

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

ACC

10000/105/236

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REGIONAL CONFERENCES
MAY - SEPT. 1944

S. JORDEN

1. In this report I shall only lightly touch on matters relating to the Economic Section as Lt.Col.C.M.Sharpe who accompanied me is reporting in detail and will himself take up the points arising with the Sub-Commissions concerned.

2. On 2 Sep I attended the R.C.'s weekly conference for officers. There were few points of interest and the meeting was of brief duration. The R.C. emphasised the remarks of Gen. Maitland Wilson at the R.C.'s Conference and directed that all officers would read the Minutes of the Conference. The R.C. is touring the Island week commencing 11 Sep.

5. At a conference with Lt. Col. Sharpe and myself afterwards, the R.C. made the following points in connection with the wheat crop and rations:

- (a) Up to Aug 29 203,000 quintals of wheat had been collected.
(b) The Island grows mainly hard grain suitable for making pasta and this is exported ~~in~~ exports soft grain for bread.
(c) The crop varies considerably from year to year from 40,000 - 60,000 tons.
(d) This year the crop sown is good but slack administration by the Government resulted in insufficient sowing and suspected consumption of the seed grain. It is not expected that more than 30,000 tons will be collected.
(e) The Island has never been self supporting and a round figure of 100,000 tons may be taken as necessary to feed the population.
(f) Measures taken to publicise Granal del Popolo include showings of the wheat film by two mobile units and in the cinemas. It is showing at the new cinema in CAMLIARI and at the first showing the R.C. and High Commissioner addressed the audience.
(g) It has only recently come to light at HQ ACC I believe that there are four ration scales in use on the Island.
(h) The number of ration card holders is estimated as being 840,000 of a population of 1,200,000 or 70%. The H.C. has been told that the percentage must be reduced to 65%. New ration cards have not yet been received.

4. In further reference to Ration Scales attention is directed to the R.C.'s letter dated 4 September making future recommendations, and also the Monthly Report for Aug of Lt.Col. Chayton, Food Officer.

5. Industry and Commerce. Principle items of interest are the large quantities of sheepskins, hides and salt available for export. There are a number of tanneries on the Island but none can operate due to lack of tannin, so that shoes cannot be made or repaired. It is said that there is tannin available on Corsica but the French will not sell to the Sards.

6. Coal Mining: Visited CARBONIA on which money was lavished during the Mussolini era. It has modern equipment and housing for employees and cost of coal at the pithead is 148 lire per ton whilst the cost of production is more than double this figure. It is the opinion of Major Matthews (A), who is one of the two Mining Inspectors there, that Sardinian coal has not been loaded in

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7. Transport: Decree with regard to ENAC has not been applied here but will be on Lt. Col. Sharpe's recommendation. In an investigation of the transport organization it was found to be slackly operated with deliberate evasion of restrictions. The monthly FUL indent is approximately 15,000 tons and it is recommended this is cut by 25% without giving the Italian authorities opportunity to justify their figures.

8. Finance: An impost of 25% is applied to all imported food excepting grain and flour. This impost is made up of dock charges, handling, transportation and two additions of 2% to cover overheads of middlemen. As examples the following are landed and prices to consumer:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Landed Price</u>	<u>Price to Consumer</u>
Sugar	13.00	16.60 +
Soup	24.00	31.30
Dried Veg.	24.00	29.30 +
Powdered milk	13.00	16.50
Soap	19.00	25.20

+ middleman's percentage is not added to these items.

The Sards are extremely poor and can afford little more than the bare necessities of life. Arrangements are being made for shipment to the mainland of hundreds of cases of dried vegetables and dried milk because it is stated the people cannot afford to pay for them.

9. Public Health: After 30 days in hospital Italian troops become civil responsibility. Regian VI first knew of this when Italian Comd showed Col. Dobas a letter concerning "in accordance with instructions received from ACC Army S.C."

Typhoid: A few cases, not abnormal.

Malaria: Only a fifth of cases last year (July period).

Medical Supplies: Adequate.

