confinati" are persons who have been interned without proper trial, though many of them may have a heavy criminal record. On the other hand some of them may be political prisoners.

ALGOT H.Q.
15 Army Group.

GCE/IN.

G.G. HARRISON, Major.

Capt. C. Maude,
A "Sostituto of the Procurator del Re" as an Italian
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ANGOT H.Q.
15 Army Group.

GCH/IN.

G.G. HAMMARD, Major.

G.G. Hammond

MINUTE

DATE/24/19.

16

U.S.C.

I am not happy about the position at Ustica. The investigation made by G.S.I.I.C. appears to have been done with care and judgement. But the stories in the report are too circumstantial to be passed over without immediate action.

I consider on the evidence in Document 16-19 that the persons Di Mauro, Foresta, Latoricella, should be arrested and sent here for disposal, subject to a Court of Enquiry being held by G.A.C. on Di Mauro's activities in connection with feeding internees.

Onori should be sent here and released.

Paolina Rocchetti should also be sent here pending disposal, unless she prefers to stay in Ustica until other arrangements have been made. If she stays in Ustica she must sign a paper to the G.A.C. making the request.

Action should be taken locally on the subject of Facconti, Marn, Roberti, Micheli, and Marini. These if necessary are to be arrested and sent here.

I do not like any of the 14 being kept in prison at Ustica. If there are others who have not been released, they should be sent here, and either released or kept pending charges in Palermo central jail.

Action as above immediately.

30/8



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Ill.

1725

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AMCOT/24/HQ

AMCOT H.Q., SICILY.

27th August 1943.

Subject:- Report on Civil Affairs, Ustica.

To:- Officer Commanding
A.M.E.S. 896 R.A.F.
Ustica.

1. Your report dated 17th August 1943 has been noted and the following action taken.
2. Two Civil Affairs Officers left for Ustica on 25th August 1943.
3. They have taken food, medical supplies, money and returning natives with them.
4. The U.S. Navy will dispatch from Palermo at 1000 hours every Wednesday a water barge containing 200,000 gallons.

CH
CHARLES M. SPOTFORD
Lieut Colonel G.S.C.
Chief Staff Officer.

785015

P. O. 14
MOST SECRETA.I.O., C.S.D.I.C.,
Main H.Q., 15 Army Group,
C.M.F.

Herewith report on the Island of USTICA, obtained partly from the statements of certain inhabitants awaiting repatriation in PALERMO and partly from a 30-hours visit to the island.

Under the heading "Personalities" will be found statements about certain individuals who were chosen for questioning, together with any statements made by themselves.

23 Aug 43

John R. ...
Captain,
A.I.O./C.S.D.I.C.,
Main H.Q., 15 Army Group.

ANNEXES: TO C.A.O. PALERMO

- a) Received from the Commissaire, FORESTA. List of all Carabinieri and Police Officials, internees and prisoners, together with their particulars, and an account of recent happenings on the island.
- b) Copy of cable dated 7 Dec 42, sent to PALERMO, concerning 16 British P.W.
- c) Copy of cable dated 12 Apr 43, sent to PALERMO, concerning 6 British P.W.
- d) List of Slav internees who died on USTICA.
- e) Letter addressed to the Allied authorities and left behind by Doctor KRAMER Dusan, former Yugoslav internee.
- f) Letter from RACITI Sebastiano, addressed to the Allied authorities.
- g) Letter addressed to Penal Tribunal in PALERMO.

HEADQUARTERS
24/40
27 AUG 1943
AMGOT

785015

Captain,
A.I.O./C.S.D.I.C.,
Main H.Q., 15 Army Group.

ATTACHMENTS TO C.A.O. PALERMO

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- f) Letter from RACITI Sebastiano, addressed to the Allied authorities.
- g) Letter addressed to Penal Tribunal in PALERMO.
- h) Letter to be posted, (received on island).

