

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785016

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ELBA
JUNE - AUG. 1944

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785016

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
R.C. & M.G. SECTION
APO 394

Phone 42065

Feb 2/10/5
NEF/mrd
15 August 1944

(2A)

Ref/783/8/CA

SUBJECT: Administration of Elba
TO : Headquarters, A.A.I.

Reference is made to your letter 25/G(Ops) of 10 July 44 and 25/G(Ops) of 2 July 44, the Army rear boundary has recently been moved forward so that the three southern communes of Livorno Province, including Piombino, from which Elba is being supplied, are now out of the army area. Since it is desired to assume full civil administration of Elba at the earliest practicable time, the Commission proposes that the Island now come under the control of Grosseto Province, which has been turned over by 5 Army to Region VIII, and if you approve, would be grateful if the appointment of Colonel Petit as Deputy Military Governor be accordingly rescinded.

NORMAN E. FISKE
Colonel
Deputy Executive Commissioner

Copy to:

Admin. Sect.
Region VIII

Am. L. AWP.
RRc

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ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT.

E L B A .

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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To: R.C. & M.C. Section, Civil Affairs Branch, A.C.C. Hqrs.

Subject: First monthly report on Elba.

Date: June 30th. 1944

22 JUL 1944

1A

(a)

POLITICAL REACTIONS AND POPULAR OPINION.

Political reaction in so far as the industrial population is concerned appears to be mainly Communistic. The agricultural people are moderate and rather more Socialistic in their views.

Popular opinion is strongly in favour of the Allies, and a maximum co-operative effort is being encountered from every direction. The population is very calm, despite the presence of coloured troops who tend to inspire fear in the young girls and women of the island. During the first three days after the cessation of hostilities these fears were not without foundation; but measures adopted by General Magan gradually brought the situation under control. Investigation established that although there were cases of interference with womenfolk, complaints were for the main part greatly exaggerated.

(b)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT - PROVINCIAL.

This was found to be badly disrupted due to the early evacuation of Porto Ferraio - holding nearly 50% of the population of the island. This evacuation began in Sept. 1943, when the Germans bombed and shelled Porto Ferraio prior to occupation as the result of a somewhat feeble resistance offered by the islanders. Moreover a form of passive resistance followed occupation, and appears to have continued on a diminishing scale up to the time of the taking of the island by the French. Bombing of Porto Ferraio by American and British bombers in April 1944 resulted in complete evacuation of the town and surrounding district.

Looting by the Germans, aided to some extent by the civilians, followed. The population of Porto Ferraio sought refuge in other Communes, thus creating partial chaos, and Local Govt. arrangements suffered accordingly. When the French arrived very few Govt. officials could be found. Some had been deported by the Germans and others had gone into hiding. This state of affairs is already partially rectified, in that local Govt. officials have been appointed in each of the 3 Communes, and life is slowly reverting to normal.

(c)

ECONOMIC RESOURCES AND SUPPLY - WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE

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(b)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT - PROVINCIAL.

This was found to be badly disrupted due to the early evacuation of Porto Ferrais - holding nearly 80% of the population of the island. This evacuation began in Sept. 1943, when the Germans bombed and shelled Porto Ferrais prior to occupation as the result of a somewhat feeble resistance offered by the islanders. Moreover a form of passive resistance followed occupation, and appears to have continued on a diminishing scale up to the time of the taking of the island by the French. Bombing of Porto Ferrais by American and British bombers in April 1944 resulted in complete evacuation of the town and surrounding district.

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(c)

ECONOMIC RESOURCES AND SUPPLY - WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE FOOD SITUATION.

The main industries have been completely disrupted since Sept. 1943. Agriculture engages approx. 65% of the working population; Transport, Industry, and Mining 20%; and General Commerce 15%.

Finance. Communes all facing deficit. Loans required to balance. Taxes paid up till end of April only. Rateable values down following war damage and ex-4005 on any State employees have had no salaries for 4 to 5 months. A full report under this heading will be included in next month's report. Insufficient time has elapsed since the cessation of hostilities for the preparation of reliable figures.