10. Legals: Case against Gen. Martini which has been pending for months is now ready for hearing except for the witness COCCINI who depends from Maristat, Ministry of Marine. The attendance of this witness is vital and he should be sent over at once. First President of Court of Appeal is required. VORZ has gone to the mainland and has not yet been replaced.

11. Political: Nothing outstanding. Present situation covered by Monthly Report.

12. Establishment:

(a) Regional Personnel consists of 19 officers, 17 OR's, 18 N/A.
CASILIANI Province HQ is at Regional HQ.
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CAGLIARI Province HQ is at Regional HQ.
NUORO Province is not operative.
SASSARI Province has one AOC representative, a PSO who lives at SASSARI.

(b) A pointy which an urgent decision is required is the employment by the Region of Italian Army personnel - 1 Officer and 22-989. The Italian Army is being withdrawn at a rapid rate, but it is intended to leave one low establishment division. Authority is required to form a platoon, strength as above, for employment by the Region but attached to the Italian Division for administration and discipline. This detachment is already with the Region and employed on guard duties, driving, vehicle maintenance and the like, and is extremely useful. The men are good types and have fitted well into the Regional organization.

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- (c) As requested by Col. Clough I asked Col. Pennycuik what his plans would be as regards supplies when the military installations leave the Island. He is still considering the matter but proposes to obtain a three months' supply of rations. They have a cold storage plant in CAGLIARI so fresh meat could be stored also. NAATI and PX appear a difficulty. Three months supply could be obtained but would have to be paid for on delivery, a considerable financial outlay.

13. Public Safety: Carabinieri strengths and prospective reductions have already been fully discussed but one point may require attention. The Carabinieri have about 500 horses for which forage has been obtained from the Italian Army, but with the latter's departure this supply is ceasing. Another small supply has been located but when this is used up there is no more forthcoming and it will have to be imported, especially for the winter. These horses assist mobility which becomes more important as the force is decreased in numbers.
14. Public Works and Utilities: Water supply is precarious until the rains come and present supplies are coming from reserves. It is stated that the military authorities are not cooperating sufficiently in the conservation of these reserves. There are no restrictions on electricity supplies and tramways are in full operation. Railways are operating under normal conditions.
15. General Remarks: CAGLIARI was heavily bombed and one would have expected more energetic measures to clear up debris. Shortage of transport is said to be the trouble. In a location where it might be all too easy for morale to be low I was struck by the atmosphere of business. Officers are cheerful and blend well together, CR's and EM are well turned out and disciplined. Relations with Italians appear to be correct with satisfactory liaison with opposite numbers in the Italian administration.

The Sards are of unimpressive appearance and character, emphasized perhaps by complete lack of soap. On the whole they do not look well nourished but poverty restricts their purchasing power regardless of the amount of food-stuffs available.



E. S. MORDEN,
Captain.

C.A. Br.

Report on Region I Conference,
Palermo, 24 May 44.

To: VP Adm Section.

For Special
attention
or action.

I duly attended the conference at Palermo and attach an agenda of the meeting which commenced at 0045 and did not finish until about 1830 hours.

Generally: The principal impression left upon me by the proceedings is the importance of the presence at these conferences of staff officers from HQ. Here provincial officers discuss their difficulties; so better opportunity could possibly be conceived of feeling the pulse of the whole Region, of ascertaining local conditions and opinions and of giving guidance as to policy or advice on difficulties. In my opinion it is essential that the three sections, HC & MG, Admin and Econ should invariably be represented and that in addition the principal policy - forming and administrative sub-comms should frequently attend by the Director or his Deputy and that the Directors of other Sub-Comms or their Deputies should attend at least once in every three months. There was so much that a Director could usefully have heard or said that I put the attendance of these conferences at a high priority importance. I recommend that the combined Duties of a Director and his Deputy should be so arranged as to ensure freedom for attendance at these Conferences in the case of the more important Sub-Comms preferably every month and of other Sub-Comms once in every three months.

There still exists in Regions a misconception as to the respective responsibilities of RCMG and Sub-Comms which can most quickly and most surely be eradicated by the presence of senior responsible officers exercising their functions.