Distribution

G - 2 Section, A.F.H.Q. (For attention of
C.S.D.I.C., A.F.H.Q. Commander Redd, R.N.)
G.S.I. (a), 15 Army Group
G.S.I. (b), 15 Army Group
A Force, 15 Army Group
P.W.B., 15 Army Group
C.S.D.I.C., 15 Army Group
G - 2 Section, 7th Army (For attention of Major Carter)
P.W.B., 7th Army
1st Air Defence Wing
H.Q., AMGOT (For attention of Major Paffa)
C.A.O. AMGOT, PALERMO (For attention of Major Haley)
File

23 Aug 43

MOST SECRET

GENERAL

USTICA, a small island 37 miles North of PALERMO, has about 1300 inhabitants and an intermittent settlement with accommodation for 1200 - 1500 persons. At one time recently there were 2200 Yugoslav, Greek and Albanian political prisoners on this island. The internees enjoyed almost complete freedom and were quartered in various houses throughout the village. No distinction was made between political and criminal internees. All political internees, with the exception of eleven persons, were evacuated from USTICA shortly before the Allied occupation.

The inhabitants of the island are self supporting as regards food, but the water situation always tends to become critical at the hottest time in the year. Food and water for the inhabitants were supplied from PALERMO by a water-boat which visited the island three times a week.

All the inhabitants are willing to talk, but are afraid of the consequences should it become known to the Commissaire of P.S., FORSIA.

This year's harvest has been poor, and grocery prices are much higher than in PALERMO. Clothing is at the present moment unobtainable.

II. DEFENCES

Defence forces consisted of about 50 infantry and navy personnel and 100 carabinieri. They had one machine gun, rifles, but no artillery. In Apr 43 a force of about 100 German soldiers with coastal guns arrived. These latter were all evacuated in June.

III. SERVICES

Sanitation, in the hands of the Podosta, is generally backward. There is one doctor and one dispensary for the internees. Most houses in the village have electricity.

Water is mostly obtained from wells. There are two small reservoirs, both of which appear to have been unused for some considerable time.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

One semaphore station and one naval radio transmitter were formerly on top of the only hill. One military radio transmitter was in existence 500 metres West of the village, and in the same house as the Fascist transmitter. Marine cable communication existed between the village and PALERMO. All German radio equipment was blown up on evacuation.

There are some 15 - 20 private radio receiving sets on the island.

V. INTERESTS

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V. INTERNEES

a) General

Of the original total of internees on the island only 218 now remain. This figure is made up of 207 criminals and 11 political internees.

Living conditions and food are generally of a low standard and, as it might be expected, all are anxious to leave the island. The criminals all appear to have done a term of imprisonment in ITALY before being removed to the island. The internees all appear to have been undernourished, and many have died through hunger.

Inspector General LIVOTTI visited the island from PALERMO about a year ago.

b) Prison

At the present time 14 internees are held in the prison. According to the prison governor, by order of the Commissaire FORESTI the names of these men were not entered in the prison records. Moreover, the names of four of these prisoners did not correspond with the list of prisoners handed in by FORESTI.

Conditions in the prison leave a lot to be desired, and the general upkeep of the stores and offices is disorderly. For no apparent reason, four wireless valves were found in one of the stores.

VI. BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR ...

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- 2 -

MOST SECRETVI. BRITISH PRISONERS-OF-WAR

a) Dec 7th, 1942 a Junker 52, flying from TUNIS and carrying 15 British P.W. and a crew of 4, crash-landed on the island. These remained on the island some three or four days, during which they were fed by many of the islanders, and were afterwards removed to PALERMO.

British P.W. consisted of one Sgt and 14 private soldiers, two of whom belonged to the Hampshire Regt, according to badges left behind.

It was not possible to obtain the names of any of these P.W., which had been taken down by the Military Commandant Capt. DI MARIA who, with Lt. Biagio PATRI, was taken to the barracks of the 22nd Italian Artillery Regiment, PALERMO, on 5 Aug.

b) On the 12th of April a twin-engine plane, identified as being probably British, crashed in flames off the coast. Five of the crew were saved; the sixth member was drowned. These P.W. were also evacuated to PALERMO after a few days. The names are as follows:

Sgt. BIEAR Leonard Alexander
Sgt. CLOVEY Thomas Philip
Sgt. GIKIN Ronald
Sgt. HARRISON Leslie
Sgt. SUEKLAND John Cyril
Sgt. GOLDSMITH (drowned)

VII. INFORMATION ABOUT ITALY

a) Pola

Information from an Italian naval seaman, MARTUCCI, who was at the C.R.E.M. Naval School, POLA, in May, June and July, 1942.

