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AC, JUGOSLAV - ITALO FRONTIERS
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File
27 SEP 1945
Imp. Sec. Section

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUB COMMISSION

C.S.O.
I have read this
report with much interest
H.C.
20/9

AC/1/12/2/LG

Tel: 620

SUBJECT: Report on Venezia-Giulia.

20 September 1945

TO : Executive Commissioner (copy to VP GA Section).

1. Reference your 522/514/EC dated 12 September, attached report concerning Venezia-Giulia is submitted. In making this report, Major Temple and I have had interviews and/or taken the opinions of:—

SCAO AME XIII Corps
Deputy SCAO AME XIII Corps
Area Commissioners, GORIZIA, TRIESTE and POLA areas
Commissioner of TRIESTE CITY
Heads of the following Divisions:—
Labor
Welfare and Displaced Persons
Education
Economic
Agriculture
Commander of Venezia-Giulia Police Force
Assistant Chief of Civil Police
Commanding Officer, Allied Information Service
G.S.I. XIII Corps
"D" Section A.I.S.

2. There are returned to you copies of the Zone Handbook, Venezia-Giulia and Zara and the 4 Foreign Office pamphlets:—

R. 6370/2294/92 - Copy No. 151
R. 2378/2294/92 - Copy No. 147
R. 10195/84/92/1943 - Copy No. 65
R. 13597/362/22/1943 - Copy No. 052

4361
R. H. CRIPPS
Colonel
Director
Local Government Sub Commission

RHC/pec
Encl. as in (1) and (2) above.



REPORT ON VENEZIA GIULIA

BY

CORANIEL R. R. CRIPPS
MAJOR R. R. TEMPLER

OF

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUB COMMISSION
HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

20 September 1945

A. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. In accordance with instructions contained in AG HQ letter 522/314/50 dated 12 September 1945, this report deals with a survey of VENEZIA GIULIA REGION insofar as concerns that part at present under the control of XIII Corps west of the Morgan Line and east of the boundary between the Provinces of GORIZIA and TRIESTE on the one side, and the Province of UDINE on the other. The report is developed under the following headings:

(a) ETHNIC DETAILS in connection with which the Surveyors are to obtain the correct current figures of population in the area concerned and show the distribution as between ITALIANS, SERBO-CROATS and SLOVENES, with particular reference as to whether there has been any great change in distribution of populations:

- (i) since 1936
(ii) since 1940

(b) LOCAL FEELING

(c) SERIAL CONSIDERATIONS regarding the cities of TRIESTE and FOJA, with special reference to Foreign Office Confidential Print of 27 June 1944.

2. It is pointed out that the survey does not take into account any economic matters or deal with the ethnic problem of the REMLAN SLOVENES residing in the Province of UDINE.

B. ETHNIC DETAILS1. Estimated Population: (Sept. 1945)

	<u>Italians</u>	<u>Slovenes</u>	<u>Total</u>
TRIESTE AREA.....	307,000	43,000	350,000
GORIZIA AREA.....	50,000	60,000	110,000
FOJA AREA	25,000	5,000	30,000
TOTAL POPULATION AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION			<u>420,000</u>

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(b) LOCAL FEELING

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PULA AREA	25,000	5,000	30,000
TOTAL POPULATION AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION			<u>490,000</u>

It was found on investigation that in no area does an up-to-date census of the population exist. The last census in which a division of the population by race was made was in 1921, and covered the entire territory of Venezia Giulia including that now under Yugoslav control. It is acknowledged, however, by all responsible persons, including the Italians, that these figures are not accurate as a division of the population and were purposely manipulated to increase the Italian population. Any information, therefore, contained in this report is based entirely upon estimates made by Allied Military Government Officers, derived in their turn from their recently gained knowledge of the area and their contacts with the local population. In general, the Foreign Office Confidential Prints dated 7 June 1944 (reference R.10195/84/92/1943 and R.13597/362/22/1943) appear to be accurate as is possible in matters concerning the distribution of the population.

- 2 -

Attached is a map of the area (Appendix "A") giving, as near as possible, the ethnic boundary based on the information and figures supplied by Allied Officers. It will be seen that this substantially agrees with the yellow line shown on the map attached to the Foreign Office Pamphlet reference R.63702294/92 dated 1 June 1944. The main difference is in the SE portion of the Province of GORIZIA where it will be seen that SCAC GORIZIA is of the opinion that in the valley of the Isonzo the Italian and Slovene population are mixed at the ratio of about 50% each, becoming more Italian towards the border with TRIESTE Province in the area of GRAMISCH.

