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MONTHLY REPORTS, AMG LIAISON OFFICER, CATANIA
MAY - AUG. 1945

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18 SET. 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OFFICER

CLATANIA

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MONTHLY REPORT - AUGUST 1945.

SUMMARY

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GENERAL

PART II.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC SAFETY AND COURTS
PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, REFUGEES
ECONOMICS, RESOURCES AND SUPPLY
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PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES

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18 SEP 1969

18 SEP 1969

General.

The political field has been fairly quiet and party activity on a reduced scale. The mass of the population do not appear to be politically minded and are more interested in matters affecting their economic life. The average Sicilian is content with the simple necessities of life. Membership of the various political parties represents only a small fraction of the population. Many years will be required to overcome the rooted mistrust in olive and political leaders. The problems involved by the General Election are in the foreground, and efforts are being made to increase party membership, especially by parties of the "left". The "Chullo" device is still a source of discontent to both landowners and peasants, and the administration of the Consorzio Agrario lends itself to much criticism. The arrival of certain American officials at Palermo caused many rumors, and in some cases, a hope that they were to take over the administration of the island. The Separatists continue their active propaganda and are taking full advantage of the present difficulties of the Government.

The economic situation is worsening due to the continued shortage of raw materials and lack of coal. Many plants have been obliged to reduce output, and many employees have been rendered idle. The labour market has been further disrupted by the return of service men and prisoners, and Provincial Labour Offices report about 40,000 registered unemployed in Eastern Sicily, and this figure represents only a small part of the actual number. The cost of living has shown an increase and it is expected a further rise will occur with the approach of winter.

Grain collection is very poor; farmers are reluctant to sell their grain to the masses at a price less than the cost of production. In Catania Province the grain masses during August 44 was 100,000 quintals, as against the 5,412 quintals assessed during August 45, and a similar reduction in assessing is reported in all provinces. Coercive measures are not being used, and the mobilis squads of police supervising the collection are totally inadequate. There have been no grain shipments to either Catania or Messina during the month. Exports consisted chiefly of citrus fruits to a total of 238,773 tons, and about 6,000 litres of wine. Crops are generally poor owing to the continued drought. The coal situation is still hard to mouth and becoming desperate. Domestic lighting is supplied on two evenings each week, usually after 10 pm, and the shortage of power is seriously

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Grain collection is very poor, farmers are reluctant to sell their grain to the masses at a price less than the cost of production. In Catania Province the grain assessed during August 44 was 180,000 quintals, as against the 5,416 quintals assessed during August 45, and a similar reduction in assessing is reported in all provinces. Coercive measures are not being used, and the mobile squads of police supervising the collection are totally inadequate. There have been no grain shipments to either Catania or Messina during the month. Exports consisted chiefly of citrus fruits to a total of 238,777 tons, and about 6,000 litres of wine. Crops are generally poor owing to the continued drought. The coal situation is still hard to north and becoming desperate. Domestic lighting is supplied on two evenings each week, usually after 10 pm, and the shortage of power is seriously affecting industry.

Reconstruction work is being expended in an effort to reduce unemployment. Over one milliard and a half lire have been allotted by the Government for public works in Sicily. The health of the population has remained fairly good and there have been no outbreaks of epidemic. Welfare work is carried on by many institutions, assistance to poor children is being rendered by C.N.R.I., and Reduef are being rehabilitated as quickly as possible.

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Public safety remains the most urgent problem, delinquency is on the increase and country districts are infested with armed bands who resort to robbery, kidnapping, and extortion. The authorities are without adequate means to combat this situation. These conditions can be attributed to adverse economic conditions, unemployment, and unrest in agricultural areas. The public have no respect for authority and administrative officials in general.

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POLITICAL REACTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION.

Political activity during the month has been on a reduced scale. The mass of the population appear to remain aloof from politics, it is reported that Catania, which has a population of some 250,000, has only 10,000 members of the various political parties. The people are far more interested in the economic state of family life which directly concerns them, food, money, and work. The rural population is devoid of political education, and readily absorbs the doubtful propaganda of some parties. Moreover, there is a deep rooted mistrust of politicians, the belief being that they are out for their own ends rather than the well-being of the people.

The diverse problems of the General Election are proving debatable subjects for discussion by the various parties. Efforts are being made to spread propaganda and gain new adherents, this is particularly apparent in the case of the Communist and Socialist Parties. Present difficult conditions and able propaganda are winning the sympathies of many people to the Separatist Movement. The "Gullo" decrees and the functions of the Consorzio Agrario are both items of animated discussion and some discontent. The recent decrees modifying the division of produce has caused a good deal of alarm amongst owners, and bitterness amongst the peasants. These latter, urged on by leftist propaganda, threaten to take matters into their own hands.

The arrival at Palermo of a certain number of American Officials was responsible for a good deal of speculation and rumours. Some rumours conveyed that they had come to take over the administration of the Island, and, moreover, that they were all of Sicilian-American descent. This event was fully exploited by the Head of the Separatists (FINOCCHIARO Aprile), in the form of letters, leaflets, and through the press. Separatist propaganda has been very much intensified recently, and appears to increase in ratio to the economic difficulties. The discussion of Sicilian problems by the Government, and the promises of more liberal treatment for Sicily, has come in for a good deal of comment. The scepticism are exploited by the Separatists, they speak of the bad treatment to Southerners in the North, and point to a marked difference in the economic conditions there, as compared with those obtaining in the South. This seed of discontent easily taken root among the dissatisfied classes.

Rumours of mass war reparations together with territorial

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Rumors of huge war reparations, together with territorial sacrifices are also subjects of discontent. The people are hoping for generous peace terms and Allied assistance in the way of industrial rehabilitation. Much resentment was shown against Jugoslavia due to the fact that this was the only Country to request U.N.R.R. aid, not to help Italy. Generally speaking the situation is one of expectancy for a square deal, and the realization of the promises held out by the Government. Should these not materialize, the elements of unrest in Sicily will become a serious problem.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

No improvement in local Government is apparent either at the Provincial or Communal level. There are many obstacles in the way of effective and efficient administration, such as party intrigues and personal interests. Furthermore, there is a good deal of dissatisfaction among Provincial and Municipal employees with regard to salaries. The recent increase is not considered sufficient in view of the high cost of living and many employees, without private incomes, are obliged to resort to other means of augmenting their incomes in order to adequately maintain their families. In some cases this leads to corruption and throws discredit on local administration and public officials. The situation has been further aggravated owing to the fact that many employees who were engaged during the war period, are now being dismissed and replaced by Partisans and Reduci.

The public have little respect for public authority and decrees and ordinances are never strictly applied, and in general are ignored. Quite often decrees and ordinances are modified as a result of political party influences. This has been ironically commented on in the press and resulted in the resignation of the Commissario agli Alloggi. Changes of Sindaci and Commissarii are frequently reported. Catania still has an acting Sindaco, all other candidates nominated have been withdrawn owing to the conflicting interests of the political parties. The financial situation of many Communes is bad owing to the fact that revenue is not sufficient to maintain the high cost of the public services. It is not felt that there will be any improvement before the General Elections are held.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND COURTS.

With the exception of a demonstration at Messina, no grave public disorders have occurred during the month. Major crimes are still at a very high level and delinquency is notably on the increase. The country districts are infested with bandits, the number of which is increasing every day. The usual crimes are robbery, often with violence, kidnapping and extortion. The percentage of murders is still very high. The Police authorities have not the means to suppress the activities of the armed bands in the rural areas and this has resulted in almost collective panic in these areas. Very often the victims prefer to come to an arrangement with the bandits, rather than denounce them, and this increases the audacity of the bandits and adds

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Good work has been accomplished by the Police Forces in breaking up many gangs, but others quickly form. A train was recently held up at Licata by fifty armed bandits, equipped with rifles, sub-machine guns and hand grenades. The passengers were searched and robbed of everything and the shooting resulted in deaths and injuries. The creation of mobile squads has deprived many stations of men and this increased the difficulties of the service. A bus containing 50 passengers was held up near Enna and these people were robbed. A rather serious demonstration took place at Messina where a large number of Reduci thronged the streets demanding work. The demonstrators overcame the resistance of Police guarding the public buildings and occupied the Prefecture, Municipio, and Labour Offices. Carabinieri were despatched from Catania and calm restored on the following day. Minor disturbances have also taken place in the small

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Towns and the peasants have demonstrated against the Decree "Gullo". Unrest and delinquency are a direct consequence of the rise in unemployment. This rise is due to the lack of coal and raw materials in general, also to transport and bureaucratic difficulties. The low price paid by the Amaseo is causing many farmers to leave land unsown and thus reduce labour costs.

This general dissatisfaction is creating a very receptive element for political propaganda, especially from the Separatists. They stress the fact that the North is better treated than the South, and that everything is taken from Sicily but with little return. This propaganda is winning many adherents to the Separatist Movement. Notices have been posted in towns stating that EVIS (the Separatist Army) is ready to fight for independence, and calling on the people to support them when "X" hour is called. The Separatists are demanding a plebiscite and free press, and the Movement is bound to make headway under the prevailing conditions.

COURTS.

Cases involving Allied interests have again risen from 224 at the end of July, to 236 at the end of August, of which 124 are at Catania, 64 at Messina, and 48 at Syracuse. Important trials involving gangsters have been before the Italian Courts, the chief of which was the trial of the "Puzelli" gang, charged with murders, robberies, etc. Prisons are still overcrowded. Clandestine emigration to Tripolitania has almost ceased.

PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, REFUGEES.

The health of the civilian population has been favorable during August and there have been no outbreaks of epidemics. A considerable increase in typhoid and para-typhoid has been reported in all Provinces. One case of typhus was reported at MIZZA (Messina Prov), and another at Lentini, (Syracuse Prov). Prompt action was taken to prevent a spread of the disease and no further cases have been reported. The number of infectious diseases reported totaled 435, which included 94 cases of scabies, and 161 cases of typhoid and para-typhoid. 15 persons were reported to have been bitten by dogs suspected of rabies.

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The Soup Kitchens have continued to function during August, though on a reduced scale, and the scheme whereby poor children are taken to the sea each day, has also continued. UNRRA products have been distributed regularly and Communal Committees have been formed to supervise distribution to destitute children and institutions. Provincial Committees for assistance to Reduci are doing all possible to give help, but they cannot offer employment.

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The number of refugees in Eastern Sicily at the end of August was 1,074, of whom 1000 are from Libya and whose plight is almost desperate. Many refugees are arriving here from Rome expecting to find transport to Tripoli, and many of them are now stranded and without means of support.

The economic situation in Eastern Sicily during August has shown no signs of improvement. The normal bread and pasta ration of 300 grams has been maintained. The quality of this ration is still subject to a great deal of complaint and Messina reports that bread is superior to the flour used for the bread and pasta ration. Grain threshing has not been completed in all Provinces, but production is low, as reported last month, due to the continued drought. Grain amassing is proceeding very slowly, producers are reluctant to hand over their grain at the Amasso price and the bulk of it is finding its way on to the black market. The following comparative table shows the results of the grain campaign in Eastern Sicily to date:-

Province	Grain Amassed August 1944 Quintals	Grain Amassed August 1945 Quintals	Total Amassed to date Quintals	Minimum quota to be Amassed 1945-46
Catania	130,000.00	5,412.52	5,995.14	70,000
Messina	5,995.49	2,405.13	3,423.13	10,000
Syracuse	69,255.54	13,985.48	16,347.77	30,000
Enna	47,886.22	13,545.88	15,312.42	25,000
Trapani	89,134.74	3,859.30	4,435.92	85,000
Total	342,273.99	39,214.31	44,509.18	220,000

Total Barley amassed to date is 1,283.35 quintals.

The amassing situation is becoming all the more serious as producers have no intention of bringing their grain to the Amasso. Moreover, the measures taken to enforce grain collection are far from being efficient. The C.L.N. for Sicily has held a meeting and issued an order of the day requesting both large and small producers to comply with the amassing laws. The few mobile squads of the Police Forces, responsible for supervising the grain collection, are badly handicapped in the execution of their duties due to the unserviceability of their transport. Only very small quantities of grain have been confiscated to date.

The total amount of olive oil amassed in Eastern Sicily during the month was only 18 quintals. The Olive and Almond this year are considered to be fair, but they are suffering damage

Catania	130,000.00	5,418.52	5,995.14	70,000
Messina	5,959.45	2,405.13	2,423.13	10,000
Syracuse	60,235.54	13,985.48	15,342.77	30,000
Ragusa	47,886.22	13,545.83	15,312.43	25,000
Trani	89,134.74	3,855.30	4,435.92	85,000
Total	342,275.99	39,214.31	44,509.36	220,000

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The total amount of olive oil amassed in Eastern Sicily during the month was only 18 quintals. The Olive and Almond ³⁴⁶ this year are considered to be fair, but they are suffering damage from the sirocco winds. Wine production will be reduced this year due to the continued drought affecting the grape crops. Agriculture produce in general will be scarce owing to lack of fertilizers, drugs and shortage of water for irrigation.

No grain shipments have arrived at Catania or Messina during August. Exports to the Mainland from Eastern Sicily consisted only 236,773 tons of citrus fruits, 5,684,219 litres of wine, 185,290 litres of vermouth and marsala, and 7,792 quintals of cereals.

The coal situation during August was desperate. Only one shipment of U.K. coal arrived at Catania with 1,620 tons, and a further 7,940 tons of Sardinian coal was discharged, of which 6,415 tons was delivered to the electric power station. This small quantity was the only allocation for the five Provinces of Eastern Sicily.

This has resulted in the supply of power becoming very acute, and a further reduction has had to be made in the ration scheme established by the High Commissioner. This reduction is having serious effects on industrial activity, the present production of power is so low that it cannot cover Naval and Army requirements. When power is available it is often of too low a frequency to be used by certain industrial plants. The supply of power for lighting has now been reduced to two evenings per week.

The free sale of super-phosphates has continued, but some Provinces are still finding great difficulty in transporting it from the Montecatini Works. When the Licata Works commence production, it is anticipated that the yearly output will be raised from the present figure of 750,000 quintals, to 1,000,000 quintals, which will cover the needs of the whole of Sicily.

The Consorzio Agrario at Catania have been defrauded of 90 quintals of Caustic Soda, the police have started an investigation and 18 barrels have already been recovered. 574 American Tractors are to arrive in Sicily for agricultural purposes. 1,192 hectares of uncultivated land at Syracuse have been handed over to farmers.

LABOUR.

The labour situation in Eastern Sicily is gradually worsening. The number of unemployed is rising and will continue to do so, owing to the daily return of ex-soldiers, partisans, and prisoners. The Provincial labour offices in the five Provinces of Eastern Sicily report a total of 35,190 registered unemployed, Catania has approx 14,000. This figure only represents a fraction of the actual numbers, as large numbers are not registered, especially in rural areas. The C.I.N. for Sicily has informed the Government that if coal does not arrive, thousands of workers will be thrown idle and remain so. I.N.T. employees at Caltanissetta ceased work as a protest against the Regional direction to dismiss some staff owing to tyre shortage, and several minor stoppages of work occurred as a protest against low wages.

The cost of living figure has risen, in comparison with the index figure for June 1940 (100), the figure for August 45 is shown as 1,985.93, against 1,621.93 for July 45, thus showing an increase of 164 units.

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PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES.

Reconstruction work is proceeding as quickly as circumstances will permit, but there are many handicaps such as shortage of materials and transport. The rehousing of homeless people is only on a very limited scale. The condition of roads is becoming very bad, repairs have been completed for a total cost of 15,634,500 lire. Projects for bridge reconstruction have been approved at an estimated cost of 15,780,000 lire, and important dock repairs at Messina and Catania have been carried out for a cost of 20,000,000 lire.

Large projects are in hand for reconstruction at Messina and Catania, and it is hoped these will relieve the unemployment problem during the winter months. Many industries have diesel engines but cannot obtain oil, the fuel allotment to Catania is less than Palermo and Messina, despite its greater industry.

H. Bentley

H. BENTLEY
Major

Catania Liaison Officer

10 September 45.

On 30 September 1945, the following information was received from the Catania Liaison Officer, Major H. Bentley, regarding the activities of the Italian Air Force in Sicily. The information was obtained from a confidential source who has been reliable in the past.

The Italian Air Force is currently operating in Sicily. The main base of operations is at Catania. The Italian Air Force is currently operating in Sicily. The main base of operations is at Catania. The Italian Air Force is currently operating in Sicily. The main base of operations is at Catania.

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ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OFFICES

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15 AUG 1945

MONTHLY REPORT - JULY 1945.

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PART II.

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ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OFFICER
CATANIA

MONTHLY REPORT - JULY 45.

PART I.

Summary.

The political situation has remained unchanged and there has been comparatively little political activity during the month. In spite of the large number of political parties, the great majority of the population takes little or no interest in political issues which do not directly concern them. Party membership represents a moderate percentage of the population only, and the greater majority of the people appear to be anti-monarchical. The visit of Premier PARRI to Sicily and his promise of a new era for the people, was greatly welcomed, but also gave rise to a good deal of scepticism. Separatist activities have now become somewhat subdued. Local Government still leaves a great deal to be desired, and difficulties are being experienced in many districts owing to the local budgets not providing sufficient to meet the increased costs of public services.

Grain shipments have continued to arrive regularly and the bread and pasta ration of 300 grams per day has been maintained. The grain harvest is only about 35% of normal, due to the continued drought. Farmers and peasants are withholding their grain from the warehouses owing to the low price fixed by the Government. Grain collected so far this year amounts to about one fifteenth of that collected for the same period in 1944. Coercive measures are not being employed.

The citrus crops have also suffered from the drought and the Sirocco winds and are expected to be below the average. Lack of coal continues to be one of the major problems in Eastern Sicily and industry is severely handicapped by the consequent shortage of electric power.