The workshops are all hewn out of the natural rock and accommodation exists for 8000 students. All types of naval instruction are given, including gunnery.

Surface pens for four or five submarines, as well as further accommodation for about another six submarines, are included in the installation. There are no underground submarine pens.

A large P.O.L. and ammunition dump is situated North of the port.

The whole area is very heavily defended by A.A. batteries. The largest floating dry dock in ITALY of German construction, and capable of taking vessels up to 10,000 tons, is located in the port.

All naval personnel at the school expressed anti-Fascist sentiments.

The names are as follows:

Sgt. BISSAR Leonard Alexander
Sgt. CLOPPY Thomas Philip
Sgt. IGKIN Ronald
Sgt. HARRISON Leslie
Sgt. BUCKLAND John Cyril
Sgt. GOLDSMITH (drowned)

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Reception of foreign radio programmes is impossible in the port, owing to jamming.

b) It is stated that the following political internment camps exist in ITALY:

CASACALANDA
CAMPO BASSO
VIUCHIATURO
POZZA, near NAPLES
TRENTE, in the ADRIATIC
ANCHIARI, Province of AREZZO TOSCANA

c) Anti-Fascists in TRIESTE

The following names of anti-Fascists were obtained from internees:-

Guido ZENTURO Lawyer
ZANINI Lawyer
PAULUCI

Piazza San Giovanni No 2

Via Coroneo No 3

VIII. MORALE ...

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MOST SECRET

- 3 -

VIII. MORALE

Allied broadcasts were listened to, but propaganda leaflets were neither seen nor heard of on the island. Relations between the occupying German troops and inhabitants were consistently bad, as a result of which more than one fight ensued. However, the German troops were on good terms with the Yugoslav internees, particularly with the women.

Interrogator's Note:

Morale varied considerably. As a result of the penetration of the Fascist system everyone distrusts everyone else. The leading clique are all related, and are accused of making large profits at the expense of the population in the usual Fascist way.

IX. PERSONALITIES1. Cactano DI MAURO, 33 years of age.a) Independent Statements

He was responsible for feeding all internees, for which he received the sum of Lire 5.50 per person per day. They were always undernourished and begging for food from the other inhabitants. Large numbers died from hunger, and it was no uncommon sight to see people collapsing through weakness in the village streets. DI MAURO was associated with Erocle GARGANO, of PALERMO, from whom he obtained his food supplies. His treatment of the 15 British prisoners who arrived on 7 Dec 42 was severely criticised by one witness. He had been in AMERICA on several occasions. This man is very generally hated, but since the Allied occupation has always offered his services as an interpreter. He is very influential throughout the island, and is very curious as to the movements of any Allied officer in the village. He speaks comparatively good English.

b) DI MAURO's Own Story

He was born in SAN FRANCISCO, U.S.A. Came to ITALY at the age of 13, and has since never returned to the U.S.A. He is an Italian citizen, has served in the Italian Army, and joined the Fascist Party in 1923. He was a student of the University of ROCHE, and owes his fluent English to various English-speaking friends he had in that city. He became a traveller for a shoe factory and afterwards came to USTICIA 4 1/2 years ago, where his father Pio owns land & a grocery business. On orders received from the Fascist Party in PALERMO, he became Fascist Secretary 8 months ago. He owns some of the houses in which the internees live, which were rented by the island authorities. He received the sum of Lire 5.50 per person per day for the supply of food to the internees. The food was always adequate, the number of deaths on the island normal and none caused by hunger. He was not on the island at the same time as the 15 British P.W. in December.

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b) DI MAURO's Own Story

He was born in SAN FRANCISCO, U.S.A. Came to ITALY at the age of 13, and has since never returned to the U.S.A. He is an Italian citizen, has served in the Italian Army, and joined the Fascist Party in 1923. He was a student of the University of Rome, and owes his fluent English to various English-speaking friends he had in that city. He became a traveller for a shoe factory and afterwards came to USTICA 4 1/2 years ago, where his father Pio owns land & grocery business. On orders received from the Fascist Party in PALERMO, he became Fascist Secretary 8 months ago. He owns some of the houses in which the internees live, which were rented by the island authorities. He received the sum of Lire 5.50 per person per day for the supply of food to the internees. The food was always adequate, the number of deaths on the island normal and none caused by hunger. He was not on the island at the same time as the 15 British P.W. in December.