In general the population of the large cities is overwhelmingly Italian and the Slovene population is almost entirely occupied in agriculture and is therefore in the countryside and in the hinterland and hills behind such cities as TRIESTE and POLA. GORIZIA is however one large city where the population is about equally divided.

2. Movement of Population

In the early days of Italian administration and particularly under the Fascist regime, encouragement was given to the migration of Italians into the area. In the early 1920's there was considerable movement. During the inter-war years the policy of suppression of the Slovene population has naturally tended to drive them away and reduce them in numbers. No evidence could be gained of any really heavy Italian movement into the area since either 1936 or 1945.

On the other hand, on the liberation of the area by the Yugoslavs a considerable number of persons of that nationality entered the zone, some of which are known to have remained when the Yugoslav occupation forces withdrew. There is also evidence that infiltration of Yugoslav nationals is still proceeding to some degree. SCAC TRIESTE CITY alone has knowledge of about 60 who have recently entered, ostensibly to work for recognized Yugoslav organizations, but more probably for the purpose of political aims. This number does not in any way represent the total number so entering, as only those who wish to draw ration cards make an official application. One reasonably reliable Italian source working with the police force in TRIESTE estimates that during 1945 between 10,000 and 15,000 SLAVS, CROATS and SERBS have entered the Province of TRIESTE alone without notification.

The war generally and operations in the area have naturally brought about considerable movement of the population. Anti-partisan operations by the Germans caused considerable movement of SLOVENES, particularly on the borders of GORIZIA and TRIESTE, but in general these movements have probably not altered very considerably the total population or its division.

3. Trieste City is without doubt overwhelmingly of Italian extraction. Of a population of 261,000, the population is divided as to 87% ITALIAN and 13% SLOVENES, it is estimated. The percentage shown as ITALIAN includes approximately 5,000 persons who are either CROAT nationals or of CROAT origin. These are mainly of the business classes and hold a very high proportion of the capital of the city in proportion to their numbers. It is estimated to be about 25% of the total capital, mainly represented in insurance, shipping and tobacco interests.

4. Pola. Population 30,000. The same situation arises in POLA as in the main part of the zone under review, that there are no reliable census figures by which to divide the population. SCAC POLA AREA estimates 80% ITALIAN origin, 20% CROAT or other origin; whereas the Military Commander of the area makes the

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C. LOCAL FEELING IN REGARD TO DISAPPEARAL OF THE AREA IN QUESTION1. General Remarks

(a) The determination of local feeling with any degree of accuracy without a census of opinion being taken either through election or a sampling process is an extremely difficult task. Accordingly, the following statements with regard to local feeling have necessarily been based on interviews with Allied Intelligence and Civil Affairs Officers stationed in the cities of TRIESTE, GORIZIA and POLA. A scrupulous attempt has been made to ensure that the expressions of opinion were based upon facts as observed by the persons interviewed. Local contacts obviously form the basis of the views expressed by the persons interviewed. This factor, as well as any particular prejudice or personal rationalization, had to be evaluated.

(b) It should be kept in mind, furthermore, that people in the entire area have been subjected to high pressure and propaganda, some of it violent and some of it subtle; and accordingly even the attitudes of the populace might not reflect their true feelings. Daily there has been a fluctuation of opinion, tempered by world as well as local events. It must be borne in mind also that the local feeling is not necessarily based upon ethnic differences but to a large extent on economic or political differences. Accordingly, that strata of society which is attracted to the Communist Party do so for social reasons and not national ones. Any pro-Slav feeling is due to the fact that the Communist Party in the area has identified itself with Tito and Yugoslavia, who have been portrayed as the soul of democratic protagonism. This Party includes most of the workers whose hatred of Fascism has assumed anti-Italy aspect. Their organization, "Sindacati Uniti", is listed in the Slovene camp and includes ship-yard, textile and transportation workers and longshoremen. This group is said to have 50,000 members and is well organized. The opposing workers organization, called the "Sindacati Giuliani" draws support principally from the white collar groups and includes ordinary laborers and office workers, teachers, bank company employees and employees of para-statal concerns. This group is much smaller and is the pro-Italian labor union. They are largely employees of concerns having their principal offices in Italy.

(c) In the middle of August, the Italian and Yugoslav Communist Parties formed a joint new "Giulian Communist Party". Its program is pro-Slav as described above. A small Italian Communist Party remains but is very ineffective.