The labour situation is deteriorating due to the return of ex-soldiers, the labour market cannot at present absorb them and unemployment is steadily increasing and causing some unrest.

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The labour situation is deteriorating due to the return of ex-soldiers, the labour market cannot at present absorb them and unemployment is steadily increasing and causing some unrest.

Cost of living figures for July again show a slight improvement. Reconstruction work continues and large grants are being allocated for public works. The gas works are still inactive due to the lack of coal.

Crimes still remain at a very high level, and juvenile delinquency is very prevalent. The presence of armed criminal bands operating in the country districts is still a grave problem. Armed robbery and extortion are the chief types of crime, and Mobile Police Squads are making a serious effort to suppress these gangs. Prisons are grossly overcrowded and there are large arrears of cases to appear before the Italian Courts. Glendale's emigration to N. Africa has been suppressed and arrests in this connection have been made.

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53 cases of typhoid were reported at Messina Armerina (ARMA), and 7 cases of typhus, including one fatal, at Lipari (LIPARI). In both these outbreaks proper steps were taken to prevent any spread. Local Welfare Organisations are doing good work in the rehabilitating of ex-soldiers, running soup kitchens for the poor, and supervising the visit of 8,000 poor children to the sea each day.

PART II

POLITICAL REACTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION.

There has been comparatively little political activity during the month and no political meetings of any importance. The great majority of the population continues to take little or no interest in political issues, they remain aloof from party politics and in general are apathetic. The large number of political parties tends to create confusion and a certain mistrust. The opinion of many is that some parties do not have a clearly defined policy, and that political propaganda is based on personal interests of the leaders, rather than the collective interests of the masses.

A certain amount of minor political activity has been displayed by the major parties in view of the impending General Election. Meetings have been held by the various parties with a view to spreading propaganda and increasing party membership. The actual membership of the parties is only a moderate percentage of the population. Diverse solutions to the insular problems affecting Sicily are propounded, but the only matters of real interest to the masses, are food, clothing and work.

The problem of the "Constitution" is a common bone of contention among the parties and the press, and a large majority of the population is "anti-monarchical" in feeling. In some places, small groups of monarchists have tried to spread propaganda, but they only represent a small minority and reaction is invariably strong, especially from the Communists. Certain sections of the Communist Press are also very aggressive in their opposition to British foreign policy.

The victory of the Labour Party in Britain was hailed in Sicily by many sections of the public, as it is generally felt that Italy will obtain a better deal from Labour than from the Tories. Left-wing Parties have exploited the event, and other Parties which normally have "right" tendencies, have manifested pro-Labour sentiments. Great attention has also been paid to the meeting of the "Big Three" at Potsdam, and it hoped that the international status of Italy will be improved thereby.

The week-end visit of PAMM to Sicily and his speech to the Sicilians came in for a good deal of comment. Many sections welcomed his promise of a new era for Sicily, and his constructive programme, but it also came in for a good deal of sarcastic comment among other sections of the community and press. Many people regarded the speech

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The week-end visit of PARRI to Sicily and his speech to the Sicilians came in for a good deal of comment. Many sections welcomed his promise of a new era for Sicily, and his constructive programme, but it also came in for a good deal of sarcastic comment among other sections of the community and press. Many people regarded the speech as a flow of empty words and they expect the status-quo to continue.

The Regional Congress of the Action Party was held at Syracuse and was attended by Minister LA MALFA. The result was a large increase in number of adherents to this Party, but its membership is still small as compared to the major parties.

New offshoots of the main parties and new political groups are springing up. There appears to be a good deal of internal competition among the respective leaders. Clandestine Fascist propaganda by means of leaflets at NOTO (Syracuse), did not lead to the identification and arrest of the culprits. Separatist activities have been somewhat subdued, although underground propaganda continues unabated. This propaganda is usually carried out by means of small clandestine newspapers and leaflets.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The situation shows little sign of improvement either at the Provincial or Communal level. In many cases there appears to be no determined effort to administer firmly and enforce Governmental and Provincial decrees. The Prefects are making valiant efforts to tackle the many and diverse problems, but they do not receive enough support from local authorities. Many Sindaci are too weak and ineffective in their efforts to enforce decrees and create respect for local authority. Local administration is often too much under the influence of party politics. The efficiency of local administrative bodies is impaired through political partiality, with consequent non-co-operation due to conflicting interests.

There have been no changes in the administration of the larger towns, with the exception of Catania. The Sindaco of Catania has been appointed an Under Secretary in the PARI Government and the Town has at present an acting Sindaco, pending a new appointment. Certain minor administrative changes have taken place in the smaller towns, many of which are administered by Prefect Commissioners. Many Communes are in financial difficulties due to the fact that local budgets have not proved sufficient to cover the increasing costs of public services. Only when the economic life of the community has been restored to some degree of normality, can any noticeable improvement be expected.

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ECONOMICS, RESOURCES AND TRAFFIC.

The economic situation in Eastern Sicily shows little change and continues to be fairly stable. Bread and pasta have been distributed regularly on the basis of 300 grams per day. The quality of both bread and pasta is still a cause of complaint by the public in spite of the committees set up to supervise the marketing. Both these foodstuffs are being sold in the open market in almost every town and prices have risen by about 20%, but the quality is generally better.

The grain harvest is ended and threshing completed, production this year is very low owing to the hot spring and continued drought. The marketing of grain is proceeding very slowly and producers are reluctant to bring in their grain as they consider the marketing price does not cover costs of production, and the free market is more remunerative. Total amount of wheat marketed to 20th July, in the 5 Provinces of East-

77 112 18 quintals marketed

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ECONOMICS. HARVESTS AND MARKETING.

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The grain harvest is ended and threshing completed, production this year is very low owing to the hot spring and continued drought. The amassing of grain is proceeding very slowly and producers are reluctant to bring in their grain as they consider the amassing price does not cover costs of production, and the free market is more remunerative. Total amount of wheat amassed to 20th July, in the 5 Provinces of Eastern Sicily was 4,620.31 quintals, as against 77,112.18 quintals amassed in July 44, the figure for barley is 26.56 quintals.

The total yield to the amasso this year is almost certain to be a complete failure due to the low yield per hectare (5.5 quintals), and to the inadequate measures taken to enforce the grain collection. Control of the amassing is in the hands of a few mobile squads of Carabinieri, Finance Guards and P.S. Agents, who cannot carry out these duties efficiently owing to unserviceability of their transport. The quantities of grain confiscated are small and of no importance and so far no arrests have been made for evasion of the amassing regulations.

The total amount of olive oil amassed during the month was 86.90 quintals, and this low yield is also attributable to the low price fixed by the Government. Growers consider this year's production fairly good and a good crop of almonds is also anticipated.

Grain shipments have arrived regularly at Catania and Messina. At Catania 7,222 tons were discharged during the month and 9,579 tons at Messina.

Exports to the mainland from Eastern Sicily consisted chiefly of citrus fruits and wine. The figures for the month are 2,176 tons of citrus fruits, 5,151,400 litres of wine, 105,101 litres of vermouth, and 11,622 quintals of carobs. 505,151 litres of wine were shipped from Syracuse to Malta.

The coal situation is still unchanged and desperate, no U.K. coal arrived during the month. 14,199 tons of Sardinian coal were discharged at Catania during the month, of which 11,609 tons were allocated to the Electric Power Station. The shortage of electric power in Eastern Sicily became more acute this month owing to the reduced output of the Palermo Station, due to lack of imported coal. The Catania plant is now heavily overloaded during peak hours and is supplying half the island. Current is strictly limited for industrial and agricultural purposes during the daytime and this is seriously affecting industry and limiting irrigation of land. Current for domestic and lighting purposes is restricted to three evenings per week.

The five principal sulphur refineries in Catania have suspended work. Carbon bi-sulphide production for July was 15 tons, stock of this commodity at the S.P.E.R.O. warehouse at the end of July was 167.42 tons.

1,325 tons of Chilean nitrate were discharged at Catania and this is being distributed to farmers without delay. The sale of super-phosphate has continued but farmers find great difficulty in transporting it from the Montecatini works. Copper sulphate has been made available for vineyards, and there has been a distribution of Spray Oil Emulsion for the anti-cochineal treatment of lemon trees.

LABOUR.

The labour situation has deteriorated with a further rise in the number of unemployed, and many firms have informed their employees that they will be obliged to close down owing to the lack of electric power, coal or cement. In Messina 1,500 workers were discharged during the month from Allied installations. The labour market is seriously dislocated by the return of many ex-soldiers and prisoners, and there

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Cost of living figures for July are slightly better, but a rise is anticipated before the end of August. Compared with the index figure for June 40 (100), the July 45 figure is 1821.23, as against 1847.62 for June 45, thus showing a decrease of 25.69. Monthly cost for food in July for a family of five was computed at lire 6,105, as against Lire 8,219 for June 45. 6340

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PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES.

Reconstruction work is proceeding very slowly and State and Provincial roads are in bad repair. Genio Civile have completed works during the month for a total cost of lire 5,015, 146.

In the Province of Catania road repairs have been carried out at a cost of Lire 1,462,000. Lire 1,828,800 has been expended during the month on bridge reconstruction in Eastern Sicily, and dock repairs at Messina and Syracuse have been carried out for a cost of Lire 1,410,000. Approval for the expenditure of 5,000,000 Lire on public works in Catania, and 17,000,000 in Syracuse has been given.

All public works are seriously affected by the shortage of coal and consequent limited electric power, cement, etc., and for this same reason the gas works remain inactive.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND COURTS.

A slight improvement has been noticeable in July, but the situation still cannot be considered satisfactory. No demonstrations or serious public disorders have occurred during the month, but crime still remains at a high level, with juvenile delinquency most frequent. Good work has been accomplished by the Police Forces against the bands of criminals operating in remote country districts. The presence of these bands is a grave problem and is having a serious effect on agricultural production.

Mobile Police Squads, under a Regional Directorate are now operating in several Provinces and they are able to cross Provincial boundaries in the execution of their duties, which allows them much wider scope. A decrease in country crime can be attributed to the presence of Mobile Police in these districts who are controlling the smuggling.

Prisons are still overcrowded due to shortage of accommodation and the large number of prison sentences. Expiration committees are functioning but results are unsatisfactory, 6 cases were tried at Nizza and 6 at Catania.

Energetic steps have been taken to curb illegal clandestine emigration to N. Africa, from Syracuse. Certain schooner owners have been arrested and clandestine emigrants are being deported from Africa.

Despite repeated requests for priority in the hearing of cases affecting Allied interests, the number of cases pending rose

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Despite repeated requests for priority in the hearing of cases affecting Allied interests, the number of cases pending rose from 147 at the end of April, to 224 at the end of July, all these cases are in connection with "possession" or "theft" of Allied property. One case has just been disposed of at Messina concerning the opening of and desecration of the grave of a British soldier, and the stealing of his boots. This trial was attended by A.C. Laidson Officer, Catania, the accused was sentenced to 4 years imprisonment, a fine of Lire 1,600 and all costs, including the cost of his keep whilst imprisoned. There are large arrears of penal and civil cases outstanding in the Italian Courts.

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PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, REFUGEES.

Provincial health reports for Eastern Sicily were fairly good in July. With the exception of an outbreak of typhoid at Piazza Armerina (Enna Province), there have been no serious epidemics. 93 cases were reported in the above outbreak which was attributed to

contaminated drinking water and bad housing conditions. All patients were segregated in the local Hospital and steps taken to avoid a spread of the epidemic. All provinces show a seasonal increase in cases of typhoid and para-typhoid and in most cases the people affected have not been inoculated.

An outbreak of typhus has just been reported at ELIZARI (Mazara Province) involving seven cases, one of which proved fatal. Fighting with D.B.F. is being carried out and all cases and contacts isolated. Cases of infectious diseases reported totalled 322, including 100 cases of scabies at Mazara, 262 new cases of Malaria have been reported.

The food kitchens are operating on a reduced scale, but meals are still being provided for the poor. The scheme thereby 8,000 poor children are being taken each day to the sea and provided with a meal, is in full operation. Rehabilitation of ex-soldiers is being assisted by Provincial Committees in the way of advice and assistance.

Clothing distribution to necessitous persons has continued through S.A.S.M.I. and U.N.R.R.A. commodities have been distributed in each province.

The number of refugees still in Eastern Sicily at the end of July was 1,796, of whom 1,665 are from Libya. The plight of many of these latter is desperate and they are prepared to take any risk to return home and a certain amount of illegal emigration to E. Africa has been going on.

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H. Bentley

H. BENTLEY

Major

Liaison Officer

Catania
11 Aug 45

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CC O Sect

SECRET

LO/CAT/M.

ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OFFICER

GENERAL

11/11/45

MONTHLY REPORT - JUNE 1945.

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REPORT ON INCARCERATION

Ty	Int	Date
VP CA Sec	<i>Int</i>	<i>10/17</i>
Public Safety	<i>Int</i>	<i>10/17</i>
Public Health	<i>Int</i>	<i>23/7</i>
Legal		
Local Govt		
Patrols	<i>Int</i>	<i>30/7</i>
Dispar	<i>Int</i>	<i>1/8</i>
Education	<i>Int</i>	<i>11/8</i>
MFA & A	<i>Int</i>	<i>1/8</i>
Ca Sec		

PLEASE PASS QUICKLY

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- 1 -

SECRET

ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OF ICRR

CATANIA

MONTHLY REPORT - JUNE 1945.PART I.SUMMARY.

In general the political situation has remained unchanged and there has been no outstanding political activity during the month. The formation of the ICRR Government had very little reaction in Sicily. The fact that several members of this Government are of Sicilian origin has fostered the hope that local problems will now receive far more attention and sympathy by the Central Government. Despite the fact that new parties are continually springing up with high sounding programmes, the average Sicilian still remains apathetic.

The Separatist Movement has come in for a good deal of publicity due to the susceptibility of the Sicilian to magnify any incident far beyond its true proportions. Many rumors regarding this Movement doubtless originated from the fact that mobile columns of troops and CC.RR. were operating from Catania in search of these Separatists. As yet no groups of Separatists have been located and the authorities are in complete control of the situation and prepared for any eventualities.

The usual normal activity has been shown by most of the major parties. The only incident of special note was the split in the ranks of the Liberal Party. A good deal of subversive propaganda is being spread among the agricultural community, most probably by Communist elements. The now famous "GULLO" decree has been the cause of much unrest in the country, a second decree recently issued by High Commissioner ALDISIO, dealing also with agriculture, has similarly come in for a good deal of criticism. The divergences of opinion between Republican and Monarchist groups are becoming acute and public opinion would appear to have strong leanings towards

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The usual normal activity has been shown by most of the major parties. The only incident of special note was the split in the ranks of the Liberal Party. A good deal of subversive propaganda is being spread among the agricultural community, most probably by Communist elements. The so-called "MILLO" decree has been the cause of much unrest in the country, a second decree recently issued by High Commissioner ALDISIO, dealing also with agriculture, has similarly come in for a good deal of criticism. The divergence of opinion between Republican and Monarchist groups are becoming acute and public opinion could appear to have strong leanings towards a Republic.

There has been little or no improvement in the effectiveness of local administration. A number of "Commissari Prefettoriali" are still in office. Any decrees issued are usually only partially enforced and this is especially noticeable in regard to the raising of grain and oil. Price committees are functioning, but a rigid control of prices is still lacking, resulting in an increase of "black market" activities. Defascistization is progressing slowly and individuals affected are in most cases only minor officials.

The internal security situation still remains very delicate. Crimes remain fairly stationary, but the operations of armed bands are increasing and the public security and police forces are doing their best to cope with the situation. The work of the CC.RR. in country districts is filled with many difficulties, but good work is being performed in a most praiseworthy manner.

- 2 -
SECRET

In the Italian Courts, the number of cases still to be tried is large and the arrears continue to increase. Outstanding cases affecting Allied interests are receiving priority and the number of such cases is now decreasing. Prisoners are still grossly overcrowded and the number of prisoners awaiting trial is large.

The arrival of grain and coal shipments has been regular, good stocks of grain are now held but coal is in very short supply and totally inadequate to meet industrial needs. The bread and pasta ration has been maintained and there has also been a disinflation of sugar and soap. The acute shortage of coal has resulted in a sharp decrease of cement production, due to lack of necessary electric power.

Shipments to the Mainland and abroad of the coal concentrates have been maintained. The sulphur refineries at Catania and the sulfur-phosphate plant at Montecatini are working satisfactorily. A shortage of potassium and nitrate of ammonia, also copper sulphate, is reported from agricultural sources.

In local trade a downward trend in prices has been noticeable, especially in the case of certain foodstuffs and essential commodities.

The new wageing has not yet commenced, but from reports received, it is expected to be a complete failure. The price fixed is considered unremunerative and, in fact, below production costs, due to the increased wages of farm labour. There does not appear to be any organization responsible for enforcing the existing regulations similar to previous years. Production estimates are far below normal and the continued drought has had serious effect on the citrus crops.

Public Health continues to be maintained at a fairly satisfactory level. The typhus epidemic in Messina Province has now been stamped out and no further epidemics have been reported.

Large grants of public money have been earmarked for extensive public works to be carried out in Eastern Sicily and these will help considerably to relieve the unemployment problem.

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There is still a fair amount of poverty and distress and the various welfare organizations are doing all in their power to combat it. Soup kitchens are still functioning for the poor and a large number of children are being taken to the sea and provided with hot meals. Every assistance is being given to "reduce" by local Committees.

The financial position of the different provinces is healthy and banking returns show large deposits and a good turnover. There is a substantial decrease in the cost of living index. 6335

With the exception of a strike by telephone employees, the labour situation has been quiet. Classified labour employed by the allies in Sicily has been granted an increase of 70 lire per day.

An allotment of tyres has been announced in the press and this should have a very beneficial effect as trade depends to a very great extent on road transport.

PART II

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SECRET

POLITICAL REACTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION.