His wife, Marguerite LONGO, was born in LOUISIANA, U.S.A., and is the daughter of a previous podesta of the island.

2. Cav. Luigi FORBES, Commissario di Pubblica Sicurezzaa) Independent Statements

Is in charge of both Police and Carabinieri, together with whom he is generally disliked. He is responsible for the welfare of all internees on the island. He imprisoned 14 internees on the 6th August, and has since kept them imprisoned on the orders of a British Major. No accusation has been made against them, nor have they been tried. The internees are badly clothed, and he is accused of deliberately withholding fresh clothing from them.

During the German occupation of the island, internees employed by the Germans received clothing and food as wages. The clothing was taken from them by FORESTA. His treatment of the internees was consistently bad, and with DI MAURO he made a handsome profit out of them.

/b) Own Statement ...

SECRET

- 4 -

Gen. Luigi FORESTA (Cont'd)

b) Own Statement

All internees are troublesome, especially the 14 now imprisoned, as a result of a disturbance after the Allied occupation. These men have remained in prison on the orders of Major HIGGINTHORN, who charged him with the maintenance of order, and FORESTA requests the removal of all internees in order to preserve the peace of the island.

On the German evacuation of the island, their radio stations, arms and equipment were destroyed. However, FORESTA is of the opinion that a quantity of arms were left intact and are in the hands of internees, but is unable to conduct a thorough search owing to the shortage of police and carabinieri. He produced a copy of the cable sent by him to PALFREY on 7 Dec 42, stating the number of the British prisoners to be 16 and not 15, and the crew as being 5 and not 6, also of cable sent on 12 Apr 43 concerning the 5 British P.W.

Interrogator's Note: Major HIGGINTHORN, of AMGOT, states that he gave no orders concerning the continued imprisonment of the 14 internees.

3. Podesta LAURICELLA

He was a previous Fascist Party Secretary. On the whole, he appears honest and willing to talk, but is very nervous, particularly with regard to DI MAURO and FORESTA. He states that he trusts neither of the above-mentioned and that neither is a good influence on the island, but at the same time would make no concrete charge as to their misdeeds.

He is responsible for the administration of the inhabitants of the island, but at the same time has no control over FORESTA at all.

He states that the normal strength of the police was about 25, and of the carabinieri 60 - 80.

4. Roberto OMORI, Inventor, 53 years of age.

Arrested in Rome November 1940, charged with business activities affecting military supplies, but never tried. He was deported to USTICA in Jan 1941. He is the inventor of several mechanical devices, including a new type crane and a torpedo tube. In 1937 applied for French patents for some of his inventions, and in 1939, unable to interest the Italian Government in his new type torpedo tube, he entered into negotiations with the British Attaché in Rome, Commandant BAYEN. After the outbreak of war between Italy and Great Britain, the Italian Naval Minister gave orders for the construction of two of these new torpedo tubes by the BARGIACCHI Naval Construction Plant, SPEZIA, but CIANO, who was chief shareholder of the STE INDUSTRIALE SAN GIORGIO, near GENOVA, a very important naval construction plant, caused this order to be cancelled.

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He submitted plans to the Municipality of USTICA for the construction of new roads, an improved water supply, and renovations of the church.

The 2200 Yugoslav internees who were among the internees who were removed from the island shortly before the Allied occupation were very badly treated, and the inhabitants generally charged exorbitant prices for everything they sold them, e.g. 50 lire instead of 4 for a litre of wine. These Yugoslavs received very large sums of money from their families, and the island generally made very large profits from them.

In the list of prisoners on the island he is entered as being interned for robbery. This man speaks fluent French and is by far the most educated and intelligent man on the island, and has considerable personality.

His brother, Mario ONORI, 10 Via Tibullo, ROMA, sent him money regularly, and is employed as "Chef Technique du Centre Cinique, Service Photographique" at the Ministry of War. This brother is a convinced anti-Fascist.

