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MINE CLEARANCE, VISITS
DEC. 1944 - SEPT. 1945

Col Cripps.

Attached is my Report on visit to Emilia and Venetie Regions with my recommendations as to the future of Mine Clearance in Italy. If you agree then we should inform the Italian Ministry of War to this effect. It is hardly necessary as the Italian Government have assumed responsibilities for Mine Clearance but lets them know our attitude.

31st August 45

W. J. P. at London May

Mine Clearing Branch.
Local Government Sub Commission.

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

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HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
CIVIL AFFAIRS SECTION

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AC/53.6/LG

3 Jan 45

SUBJECT: Mine Clearance

TO : Finance Sub Commission

1. The attached documents relate to Mine Clearance equipment handed over to the Italian Government. This equipment was obtained from U.S. and British Ordnance Depots.
2. The equipment obtained from U.S. Army is
 - (a) 500 Mine Detectors (see folio 3 of file)
 - (b) Safety fuse N.11 5000 feet)
Instantaneous fuse 45,000 ft) see folio 1
Detonators N.8 Commercial)
non-electric 100,000)
Fuse, lighters 5000)
3. The equipment obtained from British sources is
450 Polish Mine Detectors.
4. Receipt vouchers in duplicate given by the Italian Government for all the goods delivered are attached at folios 14-19.
5. The only shipping tickets received at this HQ are folios 10-13. The only prices received are for 500 American Mine Detectors with 6 months spare parts amounting to \$ 114,567.75 (shown at folio 9). Prices have not been received for the British Mine Detectors nor for the fuse, detonators etc. received from American sources.
6. Please make arrangements for charging the cost of this equipment to the Italian Government.

pk
M. CARR Brigadier
VP CA Section

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*This Report was prepared by
General Dupino. 189. 72*

Report of Inspection Tour in EMILIA
Region on 25-26-27 and 28 Aug 45.

1. According to orders received from the Director General I went on an inspection tour of the Minefields in Emilia Region from 24th to 29th Aug. My special aim was to find out the causes of the very high percentage of casualties occurred in this zone and to inspect the urgent mine clearance work on public works concerning the clearance of the dams of the rivers of the Bassa Emilia. Major REAKES of AC Local Government S/C was my companion and I used the air transport of AC from Rome to Bologna and a car from Bologna to Rome.

I examined particularly the activity of the civilian and of the Companies, I visited minefields in order to get an exact notion of how the work is proceeding, of the attitude of the workers and of the amount of work to be done in the Region. Due to shortage of time I did not contact the civilian administrative authorities (Prefecture and communes) and the provincial offices of the Genio Civile. Another reason of not contacting these was that the Comando Genio Bologna contacted already, and in due course, the above authorities and I had no intention to interfere as the above Command is entirely responsible for the mine clearance. I contacted the squads and the civilian workers on work and under training and my impressions are resumed in the following.

In general the mine clearance is in crisis although the crisis is neither too deep neither incurable.

The causes are the moral and economic conditions of the officers, the condition of general risk for the whole personnel engaged on the work, the scarce and sometimes absolute lack of indispensable equipment.

However, due to the zeal and intelligence of Major IGI Commander of Emilia Zone and the interest Capt SPAMPANATO took in his own men, the organization of the work is such that the

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However, due to the zeal and intelligence of Major IGI Commander of Emilia Zone and the interest Capt SPANFANTO took in his own men, the organization of the work is such that the results obtained are on a very high level notwithstanding the above cited conditions.

It has been too often repeated that mine clearance work is dangerous and the work of the mine clearer tiresome physically and morally. This fact which has practical as well as psychological repercussions is growing worse in Emilia for two reasons: the perfection of the laying of mines and the serious casualties occurred.

It is my opinion that the casualties are due partly, if not entirely to bad discipline. However, as a matter of fact they weigh heavily upon the activity of mine clearers even more heavily than it could be expected from a distance and especially on the activity of the officers. These latter are constantly under direct danger and live with the fear of an imminent casualty which is nearly always deadly.

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furthermore the economic question has not yet been defined after a year's work and they feel that in case of an accident the pensions paid are not adequate and do but increase the moral and material injury occurred to the body and to the respective families; therefore it is no wonder that officers coming forward for mine clearance are scarce and that those actually on work are anxious to get away as soon as possible.