Control and direction does not consist merely of legislation. Not until one is in touch with difficulties and can guide and advise those on the ground and the latter are so imbued with the spirit and aim of the policy as to follow the intention without instruction can control and direction really be said to exist.

It is suggested that of the Adm Sec Sub-Comms, Legal, Interior, Health and Safety should attend Regional Conferences at least every ~~three~~ month and the remaining three Sub-Comms should attend once a quarter. The attendance should be co-ordinated by Admin Staff to even attendances and prevent the imposition of an undue burden.

Regional Commissioner's Remarks.

Wheat harvest is the principal anxiety. Neglect by the Italian Govt to follow proper channel of communication causes a little friction. Country appears to be settling down; the wider base of central government seems to have satisfied local opinion. Representation on the Giunta Comissale should be similarly widened.

The expedient of appointing local commissars should be terminated if possible by appointing sindaco and local councils. One Province alone has 32 commissars. Some trouble has been caused by the fact that AMI paid sindaco whereas they are no longer paid. The question as to whether they can be re-imbursed for out of pocket expenses would be looked into. Would welcome attendance of heads of principal Sub-Comms at conferences.

Provincial Commissioner's Reports:

AGRIGENTO:

Food - Black Bread 45/100 L.p.kilo. Bean and grain crops good. Political- Communist is strongest party. Loggia intriguing against Muscatto, ~~483~~ with Alaisio. Supplies - good - rail thefts e.g. holes cut in roofs of train.

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The expedient of appointing local commissioners should be terminated if possible by appointing sindaco and local councils. One Province alone has 32 commissioners. Some trouble has been caused by the fact that AMI paid sindaco salaries they are no longer paid. The question as to whether they can be re-imbursed for out of pocket expenses would be looked into. Would welcome attendance of heads of principal Sub-Comms at conferences.

Provincial Commissioner's Reports: ALBA

Food - Black Bread 45/100 L.p.kilo. Bean and grain crops good. Political-Communist is strongest party. Loggia intriguing against Masetto, 483 with Aldoio. Supplies - good - rail thefts e.g. holes cut in roofs of grain wagon; brace and bit hole through floor so grain pours out. Labour - no change. Sulphur mines are difficult; at one mine only a 100 out of 1,300 at work.

Refugees - about 2,000 - refuse to spend their cash allowance on ground that everything should be found for them. Apparently do not consider the cash allowance as a part of the method of providing for their needs; the allowance is just their's. Crime - on downgrade - Red Cross clothing has been stolen. Petrol - notice of reduction of petrol allowance was not received until after civil ration had been issued. This left insufficient to keep essential services going. Had therefore exceeded his allowance.

CALABRESA & REGGIO

Interior - no Prefect. Vice Prefect not very satisfactory and will be removed when de-fascistisation is undertaken and is therefore not working. The local defascistising commissions should themselves be concerned; they are not yet working.

Food - Dislike of imported emergency foodstuffs - crushed beans are accepted but not liked. Dried soup is disliked, and condensed and powdered milk are regarded with suspicion. Crop prospects excellent.

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Political - Prime and Political parties are Christian Democrats and Communists.
Black Market - Bread 50 L. P.M. Refugees - about 1,500 are completely ungrateful for anything that is done for them.

CATANIA:

Defascistisation Committee formed but not working.
Food - scale is defective - there has been no increase of height or weight of children. Regate for unskilled labour paid by Army only 50 lire per day. These rates should have been increased by 70%, civil rate is 80/90 lire per day. Grain stocks are finished and now question of need to mouth supplies from Messina. Army has asked for public lavatories to be provided, for over 2,000 years Sicilians have not used lavatories and does not want lavatories. Question is who will pay for the lavatories which the Army wants erected.

MESSINA:

Stevedore rates are proving a difficulty - they are not high enough to attract labour. There are insufficient schooners for the island's needs, at least six more are required yet ten are lying idle in Messina harbour which are quite suitable for coastwise traffic.