A certain amount of political activity has been displayed by all the major parties in preparation for the General Election. Meetings and Conferences on general subjects have been held at several places in Eastern Sicily, and the organizations of the various Provincial and Communal sections of the parties have been improved.

The C.I.N. (Comitato Liberazione Nazionale) is quite ineffective, inasmuch as it is weakened by internal dissensions amongst the recognized parties.

A crisis, which has been latent for a long time in the Catania section of the Liberal Party, came to a head with the secession of a new section called "Pietro Gobetti", which is composed of extremist Liberals. These latter do not approve of the policy followed by other members, especially with regard to the present political situation. The crisis began with the amalgamation of the old Italian Liberal Party with another party of democratic Liberal tendency, but whose real policy was nebulous. This fusion of interests brought together many conflicting elements and was the cause of much internal dissension between different members of the rank and file. Varying conceptions and contrasting ideas, especially on institutional and constitutional problems, coupled with personal and political prejudices, are the main reason for the breakdown. It is quite probable that events in Catania may have far reaching repercussions and result in a general crisis within the Liberal Party.

The formation is reported in Catania of the "Consiglio Nazionale Repubblicano Giovanile", which has been joined by the juvenile sections of the Socialist Party, the Action Party, the Labour Democratic Party, the "Unita Nuova" movement of Communist sentiment, and a group of Independent Republicans.

In Syracuse the constitution of the National Association, "Roberto di Savoia", of monarchial tendencies, is reported, at present it boasts about 150 adherents. There is also reported the formation of a movement with international tendencies, whose object is the "Universal Federation of States" to avoid future wars. The strength of this movement is very limited. At Lentini (Province of Syracuse) a section of the "Movimento Comunista Classico" has been

owned by other members, especially with regard to the present political situation. The crisis began with the amalgamation of the old Italian Liberal Party with another party of democratic Liberal tendency, but whose real policy was nebulous. This fusion of interests brought together many conflicting elements and was the cause of much internal dissension between different members of the rank and file. Varying conceptions and contrasting ideas, especially on institutional and constitutional problems, coupled with personal and political prejudices, are the main reason for the breakaway. It is quite probable that events in Catania may have far reaching repercussions and result in a general crisis within the Liberal Party.

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In Syracuse the constitution of the National Association, "Umberto di Savoia", of monarchial tendencies, is reported, at present it boasts about 150 adherents. There is also reported the formation of a movement with international tendencies, whose object is the "Universal Federation of States" to avoid future wars. The strength of this movement is very limited. At Lentini (Province of Syracuse) a section of the "Movimento Comunista Classico" has been formed, with 700 members, whose policy is the complete adoption and application of the Marxist theories. This movement is supported more by the extreme Socialists than by the Communists, due to personal differences among the leaders.

All this various activity is a good pointer to the political psychosis of many Sicilians, a strong individualism but lack of team work which prevents them from obtaining unity of purpose which is vitally necessary if there is to be any achievement. New Parties with high sounding programmes are constantly springing up, ⁶³³² which are merely offshoots of the major Parties. These parties only confuse the issue and leave the poor Sicilian, who is very apolitical, highly bewildered.

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SECRET

On the 11th of June, the commemoration of Martyrs such as Matteotti, Rosselli brothers and others, was celebrated at several places in Eastern Sicily. The ceremony at Catania was attended by Minister GULLO who made a speech. There were no disturbances reported as a result of these celebrations.

Subversive propaganda is being spread among the farming section of the community. It would appear that this propaganda is originating from Communist sources and it is causing a certain amount of unrest in country districts. One gang whose members wear red neckerchiefs, attempt to dissuade farmers and farm labourers from working, and encourages them not to participate in the "Anasso". Their other activities include the spreading of Communist theories among the peasant classes with a promise of the free distribution of land.

Disorders, discontentment, strong criticisms and fanatical enthusiasms, have all been caused by the issue of the "GULLO" decrees by the Minister of Agriculture, Renato GULLO, regarding a new system of distribution of agricultural products. In many places, unknown groups, very probably Communists, have been actively interfering with agricultural work and demanding the immediate application of the decree. Naturally, the groups have asked for compensation for their interference. Disturbances have been caused in several other places by Communist propaganda. In several cases the application of the decree has resulted in instances of violence and robbery, whilst in others it has been badly misinterpreted. Generally the decree has been exploited by the Communists with extreme views. In view of the continued discontent and criticisms, the High Commissioner, ALBINIO, took up the matter with the "Consulta Regionale" the result of which was the issuing of an interpretative decree, which has naturally caused much discontent in the other camp. It is expected that Minister GULLO will approve this latter decree.

Attached herewith is a special report on the Separatist Movement. After the closing down of Separatist premises the members intensified their propaganda and some of the younger elements took to the hills and formed the N.V.I.S. (Esercito Volontario Indipendenza Siciliana). An altercation too place between some members of the latter and the CC. RR. which resulted in the death of three

Disorders, discontentment, strong criticism and fanatical enthusiasm, have all been caused by the issue of the "Gullo" decree by the Minister of Agriculture, Fausto GULLO, regarding a new system of distribution of agricultural products. In many places, unknown groups, very probably Communists, have been actively interfering with agricultural work and demanding the immediate application of the decree. Naturally, the groups have asked for compensation for their interference. Disturbances have been caused in several other places by Communist propaganda. In several cases the application of the decree has resulted in instances of violence and robbery, whilst in others it has been badly misinterpreted. Generally the decree has been exploited by the Communists with extreme views. In view of the continued discontent and criticisms, the High Commissioner, ALDISIO, took up the matter with the "Consulta Regionale" the result of which was the issuing of an interpretative decree, which has naturally caused much discontent in the other camp. It is expected that Minister GULLO will approve this latter decree.

Attached herewith is a special report on the Separatist Movement. After the closing down of Separatist premises the members intensified their propaganda and some of the younger elements took to the hills and formed the E.V.I.S. (Esercito Volontario Indipendente Siciliano). An altercation took place between some members of the latter and the CC. RR. which resulted in the death of three Separatists, one Separatist and three Carabinieri were wounded. Every effort is being made to round up the bands of Separatists which are presumed to be hiding, and the Italian Military is giving every assistance to the Carabinieri, but so far the results of these efforts are negative. Large numbers of troops have been sent to trace these armed bands, but as yet none have been located. It is thought the bands have prior warning of movements and are able to lie low, or the more likely reason is the bands do not exist. Many of the rumours connected with the E.V.I.S. are grossly exaggerated and it is believed the members are small dispersed sections, rather than a large organised force, and thus they are more difficult to locate.

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The situation resulting from the solution of the Venezia Giulia crisis is a feeling of confidence in Allied protection. This has compensated to some extent for the refusal of the Allies to consent to present discussions of constitutional problems. Public opinion here is opposed to the Monarchy and any steps aimed at its conservation is looked upon unfavourably.

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REPORT ON THE SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS.

Patriotic demonstrations which terminated in anti-Separatist manifestations and incidents outside Separatist premises early in May, resulted in the closing down of all their headquarters by order of the Prefect. In consequence of this closing it was rumored, and later confirmed, that many Separatists had taken refuge in the mountainous districts Northwest of Rome, presumably to avoid what they described as "persecution" by the Italian authorities. These Separatists were stated to be armed and believed to have grouped themselves together for defensive action. Many rumors were current as to their various intentions, but most of these were without any substance of fact.

On the 10th day, acting on information received, a large force of Italian troops and Carabinieri left Catania for Cesaro, a small town near the border, between the provinces of Catania and Messina. The troops surrounded the spot where the Separatists were supposed to be hiding, but no trace could be found of them. There is little doubt that "informateurs" had already advised them of a pending march. The troops, however, did discover a number of documents, stores and a quantity of military equipment.

According to reports from the Italian authorities, it appears that other groups of Separatists were located elsewhere and ready to undertake action in the small towns in their neighborhood. In order to forestall any disturbances which might occur, Italian troops and CC.RR. thoroughly combed these districts and also effected some arrests in Catania.

On the 17th June, a patrol composed of three CC.RR. on control duty at a check post situated between Cesaro and Randazzo, signalled a light truck with six passengers to stop. As this order was not complied with the CC.RR. opened fire, but only over the heads of the passengers, and the truck pulled up. However, immediately the CC.RR. approached the truck, they were fired on by the occupants and all three were wounded. In spite of these wounds the CC.RR. returned the fire and two of the truck passengers received fatal wounds due to the explosion of a hand grenade in the pocket of one of them, which was struck by a bullet. Two other passengers then jumped down from the vehicle armed with hand grenades, but they were

small town near the border, between the Province of Catania and Messina. The troops surrounded the spot where the Separatists were supposed to be hiding, but no trace could be found of them. There is little doubt that "informants" had already advised them of a pending search. The troops, however, did discover a number of documents, stores and a quantity of military equipment.

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A search of the truck revealed the following, **116332**
machine guns, 3 pistols, 2 carbines, 16 hand grenades, 145 cartridges, 205,000 lire, along with other sundry equipment. The men were dressed in khaki uniforms, American shoes, with red and yellow neck-erchiefs (Sicilian Colours).

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The three persons killed were: Prof. Antonio CANALE, Professor of Political Science at the University of Catania, and also the Commander of the U.V.I.C., Carmelo ROSARIO and Giuseppe VINCIG, both law students at the University, the wounded man was also a law student.

In the year 1931, CANALE organized a plot against the Republic of S. Marino, this was not successful and he later escaped from the territory of the Republic. As a result of this escape he was condemned to death, in his absence, by the Supreme Court of S. Marino. He afterwards published three books in Italy on the "Dottrina del Fascismo", as a result of which he was placed in confinement by the Fascists. During the German occupation, he was in Rome and Florence and carried out a good deal of propaganda against the Fascist regime. He also published a clandestine newspaper in Florence called the "Giornale dei Lavoratori" of marked Communist tendencies. After the liberation of Florence, he returned to Sicily where he joined the Separatist Movement. It appears that shortly before his death he had been actively engaged in the organization of armed Separatist bands in the mountains.

The Italian troops and Carabinieri have now intensified their control over civilian movement, especially by road, and planes have been stationed in the outskirts of all towns on the main arteries, all vehicles are searched and people are required to produce identity cards. A similar strict control is being exercised in country districts, in addition to active scouring of suspected hide-outs, only individual arrests have so far been effected.

The area where the Separatists have been reported as located, is adjacent to the Bay of Bronte, the property of Lord Bridport. Rumours have been current - doubtless emanating from Separatist sources - that the Allies were giving them help and protection. It can be stated, however, that no help or encouragement has been afforded from the above estate, and access to the Castle which flies the "Union Jack", has constantly been refused. When this office was informed of Separatist claims of Allied sympathy, a protest was made to the Duke of Gloucester, Head of the Juvenile Separatist League, who gave a denial of any such sympathy.

In spite of all the Police activities, the Separatists have been carrying out their propaganda by means of wall slogans and the

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In spite of all the police activities, the Separatists have been carrying out their propaganda by means of wall slogans and the showering of leaflets in Cinemas. They constantly endeavour to distort and misinterpret events and hope thereby to throw discredit on the Italian Government.

During the first days of July, continued rumours were circulating about the Separatist groups in the country. A large number of these elements were reported in a locality Northwest of Enna, and a large force of troops and CC.RR., equipped with armoured vehicles, left Catania to round them up. All traffic was temporarily suspended over certain strategic roads. A large area of territory bordering Messina Province was surrounded and an intensive search made, but without any trace of Separatists being found, no doubt they had received prior warning of the movement. The troops did not cross into Messina Province where a small mobile group of Separatists is reported in close proximity.

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From this area is reported a clash, having fatal consequences, between Separatists and bandits. It would appear that the latter joined the Separatist Movement and, after having procured guns and bombs, began acts of brigandage in the countryside. This action infuriated the Separatists who adopted retaliatory methods resulting in a sharp clash and casualties - including dead - were suffered by both sides.

Rumours, which were also published in the local press, but since denied, to the effect that a train had been held up between Messina and Catania by Separatists, and that they had occupied Randazzo, were found to be completely without foundation. It is probable they found their origin in the movement of troops in the Randazzo area. It should be pointed out that the CC.RR. are ill equipped in both arms and supplies, to carry out an intensive campaign.

With regard to the strength of the groups of Separatists said to be in the mountains, the Italian authorities state they are numerically small, and for the most part composed of students. The Duke of Caracci has stated that he believes some 40 or 50 Separatists have fled due to their fear of being arrested, since this statement the Duke himself appears to have also gone to ground. These groups are living in very isolated parts near provincial borders, so that they can avoid the CC.RR. of the particular Province searching for them.

The Prefect of Messina has proposed that joint action be taken between the authorities of the four adjoining Provinces, but so far this suggestion has not materialised. The presence of Separatists is also reported in the hills west of Catania, and in the Province of Enna.

The general situation here is well under control, due to the energetic action of the authorities, but should there be any new developments, a report will be submitted immediately.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

There has been little or no improvement in Local Government either at the Provincial or Communal level. There is no determined effort to administer firmly and enforce Governmental and Provincial ordinances. Many departments endeavour to work in water tight compartments and there appears to be a complete lack of co-operation between the several departments. Certain minor changes have been effected in the administration of some of the smaller Towns, but the general standard of efficiency and effectiveness seems unaltered.

The Prefects are doing their best to tackle the general problems facing the population, and they are actively engaged in the difficult task of seeking the full co-operation of Sindaci. Many Sindaci have shown a good deal of weakness and ineffectiveness in their efforts to enforce Provincial decrees, the real test of their local power will be shown in the degree of success of the Granai del Popolo. Commissari Prefettini have been appointed in several Communes.

Most Communes have "Giunte Comunale" in operation, but their effectiveness in many instances is very doubtful owing to political reasons and the resultant non-co-operation of the various parties. Personal prejudices, political interests, and a good deal of bureaucracy are the elements which make local administration very impotent. Distress among sections of the population, plus the lack of effective means to combat it, is another factor which diminishes confidence in both the Local and Central Government. When the economic life of the people has returned to some degree of normality, and some of the obstacles which hinder progress have been removed, then it will be possible to expect an all round improvement.

However, some authorities, such as Prefects, Questori and Carabinieri, are doing their best in spite of innumerable difficulties. Other authorities such as certain Sindaci and Commissari agli Alloggi are making valiant efforts, but circumstances over which they have no control greatly impede whatever action they take.

No changes in administration have taken place in any of the larger Towns of Eastern Sicily. It is probable that a new Sindaco will be appointed in Catania owing to the appointment of

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No changes in administration have taken place in any of the larger towns of Eastern Sicily. It is probable that a new Sindaco will be appointed in Catania owing to the appointment of the present Sindaco as Under Secretary of State for the Navy, in the Parri Government. This appointment has given many Sicilians confidence that local problems will now receive far more attention from the Central Government than heretofore.

DEPASCISTISATION.

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The work of the Provincial Committees for epuration is proceeding slowly but with few apparent results. The Catania Committee is the only one to show any activity, although the ones tried are very small. Twelve persons have been removed from office, and nine persons suspended for terms of from two to six months. In the recently tried cases there were no individuals who were State, provincial or communal employees. None of the persons who were known to have strong fascist tendencies have yet been epurated.

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In the majority of cases those persons who have already been expatriated are those who were dismissed from office by S.C.A.O.'s during the period of Allied Military Government. Many of these persons have been restored to office after a short period of suspension as the period of suspension is deemed to have commenced from the date they were removed by A.M.G.

It is obvious that such activity causes a good deal of resentment and discontent among the population, who say that fascist elements are still in charge of Public Administration.

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PUBLIC SAFETY AND COURAGE.

Public safety is still the most important and pressing problem in Sicily. Lack of security in the country districts is causing much concern among peasants and farmers. Banditry, which takes the form of livestock and grain stealing, is very prevalent and having serious repercussions on the economic life of the agricultural community. Growers must provide their own protective measures as a safeguard against thieving as police protection is quite inadequate. In many cases victims will not come forward to denounce the bandits for fear of retaliatory measures which might be taken against themselves or their families. Every effort is being made to capture the bands of delinquents which are operating in the rural districts, but the problem is very difficult with the present available resources.

From recent statistics of crimes committed in Italy, Sicily appears to be the region having the greatest number, especially major crimes. This can be understood when one takes into consideration the limitations of the authorities responsible for maintaining law and order. The members of police and Carabinieri are quite inadequate, especially at the present moment when they are being called upon to assist in the grain campaign, in addition to their other duties. The Questori have got on in the large towns but country districts are left to the Carabinieri. These latter are doing their best but their numbers are far too small. As a result, large zones in the Provinces remain practically uncontrolled. Even in the inhabited localities where two or three Carabinieri are stationed, the situation is little better, as the outlying districts cannot be patrolled effectively.

In order to be really effective, the numbers of CC. RR. should be at least doubled, furthermore, they should be equipped with modern weapons and possess serviceable transportation. Better pay and allowances would do much to increase morale and reduce corruption.

Increase in delinquency in Towns can be attributed to unemployment, and the extreme misery of certain sections of the population. Juvenile delinquency is a very serious problem.

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Several armed bands are operating in the Provinces of Catania and Naxos. These gangsters extort large sums of money from farmers by means of threats, and prevent them from working. Lack of police protection is one of the reasons why farmers are often obliged to help the gangsters.

A serious effort is now being made to stamp out these bands. The Military are giving every assistance to the civil police and Carabinieri, and mobile squads are dispatched to arrest bandits when they are located. Control points have been established on all roads, and vehicles and persons are now being systematically searched for arms etc. This system is meeting with some success. The possession of arms is a very grave problem in Sicily where almost everyone owns a weapon of some kind.

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The creation of strong "nuclei mobili" is still under consideration. These could have a strong deterrent effect as they could follow the gangs from one Province to another, this would prevent the bands from operating near the Provincial boundaries.