I told them about the struggle of the central authorities which are near to be successful to eliminate the above cited inconvenients and I told them about the new provisions to be taken to fix the economic treatment of the officers, of the NCOs and of the workmen (supplementary insurance) and for the more adequate technical equipment of the mine clearance squads.

I insisted upon the necessity of a strict discipline during the work and on the possibility to eliminate nearly completely the casualties analysing them carefully and demonstrating the most evident causes due to failure to observe the security regulations issued several times.

At any time I deemed it necessary I took direct part in the work of civilian and military personnel showing how to proceed on the minefield; I made some prodding, some research with the mine detector and also blew up mines.

I am bound to recognise that I always found utmost good will and intelligent attention; the method is undoubtedly useful and I hope that its result will be sensible reduction of casualties in the next future.

3. As already pointed out it will be necessary to insist upon a technical discipline requiring the observance of the security regulations set up for individuals as well as for organisations.

I insisted upon the fact that a circumspect work is not only more efficient but eliminates as completely as possible the causes of accidents.

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In general the Zone Organisation is better as regards discipline and efficiency than the military organization. The civilians work in general well, with a just spacing between the squads and between the individuals and they are very efficient but the same could not be said of the companies. The behaviour concerning mines is absolutely deficient; there are still too many mines neutralised although precise orders have been given to destroy always if deemed necessary. Neutralisation is operated sometimes because of lack of organisation (lack of equipment for destroying) which has to be eliminated and sometimes because of a spirit of recklessness towards danger which is not courage but unconsciousness; but sometimes it is due to the wish to hide the amount of fuses and cartridges used by the workmen during illegal works carried out for landowners for high compensations. It is to be pointed out that nearly all the casualties occurred in the absence of officers which proves that a good technical organisation is furthering the work.

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It is felt that the observance of minefield discipline is very deficient; there are of course exceptions which however may easily become ~~xxx~~ the rule. The marking of dangerous zones is in general neglected or badly done, the personnel is moving irregularly, the signalling of detected mines is imperfect, the regulations for destroying are not complete and very often instructions are lacking for the case of accidents. Some accidents were even getting worse because of panic; an accident in a minefield provoked an inconsiderate "save who can" which caused other and more serious casualties.

I insisted upon the necessity to avoid such inconvenients and it will be necessary to issue new, more explicit and stricter orders.

4. I spoke with officers, soldiers and workmen about the above arguments.

I did my best to alleviate the feeling that casualties are due to happen but in the meantime I drew the attention of all personnel to the fact that a good and strict discipline has to be observed by everyone inside the minefields.

The dangerous nature of the minefields and especially of the minefields in Emilia Region is undeniable but an intelligent and watchful attitude would be able to render them less dangerous.

The minefields are now all marked and delimited; AG is carrying out the reproduction of minefield maps handed over to the Allies by the Germans and even the vegetation shows the existence of mines because ~~xx~~ minefields in contrast to the florid aspect of the cultivated camps ~~there~~ are but a mass of dry stubs.

There are thousands of hectares disposed of in a "gross way" on the lagoons of the Comacchio heights south of Bologna-Garfagnana and in various measure on the lines of resistance and in some rear centres still to be cleared.

They require to be cleared methodically, searching every inch, delimiting the danger and proceeding to the destroying of every mine; thereafter the territory may be given back to agriculture.

It has to be pointed out that I found a sensible resistance as to the destroying of single mines which is thought to be dangerous because supposed to have as effect the blowing up or sensibilization of the mines nearby. Therefore I carried out myself the blowing up of mines in a minefield situated at Prati S. Iazzaro at 10 km south

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5. The above procedures exclude casualties of at least reduce them to pure fatality which cannot be avoided in managing explosives.

The instructions will require to be carried out constantly and very strictly; the men have to be watched, training should be very thorough and the men should assimilate the security regulations; they will require frequent rest turns especially during the heat and their food and drink will also require to be supervised. All these questions can be solved with organization and discipline.

The allotment of technical equipment improved recently but it still requires increase.