/5. Paolina ROCCHETTI ...

MOST SECRET

- 5 -

Paolina ROCCOZZI, widow of PICCOLI

This woman, according to her own story, has always taken an active part in the Communist movement. Has been in RUSSIA, SPAIN and FRANCE. Her husband, an ex-Communist Member of Parliament in ITALY, fought on the Government side in SPAIN, where he was killed. She returned to ITALY from FRANCE after the collapse in 1940, where she was employed in a municipality. She refused consistently to take any part in the Fascist movement and was finally arrested in 1941 and held in prison until Nov 42, when at her own request she was sent to USTICA.

She is very anxious to leave ITALY until the conclusion of the war.

She states that between November 1942 and August 1943, to her certain knowledge, between 200 and 300 people died on the island through hunger.

She accuses the following of continually bad treatment of the internees:-

FACCONI	Alfiero	Guardia Scelta di P.S.
MAVA	Antonino	Guardia di P.S.
ROBERTI	Matteo	" "

6. Giuseppe MICHELINI
LEONE MERLINI

Own Story

There are two men, who were among the 14 in the prison and who both admit being origin... allege that large quantities of arms and ammunition, including 14 rifles, were left behind from the German occupation and were taken by the inhabitants, whom they are prepared to identify.

DI MAURO is known to have two radio transmitting apparatus in his possession, one the naval transmitter which used to operate from the hill and the other the Fascist Party transmitter, both of which he feared would fall into Allied hands. Also two German D.K.V. electric motors are in DI MAURO's possession.

6. Giuseppe MICHELLO
Lino PERLINI

Own Story

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ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
City of Palermo



For filing

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AMGOT 24/HQ

August 26, 1943

Subject: Civil Affairs - Ustica

To : Lt. Col. C.M. SPOFFORD, G.S.C.
AMGOT HQ.

1. Reference your memorandum
to SCAO of August 22, 1943.

2. Two Civil Affairs Officers
left for Ustica yesterday morning, with
food, medical supplies, money and return-
ing natives.

3. Have arranged with Navy to
dispatch water barge (200,000 gallons)
at 1000 every Wednesday.

4. Situation presently under
control. Detailed report will be
submitted to SCAO in near future.

George W. Haley
George W. HALEY
Major, CMP
Civil Affairs Officer

Action Taken
PA
27/8/43
8

ds
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1189
09
~~12~~
AMGOT/24/HQ

22 August 1943

Subject: Civil Affairs - Ustica

To : S. C.A.O. - Palermo Province

1. Reference is made to attached copy of memorandum from the R.A.F. station at Ustica.

2. In compliance with request contained therein, it is requested that a C.A.O. visit the island at the earliest opportunity.

3. Ask him to investigate alleged mistreatment of political prisoners.

[Signature]
CHARLES M. SPOFFORD
LT. Col., G. S. C.
Chief Staff Officer

AMGOT HQ
15 Army Group

Encl.

8529

785015

(C O P Y)

A.M.E.S 896,
Royal Air Force,
Ustica.
17-8-43.

1169
8

Sir,

REPORT ON CIVIL AFFAIRS - USTICA

I have the honour to present a brief report on Civil Affairs on the Island of Ustica, now in occupation by the Allied Forces.

2. The Senior Officer at present on the Island is the Officer Commanding A.M.E.S. 896 R.A.F., who is waited on daily by delegations from the civil population and who has neither the time nor the authority to deal with their enquiries and requests. However a modus vivendi has been established.

3. Both food and water are said to be in short supply. With regard to the former, I have never seen a healthier group of islanders except for the fishermen and civil prisoners who are lean and hungry. Water will be supplied from Palermo through No. 1. A.D.W., M.

4. An official price list for commodities has been obtained from the Mayor, but this seems to have paper value only. The population as a whole are loath to accept lira and prefer to barter.

5. The Chief of Police, accustomed to replenish his funds from Rome, says he can pay neither his Police nor his prisoners.