PALERMO & TRAPANI:

Quiet - Crime, no change - some increases in number of cases of wire cutting - considerable length lead covered cable removed which is apparently an act of sabotage. Forged 1,000 lire notes in circulation, excellent imitations, 39 arrests have been made. 45 million Lire forged notes seized. OC Troops states no need to enforce Blackout but no official instruction on point has been received. G-4 has given instructions that cars required for Sub-Commission's officers in the Regions should be requisitioned. Latest provision for Allied troops - travelling brothels for isolated Al Sites.

Age 65 given as reason for unsuitability of Palombo for promotion was an excuse, his background is unsatisfactory, is alleged fascist - further investigation is being made. He is a Christian Democrat. Aldisio is installing his friends. Military Courts are frequently asked for by the Army for stealing army stores, it has been made clear that this is not allowable. Crop yield estimated excellent. Nervous about high cost of living. Mines have had to close owing to the shortage of materials - long lists of supplies urgently required to keep mines working have been supplied to HQ but nothing happens. More work is necessary to be done it takes as much as 3 months to get the request for funds through the mill before work can start. The work meanwhile waits. Refugees badly need summer clothing, 75 tons in Palermo is not allowed to be touched as it is said to be earmarked for Rome. Communes are not linked by telephone, further extensions are urgently needed.

Untried cases - some accused have been ten years awaiting trial. Provincial Commissioners will try to expedite trials. Many Italian civilians draw petrol in cars or must it be delivered into their car tanks.

Health: Approve of Italian Regional MCH scheme, he would stand to the Provincial MCH in a position somewhat analogous to the English Minister of Health stands to the county MCH. Cars were required for material control. Could petrol be spared for street watering. Some arrangements must be made to control retail price of medicines, were the Guardia Finanza suitable for this. The new welfare scheme was welcomed.

Safety: Sabotage - wire cutting had increased, probably more theft than vice but special mixed patrols of military and civil police had been organised to deal with it. Police patrols were being used to search for grain in cars.

Divisional Matters:

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Safety: Sabotage - wire cutting had increased, probably more theft than vice but special mixed patrols of military and civil police had been organised to deal with it. Police patrols were being used to search for grain, in one case 40 tons had been found. Certain senior officials and Allied officers were involved. Provincial committees for defascistising were not working. Recruitment of Scheda Personale not completed. Scheme for release of prisoners of War was outlined to meeting.

Education: Minister of Education was not clearing through the HC. Sindici and CMAs are responsible for enforcing school attendance. 15% children absent for want of food or clothing.

Finance: Instructions have been given that Finance Officers are no longer to act as Sub-Accountants. ACC Finance officers in the field are to concentrate on trying to get Italian officials to do their job. Provincial Commissioners have now to undertake work of Sub-accountants or detail another officer to do it and none can be spared. In the case of Syracuse this is a great hardship as unfostered trade valued at 35 million lire a month has sprung up between Malta and Syracuse and all finance is conducted through ACC, every merchant has to be paid and every payment means 5 or 6 signatures.

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It is suggested that Maita should send over its own buying agent in order to pay merchants from whom supplies are bought and arrange for banks to pay merchants. It may facilitate matters if a system of payment by bills were organized. Inflation control is in Naples.

The trouble with regard to payment of consorts of grain, (some growers have not yet been paid for last year's crop) is mostly due to the fact that growers have not submitted proper claims or accounts. Under the circumstances many producers are averse from selling this year's crop.

Of 353 communal budgets, only 12 have been received in satisfactory form. 54 more have been received wanting certain particulars; from 287 communes no budget of any form has been received. Communes do not want the scheme to work. Funds are at present supplied, they do not want to rely on what they have got to get in. Finance officers must get out and put pressure on communes.

Agriculture: Collection of potato crop is starting - no control of sales. Army

requirements will be covered by requisition. Principal problem is caused by price of wheat having been fixed at 1,000.

Procedure should be to check the register of citizens, deduct deaths and moves out, add births and moves in, which should show the population. Allowance has

then to be made for those entitled to ration cards. HQ thinks that 50% only of the population requires ration cards. Experience shows that the population varies according to the principal industry to from 60% to 70%. With regard to HQ proposals for control of wheat and wheat prices. It will be extremely difficult to form the proposed local committees of two farmers and two farm workers.