In general there is a lack of fuses and cartridges which is an incentive to neglect the rule of destroying each mine separately

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In my opinion the mine detectors are not too useful and sometimes they are even dangerous especially if the work is not based upon the possibilities of the technical equipment and upon the characteristics of the minefield. However they have a favourable psychological effect upon the workmen and they are really helpful in case of small or sensibillized (S) mines when the prodder may not only be inefficient but also dangerous.

The squads should be allotted electric discharges and also electric catridges. Such equipment would spare fuses and would eliminate failed explosions due to some defect of the fuse and in general it would speed up the work of destruction of mines.

Some of these electric discharges have already been allotted to the Zone Emilia.

6. The economic question will be solved shortly concerning civilians as well as military personnel (all ranks).

This question is the basic lament and many soldiers spoke to me about the problem pointing out the usual complaints.

The soldiers cite the fair remuneration accorded to them by the now suppressed circular 139 GW 1944 and ask to go back to those wages.

This brings me to speak about the discipline of the mine clearance companies.

The organisation is good as regards the senior officers but deficient in at least of 50% of the junior officers. Relatively good are the NCOs, the ORs are rather bad and scarcely disciplined. The methods of work are not always according to the instructions of the Ministry and the organization of the work is not efficient. I had to suspend urgently a work on an S minefield in the immediate neighbourhood of the Emilia bridge across the Senio river because the circumstances were such that the work meant serious danger not only to the workmen engaged on on work on the bridge but also to the passengers of the road in case a mine should have been blown up casually.

In general the companies gave me the impression of units in imminent crisis of very scarce efficiency which are only upheld by the personal activity of Capt. Spampinato who was in charge of the organising and training of the 3 companies located in Emilia Region.

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The class 1915 having been released the Companies will lose about 150 soldiers which means a further reduction of the working possibilities. Further complements have been asked for "via breve"

7. The civilian workers gave no place to special remarks. Their efficiency as a whole is not very high but this is due to the difficulties of the work and to organization. But a sensible improvement might well be expected after an increase of the officers (which is absolutely necessary) and after an allotment of vehicles for the officers.

The civilian organization might be sensibly improved which is deemed necessary in order to give the work an impulse corresponding to the amount of work to be done in Emilia Region.

Until the present moment only the strictly necessary number of personnel has been trained according to the immediate requirements of Zones and Sub Zones and depending on the availability of transport. But Mine Clearance as a whole is also a question of specialized workers which should be made available in a large measure. Therefore in my opinion men should be trained in a large number and Zone Commands should be given the opportunity to choose

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as many men as they require according to the amount of work in course.

The remaining men would not be lost because in a region like Emilia every mine clearer is bound to clear mines. They could work on behalf of privates or contractors, individually or organised in cooperatives.

The cost encountered by the Administration for such mass training (it could be partly reduced by reimbursement on behalf of the boards who later will employ them) would be a remunerative one being the training of a great number of workmen of vital interest.

8 The actual possibilities of the Region are relevant.

The notice of the activity of mine clearers has been widely spread and many workers apply to be admitted to the mine clearing courses.

In Ferrara Sub Zone a first training course was held for 23 pupils, a second one for 54 and the third for 135.

It would be very easy to organise at Ferrara, Bologna, Ravenna and Forli courses for 150-200 men and pass from the actual 200 workmen and 175 under training to a 1000 men actually on work and to 500 under training.

The scarce availability of transport is not considered as a serious hindrance to the expansion of the job because Emilia Region is rich in vehicles and it should not be impossible to hire an adequate number (1 ton cars) paying the prices of the market.

A major difficulty would be the organisation but the number of officers available will undoubtedly increase in consequence of a favourable economic treatment and there certainly would be officers in situ who would be agreeable to collaborate.

9. Anyway apart from extraordinary provisions Mine Clearance organization is improving in Emilia according to the scheme approved by this Direzione Generale; the sub zone Ferrara has already been organised and in the next few days the Pesaro Ancona sub zone will be organized too.

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As regards mine clearance in Venezia it seems to be ascertained that the requirements for Mine Clearance are very few, the main problem being UXBs/

I discussed in Bologna with Gen. Properzi and with Gen. Rostagno the problem of cooperation between the Engineers and the Artillery in connection with mine clearance and blowing up of shells. It was possible to fix the activity in Venezia; AC took particular interest in the matter as AMG asked for help. AC intend to carry out the work in Venezia with civilian squads already organized in this Region. But being the chief problem the removal of unexploded air bombs the Director General of Artillery gave instructions that the civilian organization be brought under the Artillery Command of Padova.