The situation is fairly stationary in the Provinces of Syracuse, Ragusa and Messina, but has worsened slightly in the Provinces of Catania and Lucca, where the presence of new gangs is reported. Gangs are reported in Catania Province whose members wear red neckerchiefs, they are spreading propaganda against the masses and inciting the farmers to revolt against the landowners, with the promise that such action will result in the land being given to them.

Members of the clandestine army of the Separatists are reported to be still hiding to the North West of Lucca, but their activities have ceased since the active intervention of the Military early in the month. Attached is a separate report on the Separatists.

There have been no serious disorders during the month and no cases of sabotage or other serious cases affecting Allied interests.

COURTS.

The Italian Courts have continued to function throughout Eastern Sicily but there are very large arrears of criminal cases, particularly in the large Cities, and this situation cannot be regarded as satisfactory. With regard to action by the Italian Courts in cases affecting Allied interests, the Procuratori del Regno have been requested to give priority to any such cases. Although the number of cases outstanding has decreased, there is still much to be desired in this respect, furthermore, very lenient sentences are being imposed.

The Prisons are crowded and this shortage of Prison accommodation is compelling Judges to release prisoners after having sentenced them to imprisonment. This is evidenced by long lists of cases where all the accused get a suspension of sentence for long or short periods, in many cases for five years. Crimes reported involving Allied interests still continue to be chiefly theft of Allied property, or wrongful possession of such property.

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One outstanding case involving two British sailors will be tried as soon as evidence have been completed. In this particular case, some civilians are accused of injuring the sailors, but it would appear from a letter submitted by the Town Mayor of Messina that the civilians were provoked to action.

There continues to be a large number of penal and civil cases in the civil Courts, and large numbers in the Prisons awaiting trial.

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ECONOMIC, RESOURCES AND SUPPLY.

The economic situation in Eastern Sicily continues to be fairly satisfactory due to the regular arrival of grain and coal ships. The reduction in retail prices which occurred after the liberation of Northern Italy and the cessation of hostilities in Europe has not ceased and most prices remain firm. The majority of retail trade is inactive owing to the public only purchasing bare necessities, in the hope that supplies will soon be forthcoming from the North.

The normal bread and pasta ration of 300 grams per head has been maintained. The quality of bread and pasta is still subject to a good deal of complaint owing to the high percentage of barley flour added which causes a darkening of colour. A further source of complaint is the lack of supervision and control exercised over the baking of bread. Many bakers are making clandestine bread of a very high quality, using the best flour and selling it at high prices on the black market. The bakers can purchase this flour from the Mills or they obtain it from a second sifting of the allotment of flour which they receive for making the standard bread. It is pointed out that both bread and pasta of a very good quality is being sold quite openly in Catania and other centres of the Province in the public squares and black market centres. The authorities turn a blind eye towards this trade and the civil police take no action. This "free market" began quite openly in Eastern Sicily after the end of hostilities in Europe.

The shortage of electric power is still very acute and this is seriously affecting industrial activities, and in particular the output capacity of the Mills and Cement Works. The lack of coal and consequent shortage of power is the main handicap of the "Vital-cement" works at Villafraanca, Messina, production is so low that it cannot cover the dock and harbor repairs being carried out for the Royal Navy, or meet the Army's requirements. Every effort is being made to step up production by whatever means are available.

The "Reuben Tipton" docked at Catania with 8,850 tons of wheat. At Catania the "Empire Archer" discharged 4,500 tons of wheat and the "Paul H. Heyne" arrived on 20 June to discharge a further 8,971 tons. All these ships were unloaded promptly and

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Shipments to the Mainland during the month again consisted chiefly of citrus fruits and wine, the figures were approximately 5,000 tons of citrus fruits, 3,519,873 litres of wine, 142,000 litres of alcohol, and 408,880 kilos of vermouth and vermouth. At Catania and Syracuse 265,220 kilos of sugar were unloaded.

The coal supply situation is still on a hand to mouth basis. The "Eura Beech" docked at Catania with 5,098 tons of foreign coal on 7 June 43. The "Edera" discharged 5,100 tons of Sardinian coal, of which 3,052 tons were allocated to the Electric Power Station. On the 18 June, the "Thomas Walsh" docked at Catania and unloaded 3,224 tons of foreign coal. The total of 11,000 tons of coal supplied to the Railways was 5,650 tons, and a further 2,650 tons to the Electric Power Company.

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One hundred grams of best laundry soap per head of the civilian population is being distributed in Catania and the four largest Towns of the Province. The price fixed by the Provincial Price Commission is 65 lire per kilo, this soap is being manufactured in Catania. All the other Communes of the Province will receive an allotment of soap as soon as production is sufficient to cover the requirements. This distribution of soap has been very much appreciated by the population, although the ration was small. The black market price of soap is still at a high level and far beyond the purse of the poorer classes.

The five principal sulphur refineries in Catania have received 5,240 tons of black sulphur since the beginning of the season, of which 4,375 tons have been refined. During the month of June 1,100 tons of refined sulphur were shipped to the mainland, to Brindisi, Cagliari, and Venice.

The production of carbon bi-sulphide in Catania for the month of June was 175 tons. The quantity in stock at the S.I.S.R.O. warehouse at Catania at the end of the June was 450 tons. The above named Company states that they have little difficulty in procuring raw material and fuel, but they do find great difficulty in maintaining plant and machinery in good working order due to the lack of machine parts.

The Ligate Mines in Messina have now increased their production. This is largely as a result of the warning from the High Commissioner for Sicily, that the Mines would be requisitioned if production continued at the same low level of the preceding month.

The High Commissioner has permitted the free sale of canned meat and #2 V to the civilian population at a price of 80 lire per kilo. The sale of these two items is slow for two reasons, firstly the high cost in comparison to fresh meat, and secondly because it is the hot season during which there is less demand.

The shearing of sheep and goat wool has begun in each Province, the prices paid at the auction range from 126 to 150 lire per kilo.

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The production of carbon black in Catania for the month of June was 175 tons. The quantity in stock at the S.P.I.R.O. warehouse at Catania at the end of the June was 4.8 tons. The above named Company state that they have little difficulty in procuring raw material and fuel, but they do find great difficulty in maintaining plant and machinery in good working order due to the lack of machine parts.

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An order has been made by the Prefect of Catania for each Comune to form a Communal Committee for the control and supervision of prices. These Committees will work in conjunction with the Provincial Price Control Committee which is already operating in Catania. The prices of essential foodstuffs and other certain commodities are often published in the press, but in many cases the article is not obtainable at the published price.

AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES.

The assessing of grain for the 1944-45 harvest was completed at the end of June. The total quantity of wheat assessed during June in the Provinces of Catania, Messina, Syracuse and Ragusa was 380.04 quintals, and the total amount of barley was 127.56 quintals.

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Provincial and Communal organizations in Eastern Sicily are making preparations for the new grain campaign, the new sowing has not yet commenced. Harvesting is now all but completed in the valleys and lower slopes but still continues in the more mountainous districts. Owing to the exceptionally hot weather experienced during the Spring season the harvest this year has been earlier than is usual in normal years. Threshing has been completed in many districts but the yield is considered very poor. The sown of the grain in most districts are small but the crop of straw appears to be large.

The decrease in yield for the sowing of grain has caused a good deal of discontent among farmers and peasants and local authorities anticipate that the grain campaign will be a complete failure. Farmers have been pressed to declare the area of land sowed, but it is reported that only 70% of such land has so far been declared. Any comparison between the declared acreage and that actually sown is very problematical.

The main reason for the almost universal unwillingness to hand over the grain to the Granai del Popolo is the price, this remains the same as last year and is considered to be below the cost of production. The local authorities in charge of grain inspection and control state that it is absolutely essential to supervise threshing and provide means of transport. There appears to be no organized scheme for the collection and control of the grain similar to the one in operation last year. U.S.S.R. has asked for Carabinieri and the use of Military, but at the moment they are both fully occupied with pressing public safety duties. Funds have also been requested to meet the cost of maintaining the necessary control, but as yet no answer has been received.

The production of wheat is low in comparison with last year's figures, this can be attributed to both excessive rain and drought. During last December there was very heavy rain which brought to the surface part of the sown wheat. The early Spring was very dry followed by extreme drought and dry sirocco winds which caused much harm to both grain crops and citrus trees. The inadequate supply of fertilizer has also contributed to the low yield of the grain crops. The average production of grain per hectare is reported to be 5.50 quintals. The estimated yield for this year's grain harvest in the provinces of

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The total amount of olive oil assessed during June in Eastern Sicily was 415,11 quintals. In comparison with the last "oil campaign", farmers and growers point out that increased labour costs have greatly increased the cost of production, and it is maintained that the price fixed by the Government for the marketing did not even cover the general overhead expenses. This was the main reason for the rendering of such a very low percentage of the total oil production to the "Granai del Popolo". It is also reported that the U.S. Agrari have not sufficient storage tanks to receive the oil. U.S.S.R. inform us that the High Commissioner for Sicily has given permission to several dealers to purchase oil directly from the producers at "free market" prices, this oil should have been assessed and this action has seriously affected the control situation.

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During the month of June the ration of sugar was distributed to the civilian population on the basis of 400 grams per head, this distribution was very much appreciated. A ration of 500 grams of dates per head has also been made during the current month.

The Montecatini Works at Biocce, Catania, and Villaggio Messine, have maintained their production regularly. The High Commissioner for Sicily has placed at the disposal of the five Provinces in Southern Sicily 75,000 quintals of super-phosphate for free sale, this is a revised figure and exceeds the 2,400 quintals as quoted in our May report. The allotted quantities have to be collected by the farmers directly from the Montecatini Works. The shortage of copper-sulphate has been responsible for the spread of some diseases in certain vineyards, but despite this, it is anticipated that the crops will be good. There is still no soda and Potassium available on the market. U.I. S.S. are supplying a small quantity of Nitrate of Ammonia on the basis of 10 kilos per hectare. This amount is very small as the recognized required quantity is not less than 1 quintal per hectare.

The Provincial Agricultural Inspectors of Sicily have met in Catania and they have decided to distribute the whole quantity of 14,000 litres of anti-cochineal liquid (Volek), to the Provinces where citrus fruits are most extensively cultivated and to those which are most interested in fighting the cochineal. The allotment of 8 litres per hectare which has been fixed is considered insufficient.

The prevailing weather this month has been very unfavourable for crops, the dry, southern, (flavonio) winds have added to the previous crop damage, especially grain, olive and citrus crops. The production of forage crops is very low and this has resulted in a reduction in the price of livestock. Permethion has been given for the export of livestock to the Mainland, especially from districts in the centre of the Island which have been most affected by the drought. The crop of beans this year is considered to be most unsatisfactory.

The wine trade is not very active and ruling prices are similar to those prevailing last month. Limited quantities are

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The general condition of livestock continues to be normal and there have been no reported cases of disease amongst cattle.

People in the country districts are complaining of the unsatisfactory conditions regarding public safety, this is a great handicap to agricultural production inasmuch as many peasants have a fear of working in certain districts, due to the prevalence of robbing bandits. Stealing of crops and livestock has been very prevalent during recent months.

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SECRET

RECONSTRUCTION AND BRIDGE

Reconstruction work in the cities and on roads and bridges is proceeding very slowly, this is due to the shortage of building materials and to lack of transport. The task of re-building homeless people is also being carried out as quickly as the individual circumstances will permit. During the month of June "Radio Olympe" have completed works to a total cost of 7,005,000 liras.

Projects for bridge reconstruction have been approved by the Regional Authorities in Valencia at an estimated cost of 74,051,000 liras. "Genio Civil" is also completing important dock and harbor works at Valencia and Alicante, at the request of the British Naval Authorities. Great difficulty is being experienced by the construction due to the reduced amount of production of "nitrogen" at Valencia. Recommendations have been made by this office that a visit to an industrial being made in the allocation of coal to these works.

A Regional Committee has been formed in Valencia to consider drainage and colonization of land throughout the island. It is to also supervise the "Leyenda de Valencia" (large landed estates). A project costing 400 million liras has been approved by the Committee for the financial year 1945-46.

The "Provedores de Obras Piblicas" for 1945 has approved a large number of projects for public works in Spanish City for a total amount of 200 million liras. Furthermore, another 10 million liras have been approved for the rebuilding of the Prefecture of Catalonia. Syracuse and Valencia provinces have had some variation projects approved for total amounts of 11 and 5 million liras respectively.

The electric power situation is becoming increasingly difficult owing to continued drought and the acute shortage of coal, also to the very inferior quality of the latter. The "Comision Nacional Electrica de la España" has announced a further reduction in the supply of electricity, this has been made necessary owing to the continued inactivity of the Power Station at Forta de Puente (Province of Aragon), due to the shortage of coal for this station.

The statement published last month by the above named Societa

Recommendations have been made by this office with a view to the improvement of the electric power supply in Catania.

A regional committee has been formed by the local authorities and representatives of the various industries in the area. It is the duty of this committee to coordinate the various projects and to submit them to the Government for approval. A project worth 400 million lire has been approved by the Committee for the financial year 1945-46.

The Government has approved all the projects for Sicily and has approved a large number of projects for public works in Catania City for a total amount of 160 million lire. Furthermore, another 30 million lire have been approved for the reconstruction of the Prefecture of Catania. The Government and the various industries have had 1000 projects approved for total amounts of 11 and 3 million lire respectively.

The electric power situation is becoming increasingly difficult owing to continued drought and the shortage of coal, also to the very inferior quality of the latter. The Societa Generale Elettrica della Sicilia has announced a further reduction in the supply of electricity, this has been made necessary owing to the continued inactivity of the Power Station at Porto Empedocle (Province of Agrigento) due to the shortage of coal for this station.

The statement published last month by the above named Societa has been widely criticised in the press. The Company stated that in 1942 their Power Stations were capable of producing all the energy required. After the invasion of Sicily, the Company furnished a report up to 75% of the 1942 production figures, whilst in Southern Italy during the year 1942 the supply was only 10 to 15% of 1942 production. The press pointed out that whilst the Power Stations in Southern Italy were badly damaged by the enemy, this did not obtain in Sicily. Furthermore, the production of power in Southern Italy at the end of this year will be 80% of the 1942 figures, whilst in Sicily production is less than in 1942. The 1945 production of energy in Sicily is estimated to be 160 million kw, as against 222 million kw in 1942. 6321

The Gas Works are still inactive due to the lack of coal, but a scheme is on foot to attempt production at the Catania Works.

New tramway services have been opened in Catania, but main-
tenance of existing roads and lines is badly needed. The public bus

SECRET

MURDER, WHORE, RUFIOUS

The health of the civilian population in Eastern Italy continued to be fairly satisfactory and there were no serious outbreaks of epidemic.

The typhus epidemic at Capriati, (Province of Mantova), was stopped out by the end of May. Some trouble was reported during this epidemic involving two female specialists sent down by U.S.A.A. to combat the outbreak, these two ladies were eventually compelled to leave the district. It is pointed out that the social standards and conditions of this town are very low and the inhabitants are very suspicious. The people have a similar mentality to that of the Slovenes, described in A. Manzoni's "Promessi Sposi" who during the pest of Milan thought the disease was attributable to the "contagio" (creases). Other reasons for this trouble are: firstly, the impression that the local "Ufficiali Sanitarii" had exaggerated the published number of cases, secondly, that this same officials was alleged to have issued disinfection certificates to those persons who made a payment of 50 lire, and, thirdly, a decree issued by the Prefect of Mantova to the effect that no one must leave the town unless in possession of the above certificate. Discontent was also caused by the decision of the U.S.A.A. Representatives to issue a pass only to those persons who had been disinfectant with DDT powder, the Sindaco was compelled to make a general distribution of soap in order to avoid more serious consequences. On the 1st May, the Regional Public Health Director arranged for the two U.S.A.A. Representatives to be moved from Capriati to Riccione (Province of Rimini) where they disinfectant the local prison. The "Ufficiali Sanitarii" mentioned above has since been substituted and calm once again prevails at Capriati.

The number of infectious diseases reported during the month totalled 350, this figure includes 100 cases of measles, mostly in Romagna Province, and 65 cases of typhoid fever or para-typhoid. Inoculations and vaccinations have continued to be carried out extensively in all provinces. In spite of the distribution of 100 cases of scap the lack of this commodity is still most acute and the medical authorities consider this shortage to be responsible for the outbreak of disease.

During the month 80 fresh cases of influenza were

(dresses). Other reasons for this trouble were: firstly, the impression that the local "Ufficiali Militario" had exaggerated the published number of cases, secondly, that this same "Ufficiali" was alleged to have issued disinfection certificates to those persons who made a payment of 50 lire, and, thirdly, a decree issued by the Prefect of Messina to the effect that no one must leave the town unless in possession of the above certificate. Discontent was also caused by the decision of the U.S.R.A.A. Representatives to issue soap only to those persons who had been disinfectant with DDT powder, the Sindaco was compelled to make a general distribution of soap in order to avoid more serious consequences. On the 1st May, the Regional Public Health Director arranged for the two U.S.R.A.A. Representatives to be moved from Caymasi to Nicotia (Province of Trapani) where they manifested the local prison. The "Ufficiali Militario" mentioned above has since been rehabilitated and calm once again prevails at Caymasi.

The number of infectious diseases reported during the month totalled 30; this figure includes 11 cases of scabies, mostly in Mesina Province, and 65 cases of typhoid fever or paratyphoid. Inoculations and vaccinations have continued to be carried out extensively in all Provinces. In spite of the distribution of 100 grams of soap the lack of this commodity is still most acute and the medical authorities consider this shortage to be responsible for the outbreak of disease.

During the month 20 fresh cases of primary malaria were reported and 11 persons were reported as having been bitten by dogs suspected of having rabies.

The campaign against V.D. and free prostitution continues to be vigorously pursued by the medical authorities with satisfactory results.