No farmer will neglect his farm at the height of the most important and busiest period of the farm year any more than farm workers can afford to lose the work which is by far the most highly paid of the year.

The price offered is totally inadequate - in addition to special harvest pay, harvesters receive 1 kilo bread and 1 litre of wine per day. Fixed salary employees receive two quintals per labourer plus extra for members of the family. The only way grain will be brought in will be by amassing the whole. Price must be 1,700 - 2,000 per quintal, 1,000 will not get the grain in. Inhabitants will buy sufficient grain to last them the year. The peoples view is that this inadequate price proves that fascist rule still prevails and that they are still being exploited. For these among other reasons, it is most advisable to apply a decree of May 43 which was drawn up by a Fascist Government. Labour costs 30 lire per hour or 300 lire per day. Threshing costs 200 lire per quintal. It will be impossible to get grain in at 1,000 lire. Rich peasants will evade the law and supply the black market at a remunerative price and not amass at a loss. Total requisitions is essential - milling permits should be abolished. The peasants have not the same objection to a total requisition as they have to amassing. Farmers should not be left with grain for any purpose. They should buy back their needs and have ration cards. It is impossible to enforce the present system rigorously when the farmer is allowed to retain grain on all sorts of grounds and this grain is merely embezzled, there is room for all sorts of fraud and collusion. A large number of relatively small funds aggregate to an immense loss. The penalty for fraud should be imprisonment and not fine. Cleaners should be allowed to work, what is left to them is impossible to collect, they even pick up individual grains but the total amounts to 15,000 quintals, this cannot be taken into account but it is so much more food. If cleaning is forbidden, this food will just be lost.

There is general dismay, disillusion and disapproval at the price which has been fixed. The cost of growing the crop is not covered, the estimated total cost of production is 1,600 lire. This is the absolutely unanimous view of all Provincial Commissioners. Ration must be increased. If increased it may completely ruin

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by price of wheat having been fixed at 1,000. Checking of Ration Cards, procedure should be to check the register of citizens, deduct deaths and moves out, add births and moves in, which should show the population. Allowance has then to be made for those entitled to producer's marks milling cards and the remainder should be those entitled to ration cards. HQ thinks that 50% only of the population requires ration cards. Experience shows that the population varies according to the principal industry to from 60% to 70%. With regard to HQ proposals for control of wheat and wheat prices. It will be extremely difficult to form the proposed local committees of two farmers and two farm workers. No farmer will neglect his farm at the height of the most important and busiest period of the farm year any more than farm workers can afford to lose the work which is by far the most highly paid of the year. The price offered is totally inadequate - in addition to special harvest pay, harvesters receive 1 kilo bread and 1 litre of wine per day. Fixed salary employees receive two quintals per labourer plus extra for members of the family. The only way grain will be brought in will be by amassing the whole. Price must be 1,700 - 2,000 per quintal, 1,000 will not get the grain in. Inhabitants will buy sufficient grain to last them the year. The peoples view is that this inadequate price proves that fascist rule still prevails and that they are still being exploited. For these among other reasons, it is most advisable to apply a decree of May 43 which was drawn up by a Fascist Government. Labour costs 30 lire per hour or 300 lire per day. Threshing costs 200 lire per quintal. It will be impossible to get grain in at 1,000 lire. Rich peasants will evade the law and supply the black market at a remunerative price and not amass at a loss. Total requisitions is essential - milling permits should be abolished. The peasants have not the same objection to a total requisition as they have to amassing. Farmers should not be left with grain for any purpose. They should buy back their needs and have ration cards. It is impossible to enforce the present system rigorously when the farmer is allowed to retain grain on all sorts of grounds and this grain is merely estimated, there is room for all sorts of fraud and collusion. A large number of relatively small frauds aggregate to an immense loss. The penalty for fraud should be imprisonment and not fine. Harvesters should be allowed to work, what is left to them is impossible to collect, they even pick up individual grains but the total amounts to 15,000 quintals, this cannot be taken into account but it is so much more food. If cleaning is forbidden, this food will just be lost. There is general dismay, disillusion and disapproval at the price which has been fixed. The cost to harvesters of growing the crop is not covered; the estimated total cost of production is 1,600 lire. This is the absolutely unanimous view of all Provincial Commissioners. Ration must be increased. If increased it may completely kill the black market. The crop will be large enough to allow of a ration big enough to make resort to the black market unnecessary. If the price is not increased the Region is faced with the prospect of facing insurrection or starvation. Stocks in hand are not sufficient to give the extra ration for harvesters which is laid down in the instruction received from Rome. In order to provide this ration an extra 5,000 tons of wheat would be required. Economics: No 1 District is proposing to confiscate goods for alleged illicit export. It is suggested that neither they nor ACC have powers to confiscate goods, action for confiscation for this reason should only be effected through the Italian Courts.