(d) The 4 Italian National Parties in the Venezia-Giulia are Christian-Democrats, Liberals, Party of Action and the Socialist. They are in a formative stage and their membership is small. Generally, these Parties agree that for ethnic and economic reasons the disputed territory should not go to Yugoslavia. Italians here favor either Italian sovereignty or some type of autonomy for the city of TRIESTE or Venezia-Giulia area. The Christian-Democrat, Action and Socialist Parties participate in the "Sindacati Giuliani" described above. This association of trade unions is held together principally by common Italian national sympathies. These Parties are members of the CIL, which is an extremely weak organ, because of the absence of the Communist Party from its ranks.

(e) A large group of persons constituting the middle class, the size of which has been estimated to vary from 15 to 40% of the population, also think along economic lines and generally favor some form of autonomy. This group, in short, favors any solution that will give work to the area.

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(f) About 60% of the people in the area are engaged in farming. 80% of this agricultural population are Slovenes. Although this group is definitely against becoming part of Italy, there is some difficulty in ascertaining whether they want to be core part of Yugoslavia. This Slovene majority is interested in preserving its own culture, but not necessarily interested in becoming part of Yugoslavia. As a group, they are interested in making a living without being interfered with by political squabbles. But here again it is difficult to lay down a definite rule. The small farmer is interested in the possibility of enlarging his holdings, making a better living on the land and is attracted to the Communists, which he has been made to believe hold forth the best promise to achieve that end. A majority of the larger agriculturists and perhaps some portion of the small ones favor an autonomous Slovene state under international protection.

(g) Many secret intelligence reports were put at our disposal. These, coupled with statements of the officers interviewed who had been on the spot several months and had been able to sense reaction to various Allied Military Government orders as well as statements of political and economic leaders, form the basis of this report on this phase of the investigation. It is obvious that ideological and nationalistic aspirations are very much intertwined. With this cautionary and explanatory, but not necessarily apologetic, note the following are our observations as to what the local feeling regarding the disposal of the area is.

2. Trieste City.

This city is overwhelmingly Italian with the Slovenes living in the suburbs. The majority of the Slovenes favor incorporation into Yugoslavia. Among the Italians, the business, professional and middle class, constituting 20 to 40% of the population, consider themselves to be "Triestini" and favor an autonomous city with British and American protection. This group also includes a large Greek colony, consisting of from 3,000 to 5,000 people, who however possess about 25% of the wealth of the city and are represented in insurance, shipping and tobacco companies. They want as many ships as possible to come to the port of TRIESTE and hope that the port will cater to luxury traffic, tourists, and those bound for the Orient. Thus, an autonomous city would result in great benefit to them. Failing that, this group would favor Italian control. They drew a return to Yugoslavia and there is reason to believe there would be a general exodus from the city if it should come under Yugoslav control. There is little reason to believe, on the other hand, that the Slovenes would leave the city if it were under Italian control.

Among the working class, comprising from 40 to 60% of the population, about 10% favor Yugoslav control and another 10% Italian control and are being swayed by purely nationalistic aspirations. The rest, for economic reasons, favor incorporation into Yugoslavia or the internationalization of the city, with the preservation of cultural rights.

3. Prioste Area.

Outside of TRIESTE CITY, the area is overwhelmingly Slovene. Here the sympathy is definitely anti-Italian. The majority favor incorporation into Yugoslavia, whereas a good portion look towards some form of autonomy with guarantees for the retention of their cultural and racial institutions.

4. Corizia.

About half the population of CORIZIA AREA live in the city of CORIZIA, which as stated is divided almost equally between Slovenes and Italians. The rest of the area is overwhelmingly Slovene, are mostly engaged in farming. Feeling in favor of Yugoslavia both in the city and the rest of the area is strong. Among the Slovene population, it is estimated that about 70% are Communist adherents, the remaining 30% being anti-Tito and do not want to return to Yugoslavia. Almost all Slovenes are intensely nationalistic and, excepting for the pro-Tito camp, they favor an autonomous Slovene state, especially if provision were made for the outlet for their farm products. Practically all Slovenes do not want to have the territory returned to Italy.

Among the Italians, there is definite sentiment against having the territory incorporated into Yugoslavia. A large middle class in CORIZIA CITY is against

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Among the Italians, there is definite sentiment against having the territory incorporated into Yugoslavia. A large middle class in GORIZIA CITY is against Communism, which is translated into opposition to Yugoslavia. There is no large working class in the city. Recently, Italian political parties have been coming out into the open. There is a large Christian-Democrat and Socialist group and also a smaller Action Party following. An independent Liberal Party is also functioning itself, and includes many persons of Austrian background and sympathies. Italian Communists comprise a small group but do not consider themselves aligned with the Communists which appear on the mainland of Italy. These groups are inclined towards an autonomous state of some sort with possible attachment to the port of TRIESTE. The Italians definitely do not want the territory to go to Yugoslavia.