Hygienic and sanitary conditions in the prisons are as bad as ever, mainly due to overcrowding and inadequate washing facilities.

The old story of lack of tyres and spares is still **6320** put forward by Provincial Medical Officers as preventing them making regular visits to the Communes.

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The "Economical Dictators" have continued to function on a reduced scale during the month of June in the provinces of Syracuse and Ragusa. The "Dictators del Povo" have recently been implicated by the province of Catania, continuing to supply supplies.

The province of Catania has continued to receive supplies from the war is very urgent. Many of these are not being sent and are without means of transport and means of transport. The province of Catania has continued to receive supplies from the war is very urgent. Many of these are not being sent and are without means of transport and means of transport. The province of Catania has continued to receive supplies from the war is very urgent. Many of these are not being sent and are without means of transport and means of transport.

The "Committee of Italian Dictators" (C.I.D.) has continued to function in the province of Catania and has continued to receive supplies from the war is very urgent. Many of these are not being sent and are without means of transport and means of transport.

Every effort is being made to send all poor children to spend a period by the sea. In Catania a school has been prepared by the "Committee of Italian Dictators" to send 8,000 children to the sea during the period July to the end of September. Small beach dresses and other clothing have been sent for them from four bags given by the High Commissioner. These children will also receive one hot meal per day. Estimated expenditures for this scheme is about four and a half million lire.

The distribution of clothing from C.I.D. has continued to be necessary to people in the Communes which suffered most from war damage. The "Dictators del Povo" have continued to receive supplies from the war is very urgent. Many of these are not being sent and are without means of transport and means of transport.

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meeting held in Catania, a sum of 57,000 lire was authorized.

The "Comitato Italiano Veneziano" (C.I.V.) has collected cigarettes in the streets of Catania and these are being distributed to the poor returning on arrival, or passing through bus/train station.

Every effort is being made to send all poor children to school as provided by the law. In Catania a school has been prepared by the "Associazione Arcivescovile" to send 8,000 children to the sea during the period July to the end of September. Small beach dresses and other clothing have been made for these children and given by the High Commissioner. These children will also receive one hot meal per day. Estimated expenditure for this scheme is about four and a half million lire.

The distribution of clothing from U.P.A.I. has continued to receiveable people in the Communes which suffered most from war damage. The "Ufficio Prov. di Assistenza Sociale" (U.P.A.S.) continues their activities up to the end of June, at which date they were substituted by other work and hand over to other agencies, the "Comitato di Assistenza e Beneficenza Pubblica", as decreed in the "Decreto Ufficiale" dated 2 May 45. U.P.A.S. have complained against this decree on the grounds that their functions were started by AMNOR.

REFUGEES.

Registration of refugees from Sicily to the Mainland, and vice-versa, continued during June. The majority of the refugees leaving for the Mainland are going as in small batches so that no permit is required to cross the Straits of Messina. About 1,000 to 1,500 Sicilian refugees are arriving at Messina daily from the liberated Northern Provinces. The number of refugees reported in Eastern Sicily from the Mainland at the end of the month was 454.

In Catania and Syracuse Camps there are still many libici. These people are destitute and almost without clothing, they are most anxious for repatriation to North Africa to resume their normal lives. The subsidy of five lire per day is being paid to the refugees, also the "madennata carovane" of 3 lire per day.

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FINANCE.

The "Intendente di Finanza" report that in all five Provinces of Eastern Sicily taxes are being collected regularly and without difficulty, moreover, the sums collected are very satisfactory.

The proceeds from the "Banco di Lotto" have shown a substantial increase in each Province. In the Province of Ragusa, the "Banco di Lotto" was suspended for several months owing to the impossibility of indicating to Catania and Palermo the particular lottery numbers, but due to improved intercommunication several offices are now operating again.

The "Rattoria di Catania" has resumed its functions in the premises of the "Banco di Sicilia", its previous offices were burnt down during the disturbances in December 41. Difficulty is being experienced in assessing taxes due to the loss of all archives during the above mentioned disturbances.

The general financial situation of all the Provinces in Eastern Sicily may be considered sound.

Considerable sums are still being received by the "Banco di Sicilia" from Italian subjects in the U.S.A. for payment to relatives in Sicily.

The Bank Managers of all the leading Banks state that banking operations in general are satisfactory. Bank and Post Office savings deposits are steadily rising and there appears to be a great deal of liquid money available for investment. Export trade is still at a low level owing to the many difficulties of transportation etc.

The general index figures for June are lower than those for May, there has been an appreciable reduction in the prices of many essential commodities and foodstuffs.

The Tobacco Factory at Catania which supplies the whole of Eastern Sicily is working at full capacity, but the output has recently been somewhat diminished owing to a shortage of cigarette papers. The arrival of adequate stocks is anticipated shortly. The stock of

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The Tobacco Factory at Catania which supplies the whole of Eastern Sicily is working at full capacity, but the output has recently been somewhat diminished owing to a shortage of cigarette papers. The arrival of adequate stocks is anticipated shortly. The stock of raw tobacco is sufficient to maintain production for several months.

An individual distribution of 100 matches was made during June in all Provinces.

LABOUR.

The labour situation during June has been quiet, with the exception of the strike started in Southern Italy and Sicily by the telephone operators of S.E.T. 6318

There has been some improvement in the cost of living as compared with the previous month. In comparison with the June 1945 index figure of 100, the figure for June 45 is indicated as 1847.62 as against the figure of 2251.29 for the month of May 45, thus a decrease of 403.67 is shown. The monthly cost of living estimate

S.E.T.

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for food, for an average family of five persons was 8209.49 lire for June 45, as against 444.87 lire in June 40, and 10,015.38 in May 45.

Some industrial companies have informed their employees of their intention to close down works owned by them, due to the shortage of electric supply.

There has also been a pronounced slump in trade, prices have been falling and people are holding back in the hope of the arrival of goods from the North. So far there have been very few goods received from this source and the quantity has been insufficient to have any influence on prices, and it is anticipated that these may soon show an increase.

Pending definite wage agreements being established, many workers in the various categories are receiving an interim payment ranging from 0,000 to 3,000 liras per month.

Ex-soldiers, prisoners and partisans are arriving daily in large numbers from the mainland, most of these are in need of employment and the unemployment figure is steadily rising. The Prefect of Catania has instructed all Communal administrations to substitute non-regular staff, especially female, with "reduci" who are qualified for that particular work. Another decree of the Prefect requires all public and private firms to employ at least 10% of "reduci" in their staff. The "Camera del Lavoro" has suggested that all workers should give one hour's work for the benefit of unemployed "reduci" and partisans.

Many developments in the sindical movement have taken place in Catania during the month, and it is reported that 27 new Unions have been formed amongst the various types of labour.

A strike was started by the U.M.I. telephone employees in Southern Italy and Sicily, which lasted from 29 May until 21 June 45. The strike was ordered by a committee of workers in Naples which had demanded a wage increase and the substitution of certain officials of the central directing staff. The strike had various repercussions in Sicily, some days all trunk calls were off from 0800 to 1200 hrs, and local calls were very erratic. Allied

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In accordance with the findings of the first meeting of the Sicilian Wages Sub-Committee, an additional bonus to **6337** as a "higher rate bonus" is to be paid to various grades of labour employed by the Allied Forces in Sicily. This bonus varies from 70 lire per day for skilled labour to 50 lire per day for unskilled classes. The increase is retroactive to 1st May 45, but is subject to ratification by 1 District.

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SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATION.

No further improvement can be reported in the educational sphere. School attendance continued to be normal, though low, during the month, and the schools are now closed.

The time has now come when the educational authorities must resolve the outstanding problems for the next school year which will commence in October. These problems are numerous and by far the most important is with regard to accommodation. Many of the schools now in use as schools are wholly unsuitable from a sanitary point of view, whilst others are very badly equipped. During the past year many private apartments were being used. A number of school buildings in Catania were destroyed during the war, others were requisitioned several of the latter have now been de-requisitioned but are urgently in need of repairs which cannot be undertaken owing to the lack of materials. Various other premises which appeared suitable from an educational point of view have been used by orders of the prefect for other purposes.

Another problem which is of paramount importance is the lack of scholastic materials and books. Moreover, many of the poorer children require assistance in the form of food and clothing.

One factor of great importance is the necessity for the re-education of the present scholastic staffs, many of whom are deemed to be inefficient at their present standards. This is probably the most difficult phase of present policy.

It is felt that if efficient and adequate steps are not taken by the Italian Government in the brief absence of education, then Italian life in the future will suffer in consequence.

With the exception of two large secondary schools in Catania, all educational institutions have now been de-requisitioned.

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With the exception of the large Secondary Schools in Catania, all educational institutions have now been de-italianized.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

Road transport still continues to be a serious problem due to the lack of tyres and spare parts for maintenance. The poor condition of the roads is causing many difficulties through broken springs which it is almost impossible to replace. Italian Grain Inspectors who are supervising the unloading, and many other Provincial and Command Officials are complaining that they are unable to carry out their duties efficiently owing to scarcity of transport. A publication has appeared in the press to the effect that owners of cars in need of tyres should submit requirements for same to Palermo, addressed to the High Commissioner.

All possessors of temporary permits issued by Allied Officers authorising the use of Allied Military tyres have been requested to hand them in to the offices of R.A.C.I., who will forward them to Rome. An announcement has just been made by the High Commissioner that an allocation of tyres has been made to Sicily.

Railway transportation is still suffering from an acute shortage of box cars and coal. Several thousand tons of grain are stock-piled on the Quays at Catania awaiting transport, every effort is being made to expedite the removal of this grain to its several destinations. The passenger services furnished by Diesel Cars are operating very well.

Telephone and telegram services report a normal functioning, a short sit down strike occurred during the month involving telephone operators and the service was somewhat curtailed.

The civil postal services are operating satisfactorily in Eastern Sicily both for internal and foreign mail.

Shipping operations are presenting no special difficulties, and all transactions are being very efficiently handled by I.C.M.

H. Bentley

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Catania

12 July 45.

H. Bentley

L. BENTLEY Major

Liaison Officer

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2/13/45

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ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OFFICER

CATANIA

13 GU. 1945

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PLEASE PASS QUICKLY

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ALLIED COMMISSION ITALIAN OFFICER

C A T A N I A

MONTHLY REPORT - MAY 1945.PAGE IGENERAL.

The general situation during May was dominated by the psychological effects produced by the successful military operations carried out by the Patriots in North Italy, and by the end of the war in Europe. This resulted in a considerable improvement in the economic situation by causing a fall round drop in prices. This was based on the hope that goods would soon be arriving from the industrial North and from Allied sources.

The population here pays little attention to the political crisis. However, the problems of Trieste and Venezia Giulia is a constant topic and the development of the situation is followed with deep interest. No political activity is reported in Eastern Sicily with the exception of the Liberal Congress at Taormina. The San Francisco Conference has ceased to create interest amongst the public now that they are losing the last hope of Italy obtaining Allied status before the Conference ends. There is a certain scepticism prevalent as to the results the Conference will achieve.

Economic problems are the most pressing at the moment as they also affect the Public Safety; this can be described as becoming worse every day. This situation is also due to the handicaps suffered by the Police Authorities who complain bitterly of the lack of mobility due to shortage of transport and bad road communications. Defascistization is being carried out but results are slow.

An acute shortage of prison accommodation is affecting the functioning of the Courts. Hundreds of cases are outstanding, and totally inadequate sentences are imposed on those convicted.

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The regular arrival of substantial grain shipments has greatly contributed to a general reduction in market prices, especially bread and pasta. The clothing situation remains unchanged, although the prices of cloth in shops has fallen by half, people are holding back as it is rumoured that quantities of clothes and shoes are available in the factories of the North. The daily ration of bread and pasta has been maintained, but its quality has deteriorated due to the admixture of barley.

Industrial activity has slackened on account of the shortage of electric power. Continued drought has been one of the factors for this shortage, also the lack of coal. This reduction in the supply of current has had far reaching effects.

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The new harvest has been seriously affected by the lack of rain and the dry sirocco wind which has prevailed for several days. The problem of the new season appears to be completely compromised by the decision of the Italian Government, according to which the price of grain to be paid to farmers will be maintained at the same level as for the last harvest. It is thought that this will bring about a complete failure of the season. In order to off set the low price for grain, the Government stated that clothing would be allotted to grain producers at cost price.

Import and Export trade has been limited to essential commodities. Imports consisted chiefly of wheat, barley and coal, whilst exports were mainly citrus fruits, sulphur and wine. The production of carbon bisulphide and fertilizers at the S. J. P. R. O. and Montecatini works continued satisfactorily, chemical products such as copper sulphate, nitrogen, potassium and super-phosphates are badly needed for agricultural purposes.

The non distribution of oil and soap is causing widespread discontent amongst all sections of the community. Public health has been affected by this lack of soap. A typhus outbreak at Capinai (Pesavina Province) caused a certain number of deaths. No other serious epidemics are reported.

The Public Works situation is static, little progress is reported on works already begun. Many new projects have been announced. Roads are in very poor condition and many improvement schemes have been proposed.

Good work is being performed by the Welfare authorities by the institution of new Refectories sponsored by the Pope. The authorities of other institutions are active on behalf of abandoned children, displaced persons, and the poorer classes of the community, and their efforts are most praiseworthy.

The Refugee problem is still requiring attention as a large number of refugees from Malta and Africa are still awaiting repatriation. Movement to and from the Mainland was opened up during the month. The arrival of a considerable number of Partisans created new problems. They demand jobs anywhere and their dominating behavior is causing many minor disturbances.

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The financial situation can be considered good. The proceeds from the collection of taxes and the "Banco di Lotte" were very high. The public subscription to the last issue of 5 Treasury Bonds in the Province of Catania amounted to some 650 million lire.

Labor activities have been quiet with no strikes or lock outs. Efforts are being made to stabilize wages which were 100-150% higher than those fixed by agreements. Unemployment figures show a slight increase.

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With regard to education, there is little to report, the problems pointed out in our last report are still outstanding. School attendance has been fairly regular.

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Part II

POLITICAL REACTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION.

The highly successful military operations carried out by the patriots in the North which enabled them to rapidly overcome all enemy resistance and seize the large Cities, gave a decided uplift to Italian morale and did much to help restore confidence in themselves. The same sentiment was even manifest amongst any Sicilians who normally have no particular liking for the inhabitants of the Northern Italian Provinces. The immediate reaction to these events was soon seen in the press in the form of claims for Allied status and representation at the San Francisco Conference.

The energetic action of the Patriots coupled with the summary justice inflicted on the Fascist leaders met with general approval. It is hoped that these vigorous elements will form a part of the new Government and that operation will be carried out far more drastically than has been done heretofore.

May Day passed off quietly. Some demonstrations took place and meetings were held which were addressed by several speakers, the general theme of the speeches being nationalization of public utilities and certain industries, agrarian reform, and the setting up of a Republic.

Political interest during the month has been chiefly centered on the problem of Trieste. The press and public opinion were unanimous in condemning the intransigent attitude of the Yugoslavs. The occupation of Trieste by Yugoslav troops was deplored by everybody, even the various political parties forgot their domestic squabbles and showed a solidarity of front. Some orderly though noisy student demonstrations took place but passed off without incident. Fears were allayed by the announcement of the British and American note to Tito and the firm tone adopted by Field Marshall Alexander. The announcement of the entry of Anglo-American Forces into Venezia Giulia was welcomed and interpreted as a sign that Italy has not been completely abandoned by the Western Powers. People here hope for a fair and equitable solution to this vexed problem but would certainly be reactionary to the retention of this territory by Yugoslavia.

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The presence of the French in the Val d'Aosta also came in for much unfavorable comment in the press. The French statements that they have no territorial designs in this Region have allayed somewhat but not entirely dispelled the misgivings felt by many people. Events in Northern Italy have done much to weld public opinion into some semblance of unity.

Political activity by the six principal parties has been very limited. With the exception of a Regional Congress held at Taormina on 6, 7, 8, 9, May by the Liberal Party, the political front has been very quiet. This Congress was attended by King **6341** **BRONIO** and the Under Secretary of State RIZZO. The usual items were on the agenda, such as; party organization, the political and economic situation since the release of the Northern Provinces, and matters

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affecting Sicily. These subjects all came in for a good deal of discussion and several Orders of the Day were issued. The High Commissioner AMBROSIO was criticized, but these criticisms were more moderate and not so aggressive as some made by the other political parties. The Sicilian National Liberation Committee were also criticized, these latter were said to be a "prodotto di importazione, una creazione artificiale". In view of the fact that, whilst on the mainland these committees were set up during the German occupation to organize resistance against the Nazis and Fascists and thus contribute to the liberation of Italy, whereas in Sicily they were formed after the liberation. Problems affecting public safety, agriculture and political elections were also discussed, and the amalgamation of the Liberal Party with the "reformisti - liberalisti" which has already taken place.

Political demonstrations began by students at the end of April were carried on during the early part of May. On the whole they were noisy but fairly orderly, and few clashes with the Police occurred. The students manifested in favour of the retention of Trieste and against the Separatist Movement. In Catania the students surrounded the Separatist premises which were later occupied by the Carabinieri. After several days of demonstrations the premises were finally closed down by order of the Questura of Catania. The same thing happened in other Towns of the Province. This action caused a good deal of resentment among the Separatists, who continue to spread their propaganda against the Italian Government, charging it with persecution against them. They state that the CC.NN., and the Police, whose duty is only to maintain public order, take an active part in the persecution and show partiality towards their opponents. This statement is due to the fact that at Acireale the Carabinieri hoisted the Italian flag on the balcony of the Separatist premises, whilst at Catania they are accused of having removed a heavy Separatist sign during their occupation of the premises. The Secretary of the Separatist Movement reported the above allegation to this office and predicted retaliatory action should the persecution against them continue. This retaliatory action would be undertaken by extremist elements who would take refuge in the mountains. A later report was received from the same source stating "they could no longer cope with the situation as it was getting beyond their control". Furthermore, that a large band of armed Separatists were in the mountains N.E. of Etne and that a strong force of Carabinieri has been despatched to

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The conduct of some Partisans from Northern Italy was the cause of a few minor disturbances, owing to their domineering and aggressive behavior. The feeling of the population against them as it is believed that many of them co-operated with the Germans and Fascists in North Italy. They are provided with various cards, parade the streets wearing red neckerchiefs and so about demanding jobs and refusing to pay tram and train fares. This unseemly conduct has completely alienated public sympathy and has contrasted strongly with the behavior of returning prisoners of war.

ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΗ ΕΡΕΥΝΑ

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SECRETLOCAL GOVERNMENT.

There have been no important changes in local government in Eastern Sicily, and little apparent improvement in public administration. Local authority is still weak; this is reflected in the attitude of the general public towards officials.

A few changes of no importance have taken place in the administration of some small towns where new Sindaco or Commissari prefettoriali have been appointed. These changes are fairly frequent and can be attributed chiefly to lack of confidence in the local authorities. The same situation prevails in Catania and other large towns where the work of local government is far more complicated and hampered by many difficulties.

The situation reported at Pina last month has returned to normal. Public demonstrations were held at Pina and various parts of the Province as a protest against splitting the Province into two parts and amalgamating them to Catania and Galtanissetta. The fears of the population have been allayed due to assurances received from High Commissioner ALDISIO that the rumors were unfounded.

A similar situation is reported at Jonia, Province of Catania, which is composed of two towns, Jiarre and Rigosto which were amalgamated a few years ago. The inhabitants of the latter are strongly opposed to the amalgamation and maintain that it hampers their industrial and economic development. This matter is a constant bone of contention between the inhabitants of the two communities, but it does not appear to receive due consideration by the Italian authorities.

DEFASSCISTICATION.

The work of the various Provincial Epuration Committees continues with no apparent results. This is due to the fact that their activities are at present limited to examining the cases before them and making relative enquiries. Only in the Province of Catania and Messina have the Committees first findings been published. At Catania, 4 persons have been removed from office, one person suspended for 6 months, one for 4 months, and three others for terms of 3

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RETRASCOSTITUZIONE.

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At Messina 15 cases have been tried and the following sentences imposed; in three cases the persons concerned were removed from office, one person suspended from office for 6 months. In 13 cases disciplinary action has been taken, 4 cases are still awaiting enquiries and another 4 cases are outstanding. The Expiration Committee stated that one case did not come within the scope of their jurisdiction. In 9 cases the persons charged were acquitted. 6309.

At Syracuse 15 persons have been suspended from office pending the findings of the Committee.

SECRETPUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME.

There have been no serious disorders during the month. Public safety still continues to be one of the most important and pressing problems of the moment. The situation during the month has shown no signs of improvement and crime still remains at a very high level, although the actual number of crimes committed has shown a slight decrease from the previous month. Major crimes, however, show no signs of reduction, a considerable number of murders, robbery with violence, and banditry have been reported. The number of cases of house breaking and animal stealing has increased, whilst the number of assassins on private individuals has decreased. Corruption is to be found against all all classes of the community and a large number of cases of blackmail, petty frauds and prostitution is reported.

Armed bands still continue to operate in the Province of Sams, after having committed a crime the bandits cross the boundary into the Province of Catania. In the latter Province, their presence is evidenced by crimes committed in the boundary districts of Mineo, Ramacca, Nardò and Adrano. These incursions are having grave consequences among the farming community, many peasants prefer to remain in the towns rather than run the risk of working in the country. The CC.RR. and Police do their best to cope with the situation and are to be commended on the number of arrests effected. Owing to lack of communications and other handicaps suffered by them, quick and effective action is impaired and the public have little confidence in their protective measures.

An example of the effrontery and complete liberty of action of the gangsters is shown by a murder committed in the Public square at Centuripe, Province of Sams. The Director of a local mine, who refused to pay a ransom of half a million lire, was stopped in the public square and shot in cold blood by some gangsters armed with sub-machine guns. The gangsters then formed a circle round the dying man and prevented people from giving him any help until he expired. The following week one of the gangsters was badly wounded and arrested after a desperate encounter with the Carabinieri. He stated that the gang watched the funeral of their victim from the top of a hill overlooking the town of Centuripe.

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Many members of several gangs have been arrested during May, also several well known bandits who operated alone.

In the early days of the month there were a few student demonstrations but without serious consequences. The Police and CC.RR. were very efficient and had the situation well under control. At Centuripe, Province of Syracuse, several members of the Communist Party raided and took possession of the premises of the "Farmers Association", the "Agriculture Economic Offices", and the "Combattevoli King and Queen and burnt them. Order was restored after the arrival of Police who were promptly dispatched from Syracuse and Lentini. The premises were still in the hands of the Communists and were restored to their rightful owners and about 18 persons who were involved in these disturbances were identified and arrested.

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COURTS.

The situation is becoming more and more critical inasmuch as the number of cases outstanding for trial is continually increasing. The shortage of prison accommodation prevents the judicial authorities from imposing heavy sentences. A large number of persons who have been prosecuted are released on bail for the same reason.

Cases affecting Allied property are fairly numerous and persons are usually charged with stealing or wrongful possession. The Italian Courts have tried several gangsters charged with murder, armed violence against civilians and police, banditry etc., and heavy sentences were imposed.

ECONOMICS - RESOURCES AND SUPPLY.

The food situation this month is much better, owing to the arrival of more grain ships at Messina and Catania. The immediate consequences of these arrivals were a considerable reduction in the black market prices of bread and pasta. The retail prices of food-stuffs and commodities in general is gradually falling. Bread is available on the free market at about 40 lire per kilo, and pasta at round about 75 lire. Some prices have already fallen by about 50%. People who were holding grain to sell at enhanced prices are now anxious to sell and so cut their losses.

The principal reasons for this drop in the market can be attributed to: (a) The end of the war in Europe. (b) The regular arrival of imported wheat in Sicily and, (c) rumors that the economic and industrial situation in N. Italy is much better than was anticipated. The price of cheese has also fallen. Even clothing prices are falling, people are not buying because they prefer to wait in the hope of the arrival of cloth and shoes from the factories in N. Italy, or from Allied sources.

With reference to the index (index = 100) of June 1940 the comparative cost of living for May 45 is indicated as 2251.25, as against the figure of 2270.08 for the month of April 45. This improvement on the previous month is mainly due to the lower cost of bread and pasta.

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The daily ration of 300 grams, divided between bread and pasta, has been regularly maintained in Eastern Sicily. In the Province of Catania, the Prefect has fixed the ration at 250 grams of bread daily and 500 grams of pasta every two weeks. From 7th May the official price of bread has been raised to 12 liras per kilo for Catania City, and at 17-18 liras in the provinces. This was done to cover the higher cost of electric power and labor charges. The quality of bread and pasta leaves much to be desired and it is foreseen that it will be worse during June due to the arrival of imported barley. An admixture of 20% of barley flour is added to the wheat flour. Communal committees have been formed to keep a control on the quality of bread.

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The shortage of electric power is still acute, this seriously affecting the productive capacity of the flour mills and other factories. Although there is great willingness to resume industrial activity, the main handicap is still the shortage of power and coal. The latest instructions on power rationing have limited the supply of electricity for industrial purposes to 3 days per week during the night hours. These difficulties also prevent the development of new industries.

The "Ethan A. Hitchcock" docked at Messina with 2,527 tons of barley for Messina Province, and 1,500 tons of dates; she also unloaded 1,555 tons of barley at Catania. The "Samota" discharged 4,758 tons of wheat at Messina, whilst the "Port Turtle" unloaded 5,000 tons of wheat at Catania.

The chief trade to the mainland consisted of citrus fruits to the total amount of 7,071 tons. Other commodities shipped were 1,458,403 litres of wine, 50,000 kilos of alcohol, and 680,000 kilos of vermouth and maraschino. At Catania 290,172 kilos of tobacco were unloaded, this came from Puglia. Reduction in trade can be attributed to the lack of rail and road transport for industrial and commercial purposes.

The coal supply situation is still a hard to mouth affair. The "Sannarum" and the "Nathan Clifford" discharged 12,757 tons of foreign coal at Catania. The "Wisle" discharged 4,000 tons of Sardinian coal, this was allocated to the Electric Power Co., together with 3,628 tons of B.K. coal. The remainder was divided between the railways (5,419 tons), the Allied Forces, the Cement Works and other industries.

The "Italcaente" Works at Villafranca, (Messina Province), is curtailing production due to the coal shortage and reduction in the allocation of electric power. This is affecting work being undertaken by Genio Civile of Messina for various dock repairs in the Port on behalf of the Royal Navy.

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The serious shortage of soap still exists and no distribution has been made to the population. Soap can only be obtained on the free market at exorbitant prices - 200 to 250 lire per kilo. This price is entirely out of the reach of the poorer people and the outbreaks of such diseases as typhus and scabies in Messina Province, is mainly due to bad hygienic conditions.

The production of refined sulphur in Catania has continued satisfactorily. The five producing factories received 8,287 tons of black sulphur since the beginning of the season, of which 5,172 tons have already been refined. From 30 April to 31 May, 3,115 tons of refined sulphur were shipped to the mainland.

Carbon bisulphide production for the month of May is 1,800 quintals. The quantity in stock at the "S.I.R.O." warehouse in Catania at the end of May was 392 tons.

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AGRICULTURE - FORESTS AND FISHERIES.

The amassing of grain was very low during the month of May, owing to the fact that the 1944-45 grain season is practically over. Total wheat amassed during the month in the provinces of Catania, Messina, Syracuse and Ragusa was 645.22 quintals, and the total amount of barley was 77.82 quintals.

Farmers and producers are strongly opposed to the total amassing of grain for the new season. The "Associazione Agraria" of Catania held a meeting on 14 May at which grain amassing was discussed. A resolution was passed by the assembly protesting against the amassing as they anticipate it to be a complete failure and an encouragement to black market activities. The assembly also stated that economic liberty was absolutely necessary and went on to discuss the price of grain which they consider is far too low when compared with the high cost of production.

The total amount of olive oil amassed during the month in the provinces of Eastern Sicily was 391.86 quintals. No distribution of oil has yet been made to the population and this is causing great discontent amongst the poorer classes who cannot afford to purchase on the black market. The population of Enna Province is in a still worse position owing to the fact that it has no local production of olive oil and therefore, is unable to purchase even on the black market. The people are asking for the suspension of the oil amassing decree.

The press has announced a distribution of 100 grams of sugar per person, for the month of May, but this distribution has not taken place as yet in Eastern Sicily, with the exception of Syracuse Province.

A distribution of 500 grams of dates has been announced for the month of June.

The production of fertilizers at the Braccia and Filadelfo factories of Montecatini continued satisfactorily during the month.

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The production of fertilizers at the Bicocca and Milazzo factories of Montecatini continued satisfactorily during the month.

The farmers are worried on account of the lack of copper sulphate which is very necessary in the vineyards, when any can be found the farmers pay a very exorbitant price in order to obtain it. There is still no availability of nates and potassium. U.F.E.A. of Catania supplied a limited quantity of "Nitrate Ammonico" to the farmers for citrus fruit growing and to those whose crops had been damaged by hail storms. The High Commissioner has made an allocation of 99.400 quintals of super-phosphate to the five Provinces of Eastern Sicily, but the distribution cannot be made owing to the lack of transportation.

The weather during May has been variable, during the early part of the month fresh weather prevailed with a little rain, but latterly the heat came with days of dry sirocco wind which caused damage to the grain and forage crops.

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A complete lack of forage seeds is reported but as this is a non sowing period of the year there are no other present need requirements.

Bean production is at a low level this year and due to the scarcity of hay and fodder, many farmers have decided to export a part of their livestock to the Mainland.

The wine market is very active and it is noticed that prices have shown a considerable reduction.

Olive production is considered to be very satisfactory despite the damage caused to the crops by the sirocco winds.

The Prefect of Catania has been requested to requisition the pinewood at Linguaglossa (Province of Catania), on behalf of the "Compagnia Resiniera Italiana" whose total production of resin and turpentine is under contract to the Allies.

The general situation regarding livestock is normal and no outbreaks of disease have been reported.

PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES.

Reconstruction work progressed slowly during the month. The task of rehousing homeless persons is also a slow progress but is proceeding as fast as conditions allow. "Genio Civile" have completed public works during the month to a total amount of lire 5,958,805, in addition they are carrying out important dock repairs in the Ports of Messina and Catania at an estimated total cost of lire 32,900,000.

Bridge reconstruction works have been completed at a cost of lire 10,522,000, and projects for the drainage of malarial areas have been drawn up for an estimated cost of lire 2,535,000. The main handicap in the execution of the works continues to be lack of transport and building materials, particularly cement.

The "Provviditori alle Opere Pubbliche" for Sicily has approved of a large number of projects which amount to a total expenditure of more than 700 million lire for the whole of Sicily.

the pinewood at Lingua Gloriosa (Province of Catania), on behalf of the "Compagnia Benificenza Italiana" whose total production of resin and turpentine is under contract to the Allies.

The general situation regarding livestock is normal and no outbreaks of disease have been reported.

PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES.

Reconstruction work progressed slowly during the month. The task of rehousing homeless persons is also a slow process but is proceeding as fast as conditions allow. "Genio Civile" have completed public works during the month to a total amount of lire 5,968,805, in addition they are carrying out important dock repairs in the Ports of Messina and Catania at an estimated total cost of lire 12,900,000.

Bridge reconstruction works have been completed at a cost of lire 10,522,000, and projects for the drainage of malarial areas have been drawn up for an estimated cost of lire 2,515,000. The main handicap in the execution of the works continues to be lack of transport and building materials, particularly cement.

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The condition of roads is still deteriorating. Road surfacing material, both ballast and bitumen, is difficult to obtain owing to transport difficulties. Work on the Augusta - Melilli road (Syracuse) has not yet begun because the supplementary estimate of 4,500,000 lire has not been approved as yet by the Regional Authorities in Palermo.

Electricity production is becoming more difficult due to the arrival of the dry season and distribution is strictly **63041**.

The "Societa Generale Elettrica della Sicilia" has informed the population through the press of the reasons for the new decree on electricity rationing, issued by the High Commissioner for Sicily.

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Most certainly a member of
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REPORT

Electrical energy generated by the hydro-electric stations has fallen below the anticipated output owing to drought. The hydro-electric plants at Sosio and Alcantara produce only 100,000 kw per day, against 240,000 kw per day, last year. The thermal generating stations have to take an increased load in consequence, these latter could generate 100 million kw but the arrival of imported coal is uncertain, furthermore, the quality is poor and very often unsuitable for the boilers.

Gas works are still standing idle. The Committee of Catania has informed the press that Allied Commission has promised 200 tons of gas coal per month for gas production.

Extensive repairs have been carried out to the tramway system in Catania and new services are being initiated.

PUBLIC HEALTH - WILFANG - RABIES.

The health of the civilian population in Eastern Sicily continues to be fairly good. There have been no serious epidemics with the exception of an outbreak of typhus in the Province of Messina. The number of cases of notifiable diseases has remained fairly stationary. Five persons have been bitten by dogs suspected of having rabies.

At Capizzi (Province of Messina) the typhus epidemic has continued with 9 fresh cases during the month, bringing the total number since the outbreak began up to 44 cases, with 10 deaths. The Italian medical authorities report that all the cases are amongst the poorest classes of the community, and they attribute the epidemic to bad accommodation, malnutrition and lack of soap. Hygienic and sanitary conditions in the town are very poor, in many cases people are to be found living together with such animals as sheep and pigs. All infected persons have been segregated in a local hospital, and houses and persons have been disinfected with DDT powder. Public Health Sub-Commission specialists arrived in the area and every effort has been made to stamp out the epidemic.

The number of infectious diseases reported totalled 409, this figure includes 197 cases of scabies and 41 of typhoid fever.

PUBLIC HEALTH - MALAYA - KAMPUNG

The health of the civilian population in Eastern Siak is considered to be fairly good. There have been no serious epidemics with the exception of an outbreak of typhus in the Province of Besenim. The number of cases of notifiable diseases has remained fairly stationary. Five persons have been bitten by dogs suspected of having rabies.

At Capizai (Province of Besenim) the typhus epidemic has continued with 9 fresh cases during the month, bringing the total number since the outbreak began up to 41 cases, with 10 deaths. The Italian medical authorities report that all the cases are amongst the poorest classes of the community, and they attribute the epidemic to bad accommodation, malnutrition and lack of soap. Hygienic and sanitary conditions in the town are very poor, in many cases people are to be found living together with such animals as sheep and pigs. All infected persons have been segregated in a local hospital, and houses and persons have been disinfested with DDT powder. Public Health Sub-Committee specialists arrived in the area and every effort has been made to stamp out the epidemic.

The number of infectious diseases reported totalled 405, this figure includes 197 cases of scabies and 41 of typhoid fever or paratyphoid. Inoculations and vaccinations have been extensively carried out in all provinces. Medical authorities consider that the lack of soap is largely responsible for many avoidable diseases. Poor people are unable to pay the black market price of soap and have to resort to various substitutes which are not very efficacious. The Commissioner has a quantity of caustic soda but has no oil for saponification.

Thirty fresh cases of malaria have been reported during the month. Steps have been taken to control all malarial infected areas. About 80 acres of marshy land have been converted into rice fields, and a strict supervision is being maintained in order to prevent it from becoming malarial.

The campaign against V.D. is being waged continuously with satisfactory results.

Sanitary conditions in the prisons are still very bad due to overcrowding. Hygienic conditions and facilities are totally inadequate

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for the numbers interned. Scabies are prevalent amongst prisoners and present numbers of inmates cannot be exceeded.

The Provincial Foundling Hospital at Syracuse has been de-requisitioned and handed back to the authorities, this has caused much satisfaction as the children are very badly housed elsewhere.