A sub zone for mine clearance will be set up at Padova under the command of Capt. Nittta; Maj. Reakes of AC agreed to this. Padova sub zone would depend of Emilia Zone.

10. The war events have badly damaged the water plants east of Bologna. In order to avoid flooding the dams should be repaired and cleared of mines before the end of September. Being no military personnel, neither German PWs available the 3 Mine Clearance Companies

were put to work further some private contractors. The companies cover 50% of the work to be carried out.

11. The Commander of the Genio in Bologna according to Capt. Spanpanato's reports, believes that the companies might well finish their work until the 25th October.

In order to value the possibilities of the above Companies it should be kept in mind that they are working more or less in malaric areas and that 150 men out of 480 will be released as the class 1915 is released. Although 154 other men are signalled A/110/19 dated 2/7/45 MMIA) but this personnel must be trained before being employed therefore they cannot be put to work immediately. 200 further men are required but these would not be employed on the above work.

Therefore the task of the companies must be limited in order to ensure the clearance of mines before the end of the month.

14. Resuming the impressions of my visit to Emilia Region I would like to point out the huge amount of work to be done.

Referring to the provinces which are very badly mined the total amount of work still to be done in percentage is:

Bologna	99%
Ferrara	99%
Ravenna	80%
Forli	25%

The actual possibilities to carry out this work are absolutely not adequate.

Therefore it is necessary to provide for a speedy and adequate increase of the organisation.

This increase should regard first of all the officers and the NCOs. The Zone Commander Major IGI is a very capable and efficient officer but he too is already tired, it is therefore necessary to send shortly another senior officer to the Zone Command possibly a junior one to Major IGI. Further 2 Captains are required for Ferrara and Pesaro sub zones (Capt Pascoli is in Forli and it seems he is doing a good sort of job). Further the zone and sub zone commands should have available 4 or 5 junior officers as substitutes for those who need rest.

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Increase of transport is equally required. Often the Zone command subordinates the intervention of the squads to the concession of transport by the interested boards, this procedure proved to be efficient.

The hiring cost of vehicles is about 30.000 lire per day but should be at least 50.000 if the 33 squads actually on work would be adequately equipped. Of course such cost increases in proportion to the increase of workmen. It is to be pointed out that this cost equals the cost of the work itself.

Once organisation and transport ensured I feel that it will not be difficult to increase the number of workmen. On the other hand the training of civilians by the companies will undoubtedly encounter difficulties essentially because soldiers need training too.

I approved the disposition of the Comando Genio of Bologna to entrust the training of civilians exclusively to Zone or Sub Zone Commands.

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This report aims to give a rapid but exact view of the mine clearance situation in Emilia Region.

The problem concerning the clearance of the river banks in Romagna will be solved shortly.

The urgent problem of security can also be solved by the necessary measures concerning organisation and discipline and it is felt that the situation will improve.

The general problem of Mine Clearance has still to be solved as the work carried out until the present date does represent only 5% of the amount of work to be carried out and the present organisation must be increased in order to make effective headway.

Several thousands instead of several hundred civilians must take part in the work besides an adequate number of contractors and cooperatives.

Of course the organisation, the direction, supervision and coordination of the work, the handling of money and materials require experts and a more complete and efficient organisation than the present one.

The Central Mine Clearance office will be responsible for the setting up of such organisation.

Such organisation will be reached by grades and by solving the key problems of the service already in way of practical solution and which are the same in all the regions.

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MINISTERO DELLA GUERRA
DIREZIONE GENERALE DEL GENIO
Ufficio Dirett. Gen.

*General. Superiori and
Reports*

18/11/45

RELAZIONE SULL'ISPEZIONE
PASSATA NEI GIORNI 25 - 26 - 27 - 28/3/45
AI LAVORI BONIFICA CAMPI MINATI
DELLA R. SMILIA

RELAZIONE SULL'ISPEZIONE
PASSATA NEI GIORNI 25 - 26 - 27 - 28/3/45
AI LAVORI SCARPIFICI CAMPI MINATI
DELLA R. EMI LIA

Roma, 1° settembre 1945

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campo civile sia nel campo militare, è curata con zelo e intelligenza ed è messa nelle condizioni di rendere al massimo quello che le citate circostanze di fatto consentono di ottenerne.