5. Pola.

Practically all Italians in this overwhelmingly Italian city are anti-Yugoslavia and many thousands would leave if it were considered handing the area over to Yugoslavia. On the other hand, the Croat and Serb elements favor annexation to Yugoslavia. The Italian community, for the most part, includes the business population of the city, those who were previously dependent on the naval dock-yards for their existence. They are extremely frightened of a future under the Yugoslav machine. The Croats, for the most part, live in the outskirts of the city and are engaged in agriculture. Taking into consideration the economic as well as ethnic factors, about 60% of the population of Pola favor returning under Italian control, 30% favor incorporation into Yugoslavia and the balance of various mixed nationalities have no definite viewpoint. There is some indication of a desire to have POLA become part of an autonomous Istrian State with Allied protection.

6. Venezia-Giulia as a whole.

Broadly speaking, the majority of Slovenes desire to become part of Yugoslavia. They are definitely against incorporation into Italy, being mindful of the suppression of their language and culture and the severe reprisals taken against them when they were part of the Italian State.

For the most part they favor either incorporation into Yugoslavia or an autonomous Slovene State, linked by industrial ties with Yugoslavia.

Italian opinion is still in a process of changing and is dependent on economic factors to a large extent, and on nationalistic factors to a smaller extent. Fear of reprisals and extinction of their culture influence a large portion to disfavor incorporation into Yugoslavia. The large urban middle class and majority of ^{farmers} prefer some form of autonomy with British and American protection. The large working class and the small farmer group favor incorporation into Yugoslavia, or, to a lesser degree, an autonomy under United Nations protection.

There is some trend among Slovenes, members of the "Sindacati Giuliani" and Giulian Communist Party towards an autonomous State view, coupled with the hope that it will eventually come under Yugoslav domination.

A rough estimate as to the manifested preferences of the people in this area as a whole is the following:

- (a) incorporation into Italy - 10%
- (b) incorporation into Yugoslavia - 50%
- (c) some form of autonomy - 40%

D. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

TRIESTE. Foreign Office Confidential Print R.13597/362/22/1943 dated 7 June 1944 sets out in detail special considerations regarding the City of TRIESTE to which the information gained on this survey can add little, other than the estimated division of population shown in para 3 above and factors affecting local feelings.

POLA. This city owes its entire existence and growth to the fact that it is a naval port. Its population is almost entirely dependent upon that fact.

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POJA. This city owes its entire existence and growth to the fact that it is a naval port. Its population is almost entirely dependent upon that fact. Like TRIESTE, it is an Italian settlement situated on the coast with behind it a rocky, barren hinterland inhabited by CROATS. These inhabitants react right up to the boundaries of the cities and live to some extent within the suburbs. Other than the occupations and industries dependent upon the naval port there is little industry. There is one large cement manufacturing plant depending for its fuel upon the A.R.S. A. coal mines. While the naval installations have been very considerably damaged by aerial bombardment there remain some industrial plants which previously worked for or in conjunction with the naval authorities which

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could be put to civilian occupation. I refer to such factories as those manufacturing flags, repairing and building small ships, and rope-making. They are, however, dependent on the outer world for their raw materials. POLA finds itself at the present moment in very difficult circumstances: cut off from the immediate hinterland, it is automatically cut off from its fuel supplies, both for commercial and domestic use. Sea transport being in such short supply, POLA is also cut off from the rest of the world for supplies and raw materials. It is believed that if this port is handed over to Yugoslavia a large proportion of the population will wish to evacuate itself to Italian Government territory. This in spite of the fact that it would become linked with its natural source of supply for some of its requirements.

POLA is itself a larger example of several other coastal towns on the west side of the ISTRIAN PENINSULA, i.e. PIRANO, CITTADELLA, BARZANO and MONFALCONE, all of which are old Italian settlements largely dependent on fishing or acting as small ports for the export of coal and bauxite.

R. R. Temple

R. R. TEMPLE

Colonel

Director

Local Government Sub Commission

R. R. Temple, Major

RALPH R. TEMPLE

Major

Deputy Director

Local Government Sub Commission

20 September 1945

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R. E. GRIFFIN

R. E. GRIFFIN
Colonel
Director
Local Government Sub Commission

R. R. Temple, Major

RALEIGH R. TEMPLE
Major
Deputy Director
Local Government Sub Commission

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