Provincial Medical Officers complain that they are prevented from visiting provincial towns owing to lack of tyres and spare parts for their vehicles, the position in this respect is becoming more and more acute.

RELIEF.

During May the activity of the "Soup Kitchens" in the Province of Catania, Syracuse and Ragusa was considerably reduced, as their main functions are limited to the winter months.

Early in May, representatives of the Holy See arrived to study possibilities regarding new methods of assistance to destitute persons, a "Refettorio del Papa" was formed and this is to be sponsored by the Pope. These Refectories commenced functioning in Catania on 15 May and 1,400 meals were served daily, 800 of which were served to dependants of the Italian Armed Forces and the remainder to persons over 70 years of age.

A Provincial Committee for assistance to war veterans is working in the Provinces of Catania, Messina and Syracuse, in order to assist demobilised Italian Military to find employment and be rehabilitated in the national economic life.

Every effort is being made to reduce the large number of abandoned children, who in many cases are found living on the streets. The "Commissariato Provinciale della Gioventù Italiana" of Catania, supervises 4 "Asili Infantili" and 3 "Colonie", with 804 "Pigli della Strada". There are also special "Colonie" for the treatment of eye diseases (Trachomatosis) where the children receive good meals and are visited daily by an eye specialist.

Distribution of clothing received from S.R.N.I. has continued during the month in Catania which suffered most through the

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Distribution of clothing received from R.F.D.S.I. has continued during the month in Catania which suffered most through the war. The persons receiving this clothing are most grateful to the Allied donors.

REFUGEES.

Repatriation from Sicily to the mainland, and vice versa, continued during the month. The number of refugees from the mainland still remaining in Eastern Sicily at the end of May was 455.

In the Catania, Syracuse and Ragusa camps there are still 1,126 Libici awaiting repatriation. Most of these persons are destitute and urgently in need of clothing. In many cases they have a part of their families in North Africa. All are anxious to return to Africa and resume their normal life once again.

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FINANCE.

The Intendente di Finanza of Catania reports that the collection of taxes during May produced most satisfactory results, this was due to new and increased taxation coming into force.

The proceeds of the "Dance Lotto" for this month were exceptionally high, being four to five times higher than those of previous months.

The general financial situation of the provinces of Eastern Sicily may be considered as very good.

Banks are in a very healthy position. Despite the fact that export trade is almost at a standstill, due to lack of transport, money flows very easily and receipts and disbursements are very high.

There is a lot of liquid money on the market. The subscription for the last issue of 5% Treasury Bonds in Catania and Province amounted to 650 million lire.

The Banca di Sicilia in Catania, during the month of May, received from Italian banks in the U.S.A. lire 3,900,000 for payment to relatives in Sicily - this figure is against 3,200,000 lire for the preceding month.

The general index figures for May are slightly lower than those for April. Sugar on the black market is still about 1,100 lire per kilo, bread has dropped from 80 to 55 lire per kilo, pasta from 110 to 80, potatoes from 80 to 40 per kilo. Commodity prices in general have been falling steadily since the liberation of N. Italy.

Blue seal dollars are selling for 260 lire
Yellow seal dollars are selling for 180 lire
Pound sterling notes are at par - 400 lire.

The R. Manifattura di Tabacchi is working at full capacity. The value of cigars, cigarettes and pipe tobacco produced during May amounted to lire 101,778,000. This record figure can be attributed mainly to increased prices. Large quantities of tobacco have arrived, stocks on hand can secure production for another six months.

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There is a lot of liquidity on the market. The subscription for the last issue of 5 Treasury Bonds in Catania and Province amounted to 850 million lire.

The Banca di Sicilia in Catania, during the month of May, received from Italians in the U.S.A. Lire 1,300,000 for payment to relatives in Sicily - this figure is against 1,100,000 lire for the preceding month.

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LABOUR.

The labour situation during the month has been quiet, there have been no serious strikes or disturbances.

Although there has been some improvement in the cost of living, in comparison with the previous month, there is still great discontent amongst the workers owing to the disparity between wages and high cost of living.

It was reported that during the month wages were 100-150% higher than those fixed by contract. Efforts are now being made to stabilize wages and the last agreement on the "Indennità di contingenza" made last February in Rome is to be put into operation, bringing the "Indennità di contingenza" to 170 lire per day for industrial labour.

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Wages and Hours

and 50-70 lire daily for commercial labor, no agreement has yet been fixed for agricultural workers.

Unemployment figures continue to show an increase. The labor office of the "Ufficio Provinciale del Lavoro" cannot function satisfactorily owing to both employers and employees being against compulsory employment, they state it is a relic of the late Fascist co-operative system. In Catania 7,000 persons are unemployed, against a figure of 6,922 for the previous month, these figures are incomplete for the reasons stated above.

Eight new unions are reported as being formed in Catania Province between various types of labor.

Schooling

A few patriotic student demonstrations took place during the early days of May. Students absented themselves from school for several days, they were chiefly those attending the Scuola Media, Lyceum and University. The Provviditori agli Studi published several announcements in the local press, appealing for the students to return and asking their parents to persuade them to do so.

With this exception, the school situation is as good as the conditions will permit. The difficulties pointed out in our last report are still outstanding. No further school buildings have been de-requisitioned.

School attendance is constant, though proportionately low. Many schools are working under great difficulties owing to lack of accommodation and shortage of school supplies. The text book situation at the University is still very acute and students complain of their high cost.

Communications

The poor condition of roads and the lack of tyres and spare parts for maintenance continue to restrict road transportation. I.M.T. is functioning regularly under the Italian Government at the moment more than 65% of their vehicles are out of commission due to lack of tyres and spare parts, more than 50% of them are used by the

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COMMUNICATIONS.

The poor condition of roads and the lack of tyres and spare parts for maintenance continue to restrict road transportation. I.M.V. is functioning regularly under the Italian Government at the moment more than 50 of their vehicles are out of commission due to lack of tyres and spare parts, more than 50 of them are used by the Alimentation services.

The acute shortage of box cars and coal is seriously affecting the operations of the railways. At the present time 5,000 tons of imported wheat is stock piled on the Catania Quay awaiting the arrival of box cars to transport it. The movement of essential foodstuffs and trade is handicapped by this shortage of transportation.

The allocation of 5,000 tyres to Catania by Pirelli has not yet been received.

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Telephone and telegraphic services continued to be normal throughout the month.

The Italian mail service was in operation to the authorized parts of Italy and to foreign countries.

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ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OFFICER

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MONTHLY REPORT - APRIL 1945

TO	INIT	Date
VP CA Sec	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Public Safety	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Public Health	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Legal	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Local Govt	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Patriots	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Disper	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Education	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
MFA & A	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Ca Sec		

PLEASE PASS QUICKLY

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TO	Init	Date
VP CA Sec	<i>[Signature]</i>	16/3
Public Safety	<i>[Signature]</i>	16/3
Public Health	<i>[Signature]</i>	16/3
Legal	<i>[Signature]</i>	16/3
Local Govt	<i>[Signature]</i>	16/3
Patriots	MP	21/5
Disper	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Education	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
MFA & A	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5
Ca Sec	<i>[Signature]</i>	21/5

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ALLIED COMMISSION LIAISON OFFICER

CATANIA

MONTHLY REPORT - APRIL 1945

PART I

GENERAL.

In general the political atmosphere has remained unchanged. The month on the whole has been quiet with few strikes and little agitation. Trade and daily life continue to show some signs of improvement though in a slow and uncertain way. Everything is dominated by the food situation and the price of foodstuffs in the markets. Prices of essential commodities are high, and there is still a great disparity between wages and the cost of living. Many normal necessities are much beyond the reach of the working classes. Wage adjustments are continually necessary to keep pace with rising prices. Lack of price control and scarcity of goods are the primary causes of these increases. Poverty is still widespread, especially in the larger towns.

The successes of the Allied Armies in Northern Italy, and above all the valiant action of the Partisans, have done much to improve morale and restore confidence. It is felt that Italy has earned the status of Ally and justified representation at San Francisco. A spirit of optimism prevails and people are hoping for an economic revival and better conditions in the near future.

The diverse political parties have been active, though their activity seems confined to their respective followers. The majority of the population is apolitical and is apathetic to the promises held forth by different parties. There is still widespread distrust of the Central Government, and the people have no confidence in their own administrative officials. The chief concern of the masses is not politics but the economies of the home, as reflected in the price of bread and pasta, and the cost of living.

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The congress of the Partito Democratico del Lavoro was unanimous in its denunciation of the High Commissioner who was accused of partiality towards his own party. Some mixed patriotic manifestations were made by students in favour of the retention of Trieste by Italy and against the Separatists. These latter still demand political independence, but seek dependence on some power of economic federation.

The farming and peasant classes are strongly opposed to the Amasso. The price to be paid for grain has not yet been fixed, but it is feared that it will be unremunerative.

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In that case the farmers will prefer their grain to money and the masses will suffer accordingly. The impression is that the administration is trying to deprive them of their grain at an unjust price. The old game of "hide and seek" will recommence, and grain will find its way into the black market. The community is basically egoist and material interests always prevail.

The arrival of grain ships has permitted the regular distribution of the daily ration of 300 grammes of bread and pasta. The quality of bread and pasta being sold has come in for a good deal of adverse comment in the press and steps are being taken to control milling.

Few changes have taken place in local administration and a spirit of "laissez-faire" exists. Epuration committees are functioning in a small way and a few minor officials have been separated.

The internal security situation is far from being satisfactory. Crimes as a whole is on the increase and armed bands continue to operate in the country. The steady rise in delinquency can be attributed largely to prevent economic conditions. The police forces are still badly handicapped owing to shortage of transport, arms and personnel.

Trade to the Mainland and Foreign Countries has continued under the control of the Chamber of Commerce and I.C.E. Exports consisted mainly of citrus fruits, wine and sulphur. Inter-Regional trade is gravely handicapped owing to lack of road, rail and sea transport. The arrival of coal cargoes has been ~~unprecedented~~ and resulted in a curtailment of electrical energy.

The health of the population is generally good but there is a good deal of poverty and malnutrition. Clothing is being distributed to the needy and free meals are being given to the destitute. Sanitary conditions in the prisons are deplorable owing to overcrowding.

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Part II

POLITICAL REACTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION.

Some political parties of the National Liberation Committee displayed considerable activity during April. The greatest activity was that shown by the Partito Democratico del Lavoro which held a Regional Congress in Catania on the 8-10th April. It was attended by the Minister Cavallotto. Various problems affecting Sicilian life came up for consideration, especially with regard to public safety and grain amassing. However, the most important problem which came up for discussion was Sicilian autonomy. Two plans were brought forward and discussed, one by On. Guerino Asella, and the second by the Duke of Aveva on behalf of the Minister Paresce who was absent. Criticisms and amendments were proposed by Avv. Califfida, who suggested that a Regional Committee should be set up with the object of examining the proposed plans. This suggestion was carried and a Committee duly appointed.

Several speeches were made on the political situation, various speakers charged the High Commissioner, E.E. Aldisio, with partiality on behalf of the members of his own political party (Partito Democratico Cristiano). A particularly aggressive speech against the High Commissioner was made by a Priest, Father Treaso, who charged him with "taking advantage of his high office for the benefit of his party". He suggested that Aldisio ought to be removed and that another person not bound by personal interests should be appointed High Commissioner. The congressmen were unanimous in their approval and an Order of the Day was issued accordingly. A high degree of patriotism was manifested during the congress and all allusions to Trieste were vigorously applauded.

A great deal of activity has also been displayed in the provinces by both the "Partito Democratico del Lavoro" and the "Partito Socialista Italiano". The "Partito d'Azione" withdrew from the National Liberation Committee, on grounds that a "crisis of methods, programmes, and men, had rendered the Committee completely sterile and inefficient".

The "Partito Democratico Cristiano" had already withdrawn from the publication in

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of examining the proposed plans. This suggestion was carried and a Committee duly appointed.

Several speeches were made on the political situation, various speakers charged the High Commissioner, S.E. Aldrich, with partiality on behalf of the members of his political party (Partito Democratico Cristiano). A particularly aggressive speech against the High Commissioner was made by a priest, Father Grasso, who charged him with "taking advantage of his high office for the benefit of his party". He suggested that Aldrich ought to be removed and that another person not bound by personal interests should be appointed High Commissioner. The congressionists were unanimous in their approval and an Order of the Day was issued accordingly. A high degree of patriotism was manifested during the congress and all allusions to Trieste were vigorously applauded.

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The "Partito Democratico Cristiano" had already withdrawn from the National Liberation Committee owing to the publication in "Italian News" of the results of the enquiries made into the burning down of the Municipio and other public buildings in Catania last December. It was claimed that the findings were not truthful. The "Partito Democratico Cristiano" requested the Committee to institute further enquiries, but as this request was refused, the party withdrew its adhesion and refused to rejoin again unless these investigations are carried out.

A certain amount of activity and propaganda has also been carried out by the Separatists. New "sections" have been opened in various towns in the provinces of Eastern Sicily. The type of propaganda they spread is "pressive". They try to appear like victims persecuted by the Italian authorities, who, they state, "organize sort of obstructions and provide other parties with arms against them".

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In spite of that, they could appear like "public people who suffer this persecution occasionally for the sake of their great ideals". Hence, when noisy demonstrations took place against them in April, they remained in their premises in Catania after having obstructed the door with electrically charged wire. Following the closing down of their premises, by orders of the Gendarmerie, and demonstrations against them by students, some young separatists became less pacific and a few minor clashes took place. A few persons were injured and some were arrested. The CC.RR. and the Gendarmerie have the situation well under control.

Minister Gasparotto and On. Bavaro have toured Eastern Sicily and made several patriotic speeches, these were enthusiastically hailed by their listeners, especially by members of the "Associazione Combattenti".

At Catania, another party has been added to the already long list called "Partito del Reddito Italiano". It appears to have monarchist tendencies. Still another party has also been formed in the same town, its political tendency is rather nebulous. It is called "lavoro e liberta" and so far has collected about 450 adherents and has three sections.

At Ragusa is to be noted the presence of the "Aldilian Labour Party" which is considered an offshoot of the Separatist Movement. Despite a great deal of propaganda, it seems that until now only a few people have been persuaded to join.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

No important changes have taken place in local government, and there has been little or no improvement in local administration either at the Provincial or at the Communal level. The effectiveness of public authority is greatly reduced owing to the presence of political feeling and favoritism, which adversely affects efficiency. Corruption is widespread, and there is no determined effort to crush it and administer properly.

At Messina, another party has been added to the already long list called "Partito dei Popoli Italiani". It appears to have monarchial tendencies. Still another party has also been formed in the same town, its political tendency is rather nebulous. It is called "Lavoro e Libertà" and so far has collected about 450 adherents and has three sections.

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The public have a complete lack of confidence in local officials, and no measures for Sicily can succeed until a degree of confidence is restored. Many changes in personnel have been effected but results are not yet apparent. Local authority is weak and does little to enforce provincial ordinances, this results in lack of respect by the public.

Demonstrations were held in the Province of Enna, owing to rumors that the Province was to be split up and amalgamated to the Provinces of Catania and Caltanissetta. At Enna the townspeople are strongly opposed to amalgamation, whilst at Lincusa Agrigina and other places in the same Province, it is looked upon favorably. ~~CCSD~~ matter is under consideration by the Italian Government.

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Exparation Committees have been appointed in each Province. They have begun to function but so far their activities have been very limited. A certain number of minor officials have been appointed and some were dismissed. It is felt that their work will not remove all the obstacles which beset the road to progress unless a new and honest mentality is inculcated amongst all sections of public administration.

ECONOMICS, RESOURCES AND SUPPLY.

The food situation is now better due to the arrival of other grain ships at Catania and Messina. The daily ration of bread has been maintained regularly in Eastern Sicily. The daily ration of 300 grammes divided between bread and pasta, is not the same in the different Provinces. Whilst the Provinces of Messina, Reggio, Enna and Syracuse have 200 grammes of bread daily and 550-560 grammes of pasta every week, the Province of Catania has 250 grammes of bread daily and 550 grammes of pasta every two weeks. This has caused some discontent in the Province of Catania, where the Prefect has decided to hold a referendum, so that the people can say how they wish the 300 gramme ration divided between bread and pasta. The quality of the bread and pasta has also come in for a good deal of criticism.

Pasta has been distributed with some little delay, owing to the shortage of electric power, which reduced the productive capacity of the flour mills.

Other foodstuffs are available in fair quantities, but they are beyond the pocket of all except the wealthy minority and black market operators. The disparity between wages and prices continues to be as great as ever.

The "Samud" docked at Messina with about 5,000 tons of wheat for Messina Province, the remainder of the cargo was unloaded at Reggio. In Catania the "Clipria" discharged 3,271 tons of wheat, and the "Richard D. Lyons" arrived on 29 April to discharge another 8,334 tons.

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Trade to the Mainland was consisted chiefly of citrus fruits to a total amount of 12,800 tons. Other commodities shipped were 52,000 litres of alcohol and 1,54,000 litres of wine. There is still a large wine surplus in Eastern Sicily. The main reason for this surplus is the difficulty of transporting the wine to Porto, owing to the acute shortage of transport facilities.

The coal situation was rather difficult at the beginning of the month. The "Baron Elphinstone" and "Robert Battey" discharged 16,852 tons of foreign coal at Catania. The "Kalingo Hadjiratera" discharged 5,200 tons of Sardinian coal. This quantity has been divided between the Electric Company and Railways, a small quantity was also allocated for industrial use.

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The distribution of coal is now the responsibility of the railway authorities. All assistance has been given by this office in the way of sending urgent mail through A.C. channels and by use of the Military telephone line for urgent messages.