E' stato ripetuto sino alla noia che la bonifica mine è pericolosa ed il lavoro del rastrellatore mine è estenuante fisicamente e moralmente. Tale situazione che ha importanti riflessi di ordine pratico e di ordine psicologico, è ulteriormente aggravata nell'Emilia da due fattori concomitanti ed interdipendenti: la perfezione dell'insidia, le dolorose perdite registrate del personale.

E' mio maturato convinimento che queste ultime, almeno in notevole parte se non del tutto, sono dovute a deficiente disciplina del lavoro. Comunque sta il fatto che esse pesano attualmente sull'attività di bonifica più di quanto non si possa ritenere a distanza, in particolare sugli ufficiali. Questi, oltre che sottostare ad un pericolo diretto, vivono per così dire nell'ansia dell'incombente infortunio, che quasi sempre è fatale; si aggiunge a ciò il trattamento economico, ancora non definito dopo un anno di attività di bonifica e la sensazione che in caso d'infortunio le pensioni liquidate sono inadeguate ed aggiungano una nuova miseria alla miseria morale e materiale dei corpi mutilati e delle famiglie colpite e si perverrà alla conclusione che non deve meravigliare la scarsa affluenza di ufficiali alla bonifica mine ed il desiderio di quello in servizio di abbandonarla al più presto.

Per parte mia ho divulgato gli sfere, molto programmi e risultati positivi, compiuti dall'Autorità centrale per ovviare agli inconvenienti citati, in particolare le disposizioni per il trattamento economico degli ufficiali e sottufficiali e degli operai (assicurazione suppletiva) e per il sempre più adeguato attrezzamento tecnico delle squadre rastrellamento mine.

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Ho molto insistito sulle esigenze di disciplina durante i lavori e sulla possibilità di eliminare in misura pressoché completa gli infortuni, analizzandoli con cura e dimostrandoli nelle loro cause più plausibili dovuti a mancata osservanza di norme di sicurezza date e ripetute.

Saggiungo che tutte le volte che l'ho ritenuto necessario ho preso parte diretta al lavoro degli operai e dei militari, mostrando praticamente come si deve procedere sul campo minato, effettuando personalmente sondaggio, ricerca col cercamine e brillamento di mine

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rinviate, in una parola ricorrendo all'esempio diretto.

Debbo riconoscere che ho sempre trovato la migliore buona volontà ed intelligente attenzione da parte di tutti: il metodo seguito è senza dubbio utile e spero possa dimostrare la sua efficacia in una decisiva riduzione degli infortuni sul lavoro nel prossimo avvenire.

3 - Per quanto concerne i lavori bisogna insistere nella disciplina tecnica, esigendo la costante applicazione delle norme di sicurezza singola e collettive.

Come ho già accennato, non ho mancato di ricordare che l'oculata condotta del lavoro, oltre che le esigenze di rendimento, ha di mira l'eliminazione più completa possibile delle cause d'infortunio.

Di massima, l'ambiente Zona B.C.M. è migliore per addestramento, disciplina e rendimento dell'ambiente operastr.mine. Le squadre operaie civili lavorano in genere bene, giustamente intervallate tra di loro e nei singoli, con applicazione e sufficiente rendimento; le squadre militari lasciano invece alquanto a desiderare sotto questo punto di vista.

Del tutto deficiente è risultato in molti casi il comportamento nei riguardi delle mine: si fa ancora troppa disattivazione, nonostante gli ordini di procedere di norma al brillamento ogni qual volta ciò è possibile e necessario. La disattivazione è praticata talora per difetto d'organizzazione (deficienza di mezzi di brillamento), che deve essere eliminato; talora per un malinteso spirito di noncuranza del pericolo, che non è coraggio, ma incoscienza; in qualche circostanza per evitare di render conto ai quadri del consumo di miccia e capsule, nel corso di lavori abusivi, compiuti dagli operai dietro sollecitazione di singoli proprietari interessati e su corresponsione di elevati compensi.