6. It is respectfully suggested that a Civil Affairs Officer may visit the Island and that an interpreter may be provided for the benefit of the Forces stationed there.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(sgd.) W. L. Solon

(W. L. Solon)

Officer in Charge Civil Affairs
Allied Forces
Palermo

861

PA

See memo to (7) H

CSD w. —

= PND

for information

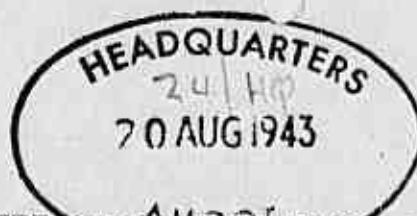
return to key

Left. Seen. *RSK*
D. P. 14
2/15

Desk — Suggest a copy of this letter be sent to C. A. C. of this area requesting a report when I.C. is. If any additional supplies are needed we will have to know exactly what is required. *RSK*

869

785015



A.M.E.S. 896,
Royal Air Force,
Ustica.
17-8-43.

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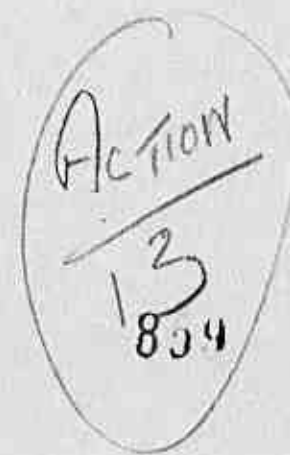
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Your obedient servant,

W.L. Solon
(W.L. Solon).

Action - Taken
PA
Officer in Charge Civil Affairs,
Allied Forces,
Palermo.



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

Subject: - Reports.

M.A.
G.O.C. in-C.
15 Army Group.

I am directed by C.C.A.O. to forward report on the
island of Ustica for G.O.C. information.

df
Major.
Staff Officer.

AMCOT H.Q.
15 ARMY GROUP.

24
AMCOT/240/10.

10 August 43.

854

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SUMMARY OF REPORT ON ISLAND OF USTICA BY MAJOR G.F.
HICKINBOTHAM TO S.C.A.O. PALERMO. 5 AUGUST 1943.

On 5th August Major Hickinbotham proceeded as directed with U.S. Naval Units comprising of two Destroyers and one landing craft under command of Squadron Commander Menocol to Ustica. The Naval detachment left Palermo at 0919 arriving in Ustica at 1245 and cruised around. At 1305, in response to signals of surrender by the island, Squadron Commander Menocol landed, demanded unconditional surrender and after parleying, the officer in charge of the military garrison unconditionally surrendered at 1320 hours. Two officers and 84 men of the Infantry and 13 sailors of the Italian Navy were made prisoners of war and removed from the Island, together with all military arms and equipment.

The C.A.O. landed at 1330 hours and accompanied by the Podesta posted proclamations and orders, he then held a conference with the heads of services and explained that administration would continue as hitherto as far as possible. All present readily agreed to continue to administer the island. The Carabinieri and agents of public safety were allowed to retain their fire arms for security reasons.

The island is not self-supporting as regards food, only one third of the total population of 1,200 can be provided for by the produce of the island. The most urgent requirement of the island is water and arrangements have been made for a tanker to call monthly at the island with 300 tons of water. Certain items of food are also being supplied.

The health of the community is good but certain medical supplies are urgently required, and these are being shipped.

There is a small electric light plant which is in good order.

The Police force is adequate and appears to function smoothly.

The island has been used as a penal settlement, and the prison normally accommodates 2,000 persons, but at present there are only 216 male prisoners under detention. The prisoners who are paid 8 Lire a day by the Italian Government, work on the land. The C.A.O. was unable to satisfy himself that the administration of the prison was satisfactory, and urges further investigation.

Allied occupation was well received and C.A.O. does not anticipate any trouble in its administration.

C.A.O. left the island with the Naval shore party at 1740 hours.

785015

To: C.C.A.C.

AMST/210/HQ.

ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
Palermo Province

*General
Mc Sherry*

5 August, 1943 for

*information
Poletti*

SUBJECT: Report on Island of Ustica

TO: Lt. Colonel Charles Poletti, Senior Civil Affairs
Officer, Palermo

3A

On 5th August, 1943, I proceeded as directed with U. S. Naval units comprising two destroyers and one landing craft under command of Squadron Commander Menocol to the Island of Ustica, Province of Palermo.