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(2)

Iron ore mines. These turn out a very high-grade ore reputed to contain over 60% pure iron. Mines mainly surface-operated could rapidly be brought back into production; but all smelting plant is completely destroyed. It will be necessary to consider shipping the ore elsewhere for treatment.

Fish Canning. Stopped for 3 reasons:-

(a) No oil. (b) No metal for tins. (c) No fishing. Daytime fishing, to cover local food requirements only, will be resumed shortly.

Calcium mines. Situated at Rio Marino. Could be rapidly brought back into service.

Cement works. Porto Porraio. Damaged and looted, but not beyond repair. Production could probably be recommenced in about three months.

Distilleries. Several- very small- structurally undamaged but looted. Could resume output at short notice.

Electrical Plant. Privately owned. Very little damaged. Already back in service for lights only. Diesel oil required. Consumption 3/4 ton daily in summer; 1 1/2 tons daily in autumn and winter.

FOOD SITUATION.

Flour. Almost non-existent. A 5-day famine was reported on arrival of the French. This has since been rectified and a full ration of 300 grammes daily is now being distributed to all Communes. No grain is available for milling; and the milling facilities are inadequate in that they are obviously only designed to cater for the output of grain grown in small-holdings on the island. It is impossible to estimate at this juncture what proportion of the population can be catered for by the locally grown grain. This year's crop will be poor, due to a 7 month's drought. This has also affected the vegetable gardens.

Olive oil. None distributed since Sept. 1943.

Salt. Urgently required. None produced and stocks nil.

Meat. None distributed for two months. Small farmers not badly off, but grave shortage in towns. Live stock protected by co-operation of French General. Stock of tinned meat meat in hand which is about to be distributed in accordance with schedule.

Milk. Urgently required for children, nursing mothers, and invalids. Not included in present relief scheme. Region 6. asked to obtain and supply. The very small local output is insufficient to cater for invalids.

Soap. Grave shortage.

COMMENT:- The people of Alba are very grateful, and have through local officials expressed their keen appreciation of the assistance being rendered.

(d)

AGRICULTURE-PORECHY - FISHERIES.

Agriculture. See para. "C" above. (Copper Sulphate

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AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY - FISHERIES.

Agriculture. See para. "C" above. (Copper Sulphate required for vines).

Forestry. Practically nil.

Fisheries. Hometarily at a standstill. It is proposed to resume day-time fishing shortly. Stopped originally by Germans, and at present impossible to resume due to known presence of mines. Shortage of nets. 2004

(e)

LABOUR.

Plentiful. 2,000 ex-steelworks and mining employees available. Recommend resumption of surface mining for Iron Ore, otherwise heavy relief charges will have to be met.

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(3)

(f) PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES.
Telephones. Lines being repaired. Use at present being restricted to military needs.
Roads. Fairly good. Deteriorated rapidly during operational period owing to passage of heavy vehicles. Unlikely to get much worse. Bridges practically undamaged. No tunnels.
Water supply. Wells in rural districts. Running water in towns. Mains in course of being repaired.
Gas. Nil.
Sanitation. Normal except for Porto Ferrajo.
Railways. Nil.
Transportation. Bus service. At present out of action. Will be resumed shortly subject to provision of diesel oil asked for. Horse-drawn traffic negligible.
Ports. PORTO LONGONE:- wharves and jetty blown up. Port navigable except for mines. RIO MARINA:- excellent port facilities with warehouses. PORTO FERRAIO:- largest port. Good depth. Badly damaged. Jetties and wharves destroyed. Mined. Sunken ships in channels.
MARCIANO MARINA :- Small but undamaged. MARINA DI CAMPO :- Operational landing made here. Shelving beach- two jetties- one blown up during landing.
Shipping. Apart from a few small fishing craft, nothing of consequence remains afloat.

(g) PUBLIC SAFETY AND FUNCTIONING OF (1) Allied Courts
 (2) Italian Courts.