Censorship: One officer only would be on ACC strength, he will be in charge of the whole censorship group, which consists of one Italian civilian for each province who will supervise work of the Prefect's censorship departments.

-4-

Transport: Instructions as to the provision of cars for ACC officials and for Italian officials received from G-4 and Supply Sub-Comm were conflicting. One instructed them to derequisition cars and procure the re-requisitioning by the Italian Government, the other required that cars for Italian officials should be borne on ACC strength if petrol was to be obtained. Cars derequisitioned first should be those whose tyres, batteries etc could not be obtained from military sources.

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ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
SICILY REGION I

Provincial Commissioners - Conference - 24 MAY 1944

AGENDA

A. MORNING - 0845

1. Regional Commissioner's Remarks

R.C.

BREAK 0945 - 1030 Visit to
Italian War
Memorial

2. Provincial Commissioners' Reports
1030

- a. AGRIGENTO
- b. CALTANISSETTA & ENNA
- c. CATANIA
- d. MESSINA
- e. PALERMO & TRAPANI
- f. SYRACUSE & RAGUSA

Maj Walters
Maj Radice
Maj Giles
Lt Col Ramsey
Lt Col Thomas
Lt Col Thurburn

B. AFTERNOON - 1415

3. Divisional Items

- a. LEGAL
 - i. Completion of legal reports.
 - ii. Plans for tour of legal officers
- b. Public Health & Public Welfare
Refugees
- c. T.C.U.P.W.
 - i. Military rds & rd estimates
 - ii. Clearing of towns AUGUST.
- d. Public Safety
 - i. Wire sabotage
 - ii. Reorganisation
 - iii. P.S.O. concern for grain collection
 - iv. Defascism
- e. Agriculture
 - i. Propaganda campaign
 - ii. Communal committees
- f. Economics & Supplies
 - i. Progress of handover to

1415 R.L.O.

1425 R.P.H.O. &
R.P.W.O.

1440 Regional
Engineering Office

1450 R.P.S.O.

1500 R.P.S.O.

1515 Maj Dring

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- i. Military rds & rd estimates
- ii Clearing of towns AUGUST.

- d. Public Safety

1450 R.P.S.O.

- i. Wire sabotage
- ii Reorganisation
- iii P.S.O. concern for grain collection
- iv Defascism

- e. Agriculture

1500 R.P.S.O.

- i. Propaganda campaign
- ii Communal committees

- f. Economics & Supplies

1515 Maj Dring

- i. Progress of handover to Italian authorities
- ii Rations and pay harvest workers
- iii Seizure by 1 DISTRICT of goods for alleged illicit export
- iv Release of freight cars.

(See Office also)

- g. Finance

- i. Funds held by A.C.C./M.C.

1530 R.C.F.O.
Office

- ii Pay for Needy Nationals
- iii Inflation

1545 R.C.

4. Domestic Items	1600
a. Personnel	R.C. & R.E.O.
i. Reductions - Priority lists.	
i. M.G./A.C.C.	
ii. Duty Officers	
iii. Medical inoculation	
b.. Course in Interior Adm 6-14 JUN	R.C.
c. Instructions for the Guidance of Offrs of the Commission	R.C.
d. Requisition procedure	R.C. & Adm Offr.
e. Surplus typewriters on amal- gamation	E.O.
f. Transport	
i. A.C.C. Cars	R.E.O.
ii. Cars for Italian Govt Officials	R.C.

DISTRIBUTION A.

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