The Naval detachment left Palermo at 0919, arrived off Ustica at 1245 and cruised around. At 1305, in response to signals of surrender from the Island, Squadron Commander Menocol landed, demanded unconditional surrender, and after parleying, the officer in charge of the military garrison unconditionally surrendered at 1520 hours. Two officers and 84 men of the Infantry and 13 sailors of the Italian Navy were made prisoners of war and removed from the Island, together with all military arms and equipment.

Accompanied by the Podesta of Ustica, Litterio Laurcella, I landed on the Island at 1550 and posted proclamations Nos. 1-12 (except 6 & 9), also G. O. No. 1, Curfew Warning and Notice of Surrender of Arms etc. on the Municipal Office and at the office of the Chief of Police.

I then had a conference with the undermentioned officials of the Comune: Podesta Laurcella; Commandant of the Carabinieri, and agents of Public Security, Luigi Forista; a Priest, Padre Targisio; Doctor Vincenzo Puzio, at the Municipal Office. I explained the object of the Allied Occupation, and went over in general terms the provisions of the proclamations. I explained that as far as possible public administration on the Island would continue as hitherto. All present readily agreed to continue to administer the Island. After consultation with Squadron Commander, the Carabinieri and the Agents of Public Safety were allowed to retain their firearms for security reasons.

P/A 10/8 6856

SEC 21

HEADQUARTERS
24/149
10 AUG 1943
AMGOT

TELEPRINTER MESSAGE
IN

P

FOLIO NO 1232
7 AUG 43

3

FROM: AMGOT SYRACUSE
TO : FILFOT AMGOT
ORIG NO: SP/11

TOO —
THI 0735B/8
TOR 0802B/8

FOLLOWING MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM POSY. BEGINS. FOR AMGOT. REPORT RECEIVED THAT THERE ARE 4000 ALLIED INTERNEES ON USTICA ISLAND WITHOUT WATER. INVESTIGATION SEEMS DESIRABLE. ENDS.

SEC DISTRIBUTION

AMGOT 3 ACTION

*Navy report - Island has been visited occupied by U.S.
Population 1100 plus 216 civil
prisoners and guards. A water
boat has been sent. You no doubt already have information.
8/8/43. G. H. [signature]*

SMO 0830B/8
TT 0840B/8 IU

POPULATION: about 1200 persons who mostly reside in the village of Santa Maria.

FINANCE: There are no banks on the Island.

MUNICIPAL FUNDS. I was informed by the Podesta that about 20,000 Lire are in hand for Municipal purposes. Time did not permit of an examination of the books.

Taxes are raised by a tax on houses and land, the rent tax being due 18 August, 1943.

The commandant of the Carabinieri has not received any pay since March, 1943. The rank and file of the Carabinieri were paid to June, 1943; the Chief Warden of the Prison paid to May, 1943, and agents of Public Security paid to June, 1943.

COMMODITIES.

Water: The water position on the Island is acute. Normally 16,000 tons of rain water is conserved in a natural reservoir. In addition the island was supplied with 300 tons of water a month by means of a tanker from Palermo. This water tanker was found in Palermo Harbor in good condition, was filled and dispatched to Ustica on 5-8-43 and will arrive at the Island on 6-8-43.

Arrangements will be necessary to insure a monthly delivery of 300 tons of water until the next rainy season.

Food: The island is not self supporting as regards food. Of the normal population of 1200 persons, 594 are entirely provided for by produce from land. 747 reside in the village, 150 police, Municipal employees etc., and 316 prisoners rely on food to a great extent from outside sources.

Sufficient stocks of the following foods are in hand to feed the prisoners for 45 days: Beans, Sugar, Oil and Macaroni. No supplies of flour are available. A stock is urgently required.

Supplies of the above foods are also required for the civilian needs. A system of rationing is in force.

MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS. There are no hospitals on the Island. Medical arrangements are under the care of Dottore Vincenzo Fazio and 1 nurse. The health of the community is good but the undermentioned medical supplies are urgently required.