(1) Allied Courts not yet functioning.
 (2) Pretura Court closed.
Carabinieri. Were disbanded, but are now back in service. Lieut. i/c had left for Mainland prior to French invasion.
Guardia di Finanza. ~~assessments~~ Controlled by a 2nd Lieut. Total strength 41. Now completely equipped and operating.
Commissariato of Public Safety. Comprises 8 Agents under control of Commissario.
Quartier Municipale. Present in each Comune. Limited to one or two per Comune.
Fire Brigade. Comprises 21 full-time firemen, equipped and operating from temporary station in outskirts of Porto Ferrajo.
Prisons. State penitentiary at Porto Longone. All prisoners removed to Mainland by Germans. Premises occupied by troops. Steps taken to remedy this.
 Another State penitentiary in Island of Pianosa (included in Comune of Rio Marina) at present holding 396 persons serving sentence. 24 political prisoners were removed by Germans. Conduct and morale both good.
 At Capoliveri there is a Mandamentale prison which was holding 7 detained persons since released by the French.

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 holding 7 detained persons since released by the French.
 Orders given for their re-arrest.
 Condition of all prison buildings good. Sanitation
 normal. Foodstocks nil. No work being done by
 prisoners due to lack of raw materials.
Civil Defense. Non-existent on Island. Rescue and
 First Aid undertaken by Fire Brigade. Ambulance
 requisitioned by French. Civil defense in factories
 non-operative and equipment lost.
Military Police. An irresponsible body effecting
 arrests on an erratic scale without any reference to
 this Hqs. Exact number of persons arrested not known.
 Situation being slowly remedied due partly to change
 of personnel employed; and as result of repeated
 representations made to French General.
Looting. This took place on a prodigious scale. It
 is impossible to determine the direction or degree of
 responsibility; as looting was indulged in first by
 the Germans, then by the civilians, and lastly by the

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by the French native troops who appear to have been trained on the principle that victory automatically entails the right to spoils of war. This situation is also now well under control.

(h) PUBLIC HEALTH, TO INCLUDE WELFARE AND CONDITION OF POPULATION.

No infectious or contagious diseases. Malnutrition rare despite the food shortage. The hospital formerly at Porto Ferrais was evacuated by Germans to Foglio. Number of patients at present 120. Medical supplies urgently needed. Stock of medical supplies intended for civilian needs on island was lost or passed into hands of French. Endeavour being made to obtain replacement from French; and in addition request forwarded to Region 5. for further supplies. Welfare and Public Assistance necessary for certain elements of industrial population. Grave shortage of boots and shoes.

(i) EDUCATION. All schools were closed some months before the arrival of the French, by order of the Germans. It is not proposed at this juncture to institute any early change.

(j) REFUGEES. The whole of the inhabitants of Porto Ferrais, amounting to more than 12,000 were dispersed between Sept. 1943 and April 1944 into other Communes all over the island. This does not in itself constitute any immediate problem as all were housed on an emergency basis more or less well before the French arrived. Nevertheless a heavy percentage of these people are homeless and in due course the problem will have to be faced. It is not merely a matter of damaged houses; the contents have been completely pillaged. The financial plight of some of these homeless refugees is dire in the extreme and is not improving. There is however no danger of rioting or serious disturbance. The population even in over-crowded country districts is very calm.

(k) COMMUNICATIONS. Roads... Good. Rail... Nil. ~~Telecommunication~~... Repairs in hand. At present limited to use by the military. Postal arrangements... Not working. Can be resumed at short notice. Mainly a transport problem. Officials available. Radio and Cables... Radio station blown up. Nothing known yet as to condition of cables to mainland. Bus service... Being resumed within a few days by three Diesel-engined vehicles. Oil for these included in amount asked for from G.4. at A.C.C. Mors.

(l) PROPERTY CONTROL. A separate report under this heading is being prepared and will be forwarded when

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(C.P. MURCHIE)

Major.

Latin Civil Affairs Office

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