Now that the dry season is approaching the hydro-electric reservoirs will soon be without water, and in consequence, a greater quantity of Sardinian coal will be required by the Electric Company, in order to supply the essential energy for mills. It is particularly pointed out that the allocation of power to the Province of Messina is insufficient, as a great part of the allocation is consumed by Allied installations. In consequence of this shortage the Prefect decided to cut off the power supply to Messina Brewery which produces beer for the Forces. Steps were taken by this office to increase the allocation of power to Messina, in order to ensure a sufficient supply for the Brewery.

The supervision and recording of schooner movements is proceeding normally. Two cases of delay in sailing occurred at Catania, namely the "Edera" and "Mantastrom", this delay was primarily due to a shortage of damage. It is pointed out by CO. 62. SA. that another reason for delay is the difficulty of telephone communication with their H.Q. in Naples by civil phone.

A serious shortage of soap exists, the quantities available are found on the black market at a price of 200 lire per kilogramme which is beyond the purse of the poorer classes, and this situation constitutes a great danger to hygiene and public health.

The production of refined sulphur has continued steadily in Catania. The main producing factories are "Unione Raffinerie Siciliane", "Federazione Italiana del Consorzio Agrari", "Zanucconi", "Macinazione Siciliana", "Carso Torisi". During the month 5,525 tons of black sulphur have been received by the above named firms. tons have already been refined.

On the 13 April, the traders of Catania held a meeting to discuss the opening of Istituto Commercio Estero Office (I.C.E.). After some debate an Order of the Day was issued and sent to the Regional and Central Authorities. This order stated that the traders

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SECRETAGRICULTURE, FORESTS AND FISHERIES.

The amassing of grain has continued slowly during the month. Total wheat amassed to date in the provinces of Catania, Messina, Syracuse and Ragusa is 40,436.5 quintals, and the total barley is 51,552.33 quintals. Farmers and producers are opposed to total amassing of wheat for the new season and they suggest, instead, a partial amassing. It is pointed out by U.I.S.E.A. that they will experience great difficulty in the control of cultivated areas owing to the scarcity of transport.

The total amount of olive oil amassed in the above named Provinces is 5,784,190.300 quintals. The amassing has proved a complete failure and resulted in an increase of price on the black market. There has only been one distribution of oil to the civilian population of 500 grammes per person, during the present oil season. This has caused a good deal of discontent amongst the people who are compelled to purchase on the black market at a price of 750 lire per kilogramme, as against the official price of 71 lire. The producers all complain that the price paid by the Consorzio Agrario of 6,000 lire per quintal is far too low and does not even meet the cost of cultivation, collection, and working of the olives. The population are at a loss to understand why the oil is being amassed if there is no distribution.

There has been no distribution of sugar to the population since February. Small quantities exist on the black market at a price of 800-100 lire per kilogramme, the official price is 15.60 lire.

With regard to crop expectations, the quantity of seed potatoes imported is not sufficient to cover the ground prepared. The weather continues to be very dry with a consequent adverse effect on the crops.

The production of fertilizers at the Bicocca and Milazzo factories of Montecatini has been in full operation since February. The Licata factory is still needing major repairs before it can start production. The output of super-phosphate has shown an increase this month and a regular distribution has been made to the population still prevents a

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There has been no distribution of sugar to the population since February. Small quantities exist on the black market at a price of 800-100 lire per kilogramme, the official price is 19.20 lire.

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The production of fertilizers at the Dicocea and Milazzo factories of Montecatini has been in full operation since February. The Licata factory is still needing major repairs before it can start production. The output of super-phosphate has shown an increase this month and a regular distribution has been made to the five provinces. Lack of transportation still prevents a full distribution of fertilizers. The non availability of azote and potassium is a difficult problem for the farmers as these two items are of great importance in land cultivation. There is still an acute shortage of farming implements and spare parts.

There have been no outbreaks of disease amongst livestock and the general situation regarding stock continues to be normal.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND COURTS.

Public Safety has been and still is one of the most important problems in Sicily. The constant increase in the number of crimes, and the presence of armed bands which continue to 6298 with impunity, especially in the country districts of the various

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Provinces, can be attributed to a great extent to the handicaps suffered by the police authorities. The Questura and the CC.NR. seem impotent to cope with the situation as they do not dispose of adequate means of transportation and communication. On the other hand, the gangs are well armed, sometimes much better than the police, and are provided with means of transport which enables them to frustrate any action by the police and move rapidly from one Province to another.

This has been pointed out by the Questore of Roma, who reports the presence of armed bands in his Province. Both he and the Commandante of the CC.NR. state that their action is often handicapped by the victims themselves who fear the gangsters and are submissive even to the point of giving them information which enables them to escape.

Syracuse Province reports the presence of gang leaders who form a gang for the purpose of committing specific crimes. After a proposed crime has been carried out, the gang disperses and goes to earth for a long period.

Owing to the small number of CC.NR. stationed in country districts they are not in a position to carry out an efficient patrol service. Moreover, it is difficult to concentrate an adequate number of police for any emergency action owing to lack of transport, and tyres. In spite of continued activity by the police and the large number of arrests effected, practically every type of crime is daily recurrent. There is still a large disparity between the number of crimes committed and arrests effected.

Political demonstrations took place in the last days of April and still continue. Students left the schools and paraded the streets waving Italian flags and shouting that "Trieste shall remain Italian" etc. Incidents occurred in Catania and other towns between students and Separatists. In order to avoid further incidents which might result in grave disorders, the Questore has ordered the closing down of the premises of the Separatist Movement in Catania, they have also been closed at Acireale, Ionia and Messina. During the above manifestations, a few persons were slightly injured and some arrests were made. The CC.NR. and the Questura have the

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We have been informed that a large number of CC.RR. are to leave Eastern Sicily, should there be any serious disturbances this may result in grave consequences. The number of CC.RR. to leave Catania is about 480, part of whom have already left. Only a skeleton force will be left behind consisting of two men in each team of the Province. If this situation arises the CC.RR. and the Questura will be completely unable to cope with any eventualities.

COURTS.

The Italian Courts in Eastern Sicily have continued to function during April, in spite of considerable inconveniences, such as lack of suitable accommodation, difficulty of communications and lack of prison accommodation, etc. The R. Procura of Catania, whose

premises were destroyed by fire last December, during the political disorders, is now incalculated in the Juvenile Court.

Large numbers of civil cases are still outstanding. The situation is far from satisfactory and would appear to be deteriorating. Substantial increases in the numbers of crimes committed are reported in all the Provinces. The prisons are overcrowded and the Procuratori del Re go ask whether it is possible to form concentration camps. Despite the activities of the medical authorities, the hygienic and sanitary conditions of the prisons leave much to be desired.

The shortage of prison accommodation is reflected in the decisions of the Courts; it is necessary in many cases to grant conditional liberty or recommend appeals for pardon.

The more common crimes affecting Allied property are "wrongful possession" and "theft".

At Messina there is one case outstanding involving four civilians alleged to have injured a British sailor.

At Catania two drunken Italian soldiers threw a hand grenade at a patrol composed of a British N.C.O. and two Italian co-operators. The two soldiers were tried by an Italian Military Court and received sentences, one to 8 years imprisonment and the second to 4 years and 4 months imprisonment.

The numbers of cases pending, involving Allied property, in Eastern Sicily at the end of April were 147, as follows:- 40 at Messina, 45 at Catania, 1 at Enna, 57 at Syracuse.

PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES.

Reconstruction work in the Cities and on roads and bridges is proceeding slowly, this is due to a shortage of materials. The work of rehousing homeless people is also proceeding with all possible speed. The "Genio Civile" have made projects for a total cost of lire 81,878,280.

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The condition of some major roads is slowly deteriorating. The road from the Port of Augusta to Melilli, which has become increasingly important, is in a very bad state. A request was made by 204 Sub Area to have this road repaired but work has not yet commenced, the delay is due to the fact that the initial estimate for repairs amounted to 5,550,000 lire, but owing to further depreciation in the road, a supplementary estimate of 4,500,000 lire is now necessary. Work will commence as soon as this expenditure has been approved.

Bridge reconstruction is also being carried out and projects amounting to lire 20,678,751 have been approved.

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Works in the Docks at Catania and Messina have continued and approval has been obtained for projects which are estimated to cost lire 11,247,258.

The seasonal difficulties of the hydro-electric generating stations are now beginning consequent upon the shortage of water. One has already closed down. This fact makes the electricity situation much worse owing to the extra load put on the thermal generating stations which are already overloaded. A shortage of electrical energy occurred during the first fortnight of April due to the delay in arrival of Sardinian coal. Strict rationing was absolutely necessary. The electricity situation would be much better in Eastern Sicily if a shipload of coal could be sent to the power station at Empedocle.

The overriding consideration during the month was the continued extreme shortage of transport, this affects practically all public works and utilities.

PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, REFUGEES.

The health of the civilian population has remained good in Eastern Sicily and there have been no serious epidemics. During the month there was a noticeable decrease in the numbers of notifiable diseases, especially typhoid and paratyphoid. Inoculations were carried out on a large scale both in towns and provinces.

One case of smallpox was notified in Catania on the 25th March 45. The patient was infected by her husband who had arrived from Naples. Proper steps were taken to segregate the patient and all contacts and all authorities were notified. Everything was done to prevent a spread of the disease and no further cases have been reported. Compulsory vaccination was given to all school children, Provincial and Communal employees and persons leaving for the Mainland, whilst large numbers of the public presented themselves for voluntary vaccination which was done free of charge.

The number of infectious diseases reported totalled 357. The typhoid epidemic at Acireale (Province of Catania) was completely

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The number of infectious diseases reported totalled 357. The typhoid epidemic at Acireale (Province of Catania) was completely stamped out and there has been no serious outbreak except in the Comune of Capizzi (Messina Province). This outbreak began in March and 16 cases have been notified. This particular epidemic was not due to water so much as to bad accommodation, food and lack of soap. This latter can only be had at very exorbitant prices beyond the reach of poor people. There has been no ration of soap to the public and this is causing a good deal of concern to medical authorities and discontent amongst the population. Inoculations were made in every Comune where typhoid and paratyphoid were notified.

There were no cases of primary malaria in the Provinces of Catania, Messina and Enna. Only a few fresh cases were reported in Ragusa. In Catania a course of free lectures on malaria was given by the Municipal doctors and the public took full advantage of them.

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The campaign against free prostitution has been vigorously pursued and appears to have met with some success.

Sanitary conditions in the prisons are very bad due to overcrowding. Washing facilities are bad and there is a lack of clothing. A large percentage of prisoners at Syracuse are suffering from scabies. Sleeping accommodation in prisons is also very poor.

Provincial Medical Officers all complain of the lack of tyres which prevents them from visiting Provincial towns.

WELFARE.

During April, the "Economic Kitchens" continued to operate satisfactorily in the Provinces of Catania, Syracuse and Ragusa. In Catania, 11,000 hot meals were served daily, of which 7,000 were free, and the remainder sold at nominal cost. S.E. Mole, Under Secretary of the Interior, gave 800,000 lire towards this upkeep. During the month of May their activity will be curtailed as they are supposed to function only during the winter months.

Each Province has received a consignment of clothing from E.N.D.S.I. for distribution to destitute persons. Provincial committees were appointed by the Prefects to supervise the distribution of the clothing to Communes which suffered most through the war. The Province of Catania received 20,000 articles of clothing, Syracuse 11,500 and Messina 18,000. Distribution in Communes is proceeding satisfactorily.

REFUGEES.

Repatriation from Sicily to the Mainland, and vice-versa, continued during the month. The number of refugees from the Mainland still in Eastern Sicily is 1,641.

The High Commissioner for Refugees has given permission for the return of refugees to Presinone and Littorio and a large number of them has already left. The remainder will be repatriated during May. Those to be repatriated to N. Africa still constitute the major problem, since at present there is no possibility for this category of refugees to be clothed.

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The High Commissioner for Refugees has issued instructions to the Refugee Camps in Syracuse and Ragusa to be ready to receive civilians from Albania. The number and date of arrival is not known.

FINANCE.

Satisfactory reports have been given by the Bank Managers about general banking operations during April. The deposits in the Banks as well as in the Post Office Savings accounts are in considerable excess of withdrawals. The Banca di Sicilia has contributed to receive important sums from Italians in the U.S.A. for payments to

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relatives in Sicily.

The index figures in April are somewhat higher than in March, with the exception of eggs and certain vegetables. Olive oil now costs 300 lire per litre and this is causing many complaints against producers and dealers, and particularly against the authorities.

Taxes to be paid in April, for the two months of March and April, have been collected regularly. The Esattoria in Catania has collected all outstanding taxes due for the year 1944.

The Manifattura dei Tabacchi in Catania, which supplies tobacco to the Provinces of Catabia, Messina, Syracuse, Enna, Caltanissetta and Ragusa is working 10 hours per day to maintain supply. Daily production of cigarettes is about 1,100,000 and cigars 84,000. 120 grammes of tobacco in one form or another has been distributed to smokers during April. This factory represents one of the principal revenue producing concerns.

LABOUR.

The labour situation during the month was satisfactory. There is considerable discontent caused by the disparity between wages and the high cost of living, also owing to the lack of clothing and necessities. There was a brief stoppage of work involving 293 Tramway employees at Catania on 27 April 45. The stoppage lasted for eight hours. The workers demanded that an agreement reached between "La Societa Tramways et Eclairage Eletrignes a Catene" and the "Camera del Lavoro" for a wage increase of 3,000 lire per month should be put into effect.

A strike was also started by 260 miniature railway workers of the "Societa Circumetnea" at Catania, which lasted from 27 April to 2 May 45. The workers demanded and obtained the payment of a wage increase as agreed between "Societa Circumetnea" and "Camera del Lavoro" of 4,000 lire per month. They also protested against the appointment of Villara Antonio as Commissario of the "Societa

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A strike was also started by 280 miniature railway workers of the "Societa Circumetnea" at Catania, which lasted from 27 April to 2 May 45. The workers demanded and obtained the payment of a wage increase as agreed between "Societa Circumetnea" and "Camera del Lavoro" of 4,000 lire per month. They also protested against the appointment of Villara Antonio as Commissario of the "Societa Circumetnea" and it was decided to replace him with a Commissario Governativo. In order to meet the above wage increase it was necessary to increase the railway fares by 25%.

A committee has been formed by D.D.L. No. 3 District under the Chairmanship of N.O.I.C. Messina. This committee consists of N.O.I.C., American Naval Base, Palermo, and representatives from A.C., R.A.F., D.A.D.L., R.E.M.E., etc. Its object is to stabilize wage rates for skilled labour and make them uniform throughout the Island.

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SECRETEDUCATION.

There has been a noticeable improvement in the general situation regarding education during the month. A large increase in the numbers attending schools is reported, the figure has risen from 8,000 to 20,000. School attendance, which was very good during the winter months, has shown a decrease during the past few weeks. This has been partly due to the many demonstrations which have taken place in which many students have participated. The Provveditore has been obliged to take steps with a view to preventing a recurrence of these absences.

The shortage of school premises, of glass for the windows and the acute shortage of paper is still a great problem and presents many difficulties to the officials concerned.

Some 40,000 copybooks were offered to the Educational authorities by A.C. and these were distributed to needy students at a price of lire 3 each book. A similar distribution has also taken place in the Province of Messina. A free distribution of text books has been made in Catania Province by the Provveditore agli Studi.

The school authorities are complaining that some school premises, recently released by the Allies, are being let on orders of the Prefect and being used for other than educational purposes. Owing to the acute shortage of paper the price of text books has greatly increased and this is causing hardship to many students.

The several University Organisations, namely:- the C.P.U. (Comitato Permanente Universitario), the Corda Frates (Federazione Internazionale des Studente), and the F.U.C.I. (Federazione Universitaria Cattolica Italiana) are still doing a good work in the relief of distress amongst students. Economical Kitchens were opened last winter for the benefit of students and were well patronised and are still in operation.

In the Medical, Physics and Chemistry Faculties, a great shortage of laboratory equipment exists. Some dissatisfaction is felt amongst the students owing to the fact that Faculties of

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COMMUNICATIONS.

RAIL. Railroad transportation is still suffering from many handicaps, such as shortage of box cars and coal, though the situation appears to be improving. Track maintenance is reduced to a minimum and rolling stock needs overhauling very badly. The passenger services by Diesel Cars have been greatly improved by the running of additional trains.

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ROAD. Road transport still continues to be a serious problem, due almost entirely to the lack of tyres and spare parts. Trucks and cars are wearing out and are irreplaceable. Many Italian officials are unable to carry out their duties efficiently on account of transport difficulties. We have just been informed that a consignment of 5,000 tyres is being sent to Catania by Tirelli, this is very opportune.

TELE-COMMUNICATIONS. No particular difficulties have been encountered during the month by the Telegraph and Telephone Services, which are functioning throughout the Island. They are still suffering from a lack of equipment.

POSTS. The postal services are operating satisfactorily throughout Eastern Sicily and inter-service is generally improving to the Mainland and Foreign Countries.

PROPERTY CONTROL.

There has been little change in property control during the month.

The "Villa Marshall" was visited by unknown thieves and the CC.RR. were notified at once and are still investigating.

Properties returned during the month were as follows:-

- a. Bennett in Messina.
- b. Viscount Bridport in Taormina.
- c. Jones in Messina.
- d. La Borne Marins in Messina.
- e. Cateicas in Catania.
- f. Bowdoin in Taormina.

All accounts of citizens of the Allied Nations, in the Banks of Messina and Catania have been "unblocked" during the month.

H. D. Carter

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- b. Viscount Bridport in Taormina.
- c. Jones in Messina.
- d. La Borra Marius in Messina.
- e. Cateicas in Catania.
- f. Bowdoin in Taormina.

All accounts of citizens of the Allied Nations, in the Banks of Messina and Catania have been "unblocked" during the month.

H. Bantley

H. BANTLEY
Major
Liaison Officer

Catania
12 May 45.

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