Purgatives and Laxatives
Disinfectants
Aspirin
Vaccine for baby croup
Peroxide of Hydrogen
Dressings and Bandages
Iodine and Medical Alcohol
General Medical Supplies

ELECTRIC LIGHT. A small electric Diesel engine owned by Societa D'Anna Bonaccorsi provides a supply of electric light for houses between 1900 and 2400. This plant uses about 1½ tons of heavy oil per month. Present supply sufficient only to last to 15-8-43.

POSTAL SERVICES. No mail has been received in or dispatched from the Island since 5th of July, and it is asked that arrangements be resumed as soon as possible. It appears that in normal times the water boat is used for postal purposes.

POLICE. There are 17 carabinieri under the command of L'Abbate Salvatore, and 11 Agents of Public Security, the whole being under the charge of Commissioner Luigi Forista. There appears to be no particular line of demarcation as regards duty of the two forces. All appear to work harmoniously, and in addition to normal patrol duty are responsible for good order of the prisoners in the Prison Colony. The Commissioner, Luigi Forista appears to be a reliable man. I left him in charge of the Police arrangements and directed him to give effect to the proclamations, seizure of firearms, wireless etc.

The police force has one Police Station in Ustica, is armed with muskets and side-arms, and in addition the Agents of Public Security have pistols. The records are fair. The uniforms are in fair condition. No transport provided or required. The force as constituted is adequate for the needs of the Island, and is capable of performing general duties.

AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS. None provided or required.

FIRE: Local arrangements on chain bucket system in force.
Houses built of stone, no other arrangements necessary.

PRISON. The island is on the lines of a penal settlement. The prison normally accommodates 2,000 persons, but at present 216 males aged between 19 and 73 are detained. I confirmed this report by conversation with an English speaking prisoner.

Normally all but nine refractory prisoners are at liberty during the daytime, work on the land etc. The prisoners are paid 8 lire per day by the Italian Government; of this, 5.50 lire is paid to a contractor, Gaetano Di Mauro for food. The system apparently works, but is obviously open to abuse. The nine refractory prisoners are said to be confined in separate cells; owing to insufficient time I was unable to visit these cells and am therefore unable to state condition.

I am not satisfied with the administration of this prison and feel that further investigation is necessary.

Chief Warden, Capo Carcere Monza, Riccardo.

The prison buildings, which are undamaged, have no separate grounds.

Prisoners' food, see under sub-heading Food.

Lists of prisoners giving required particulars are being prepared by Commissioner Luigi Forista, and will be completed on 6-8-43, ready for collection the next time the island is visited.

GENERALLY. The island is little more than a rock from which the population scratch a poor existence. Allied occupation was well received. All officials will cooperate, and I do not apprehend any trouble or difficulty.

The position as regards water, food and medical supplies are acute and early steps should be taken to secure supplies. Matches and cigarettes are also in very short supply. The population were greatly distressed by

the removal of about ten Ustica men forming part of the garrison, and I was urged by the podesta to do what was possible to secure their repatriation. If this is possible it has my recommendation.

The following persons normally resident in Ustica are stranded in Palermo:

Antonisco Lauricella, age 12, son of the podesta, at present residing at Convento Cappuccino, Via Piemonte, Palermo.

Padre Carmelo and Padre Agostino, priests of the church at Ustica, are also at the same convent, awaiting return to the island.

It is said also that about 15 Ustica people whose addresses will be known by the above priests are anxious to return to the island.

I left the island with the Naval shore party at 1740 hours.

G. F. Hickinbotham
G. F. HICKINBOTHAM
Major

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

From: C-in-C Hqd

SECRET MESSAGE

To: 15 ARMY GP

HEADQUARTERS

24/143

Personal for General ALEXANDER

(.)

AUG 143

I will have USTICA visited as soon as possible

ANGOT

To BEK

MAJOR PIRIE

DSR

TOO

29/1

051551

8518

SECRET MESSAGE

To: C-in-C Med

From: MAIN 15TH ARMY CP MA 346

From General ALEXANDER (.) I am informed that Island
of USTICA was used by ITALIANS as internment camp for allied
subjects and that its only water supply was by ship from
PALMICO (.) Now I leave it in your hands to investigate
the situation at USTICA and deal with the matter accordingly

HEADQUARTERS

8 AUG 1944

AMGOT

TOO 022040 B

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