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ACC, INFORMATION FROM RC & MG SECTION
MAY 1944

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

785016

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
R.O. & M.C. Section
APO 394

Ref/366/58/CA.

15 May 1944.

SUBJECT: Report on Visit to Calabria.

TO : Economic Section.
Admin. Section.
Establishment Branch.

Copy of a report made by an officer of
Civil Affairs Branch and of the Information
Division is forwarded for your information.

OWIS/RAC.

For Sign. Ben
NORMAN E. FISKE,
Colonel,
Deputy Executive
Commissioner.



HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

14 May 1944.

REPORT ON VISIT TO CALABRIA

1. Lt. Col. Shipp and Captain Gillett visited all Provincial Headquarters in Calabria and in addition the Provincial Headquarters of Potenza in Region II, from May 6 to 11, 1944. The following report is based on the impressions obtained from observation of the people and countryside, strengthened by conversations with officers at Provincial Headquarters. During the short visit it was not possible to obtain corroboration of all statements, so that it should be borne in mind that the report is primarily based on impression and not necessarily on established fact.
2. People. The people appeared happy and contented, well clothed and well fed. They have confidence in A.C.C. and are beginning to realize that A.C.C. stands for something. They are acquiring the habit of relying on A.C.C. officials to act as arbiters in settling most difficulties that arise, although the power has now nominally passed out of A.C.C. hands.
3. Political. Many political parties have been formed in the Provincial capitals and political activity is obviously great. In the many little communes tucked away in the mountains, however, it is not thought that the bulk of the people have any real interest in politics. An exception to this may be the case where a political meeting was organized in such a commune near Reggio on Labour Day. The Mayor got up to address the people but his views were apparently so unpalatable that the crowd adopted a threatening attitude. This frightened the Mayor, who reacted by throwing a bomb into the crowd, injuring some twenty people, thereby getting in first shot and effectively reversing the normal procedure of acting as an Aunt Sally for the people.
4. Merchandise. The shops generally appeared fairly well stocked but nothing like so well as the shops in Naples. The prices were on the whole consistent and, due to judicious prodding on the part of the police, fairly well controlled by the Prefect. It is thought that stocks will last from four to six months.
5. Defascistization. This has been carried out to varying extents in various Provinces. For example, in Reggio it is said to be satisfactory. In Potenza the Provincial Commissioner was not satisfied as he had been instructed that Fascist officials were to be released from internment and that there was no objection to their re-employment. In general the latest instructions have not yet reached Provincial Commissioners, but when they do they should help to solve the problem, providing the Italian Government carry them out properly.
6. Carabinieri. It is understood that the Carabinieri is performing its duties fairly satisfactorily but that it relies largely for moral support on A.C.C. On the whole, it is not considered that they will be reliable if this support is taken away. It is clear that they do not carry out the Prefect's instructions or discharge their duties as punctiliously as they ought.
7. Agriculture. The countryside is cultivated extensively and crops look well. Very little ground is left untilled. Many workers were seen busy in the fields, even on Sundays. It is not known what proportion is wheat; a fair amount of barley was seen.
8. Schools. The schools are open and appear to carry on all day. The hours

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8. Schools. The schools are open and appear to carry on all day. The hours are sometimes staggered so as to accommodate the large numbers who wish to attend, since in general for a variety of reasons the buildings are not sufficient to accommodate the numbers who wish to attend. Generally great keenness was shown in making use of the educational facilities now available.

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9. Refugees. The population's reaction to the refugees among them again varies in different provinces. In Cosenza a system of billeting refugees by houses has been organized by the Prefect and is being carried out. On the whole their reaction is about the same as it was in the United Kingdom.

10. Transport. No military transport was seen on the roads south of Paestum except for one small convoy of an American Engineer Unit near Reggio moving north. There was, however, no shortage of civilian transport. The general consensus of opinion was that much more transport is now coming to light since the Italian Government had taken over and demands for requisitioning are falling away. It is thought that there should be no difficulty in supplying transport for Italian Government officials from existing sources, with the possibility of providing in addition some light cars for use by AM in forward areas. There is a shortage of tyres and spares, but if this could be overcome the position should be even better. For instance, in Cosenza the recent demand for petrol showed as follows:

Cars: 85 for Doctors.
76 for Public Officials.
257 for odd civilians.

Trucks: 115

Trails: 125

There also appeared to be some spare in Reggio where 360 are registered at present; the number is shortly to be reduced to approximately 200. P.C. Reggio also stated that in the Cosenza cars were not registered and appeared to circulate freely. This is being taken up locally.

11. Conclusion. The area traversed presents the appearance of a country completely at peace. The curfew is nominally at 2300 hours but many people circulate after this hour. No black-out is observed, civilians are pursuing their normal routine, in the country working in the fields or pursuing the streets and gazing into shop windows in the towns, restaurants are even open in some places, children appear happy and well fed and beggars or refugees are not seen on the streets. Few traces of war now remain. One is brought back to reality not by the people themselves but by the sight of a jagged bombed building or a wrecked railway bridge.

12. It is therefore suggested that the Regional and Provincial staffs are much larger than is necessary. It is thought that a complete withdrawal could be made at any time of A.C.C. personnel from certain areas where there are no troops, and that a general overall reduction of 70% to 80% would not impair the war effort. It is not that the officers in the Provinces are not doing good and useful work. They are. But the work depends largely on their individual predilection and cannot in most instances be considered essential. It should be possible to withdraw all officers except one Provincial representative from the Provinces of Cosenza and Catanzaro. It is possible that not even this one representative may be required. At Reggio one Provincial representative would probably be needed in view of the transit camp there. It is understood that troops at Reggio come under command of No.1 District, who could be consulted on this point, if necessary.

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Cars: 83 for Doctors.
76 for Public Officials.
257 for odd civilians.

Trucks: 315

Taxis: 123

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13. The main pre-occupation which A.C.C. has in these areas at the moment seems to be the supervision of the distribution and the accounting for food which we import, so that a few Supply Officers would probably be needed throughout the Region. It is for consideration whether these should operate from Regional Headquarters at Catanzaro or Reggio with a real skeleton Regional staff, or whether they could operate under the direct control of this Headquarters. As regards Regional representatives it would seem that the following personnel might be necessary at Regional Headquarters:

Regional Commissioner.
Regional Finance Officer.
Regional Public Safety Officer.
Regional Legal Officer.
Regional Public Health Officer.

The activities of the other Divisions, it is thought, could be supervised from this Headquarters.

14. The present amount seems to be opportune for carrying out this withdrawal of A.C.C. personnel for the following reasons:

- (a) The work they are doing, though useful, is not considered essential.
- (b) The effect on morale of being left in a town with no troops in the middle of a war is bad.
- (c) At present our stock is high. We should sell out while the going is good because difficulties are bound to increase, and it is considered that these should be faced up to now by the Italian Government.
- (d) The personnel may shortly be required elsewhere.

It might be better for A.C.C. to step out with a good record now than to remain behind and be dragged into domestic upheavals which appear to be inevitable, and for which we should no doubt be saddled with a large measure of blame.

CWB/RAC.

C.W.I. SHEP.
Lieut. Col.

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G.W.L. SHIP,
Lieut. Col.