Da rilevare che la maggior parte delle disgrazie si è verificata fuori della presenza degli ufficiali, il che conferma l'illusione che un buon inquadramento tecnici

ro di rendimento, ha di mira l'eliminazione più completa possibile delle cause d'infortunio.

Di recente, l'Ambiente Zona B.C.M. è migliore per addestramento, disciplina e rendimento dell'ambiente operastr.mine. Le squadre operaie civili lavorano in genere bene, giustamente intervallate tra di loro e nei singoli, con applicazione e sufficiente rendimento; le squadre militari lasciano invece alquanto a desiderare sotto questo punto di vista.

Del tutto deficiente è risultato in molti casi il comportamento nei riguardi delle mine: si fa ancora troppa disattivazione, nonostante gli ordini di procedere di norma al brillamento ogni qual volta ciò è possibile e necessario. La disattivazione è praticata talora per difetto d'organizzazione (deficienza di mezzi di brillamento), che deve essere eliminato; talora per un malinteso spirito di noncuranza del pericolo, che non è coraggio, ma inconsciencia; in qualche circostanza per evitare di render conto ai quadri del consumo di miccia e capsule, nel corso di lavori abusivi, compiuti dagli operai dietro sollecitazione di singoli proprietari interessati e su corresponsione di elevati compensi.

Da rilevare che la maggior parte delle disgrazie si è verificata fuori della presenza degli ufficiali, il che conferma l'illusione che un buon inquadramento tecnico è favorevole al buon andamento dei lavori.

Deficiente è l'applicazione delle norme di comportamento nel campo minato, naturalmente con eccezioni che si ha fiducia di vedere generalizzate. La marcatura del margine della zona bonificata (margine della zona pericolosa) è in genere trascurata o mal fatta, il personale si muove irregolarmente, la segnalazione delle mine rilette è imperfetta, sono incomplete le norme per i brillamenti, mancano sovente disposizioni per il caso d'infortunio. Taluni infortuni sono stati aggravati dal panico: un incidente nel campo minato ha provocato uno

considerato "si salvi chi può" che ha generato altri e più gravi infortuni.

Ho particolarmente insistito sulla necessità di evitare a tali inconvenienti ed occorrerà provvedere in proposito mediante nuove norme, copiose e tassative.

4 - In merito ai precedenti argomenti ho parlato ed ufficiali, soldati ed operai ogni qual volta è stato possibile e di conseguenza molto spesso.

E' stata mia cura costante di alleggerire l'impressione d'ineluttabilità dell'infortunio che grava su larga parte del personale addetto alla bonifica, rendendo però in pari tempo avvertiti tutti gli interessati della necessità di una vigilanza costante dei propri ed altrui atti per conformarli sempre alle buone modalità tecniche ed alle norme di sicurezza, entro il perimetro dei campi minati.

L'inevitabilità del campo minato è innegabile ed i campi emiliani sono l'up-to-date in proposito, ma alla insidia deve rispondere l'intelligente e vigilante attenzione intesa a eventarla.

I campi emiliani sono ormai tutti marcati e delimitati; è molto avanzato il lavoro in corso presso l'A.C. di riproduzione degli schizzi dei campi stessi, consegnati dai tedeschi agli Alleati; la stessa vegetazione ormai li segna, perchè in contrasto col fiorente aspetto della campagna coltivata, il campo minato è divenuto il regno della sterpaglia folta e secca.

Ve ne sono migliaia di ettari, disposti "grosso modo" sulle fasce lagune di Comacchio-alture a S di Bologna-Carfagnone ed in misura varia sulle linee di resistenza a cavallo dei fiumi antistanti o su qualche centro arretrato.

La loro bonifica deve avvenire con procedimento metodico, esplorando ogni palmo di terreno col cercamine e coll'asta di sondaggio, individuando e circoscrivendo il pericolo e procedendo, al momento opportuno, al brillamento.

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A questo proposito, ricordo di aver riscontrata una sensibile resistenza alla effettuazione dei brillamenti per mina singola, talora ritenuti pericolosi se effettuati in posto per supposti effetti di detonazione per simpatia o di sensibilizzazione dello mine circostanti. Ho provveduto ad effettuare un esperimento pratico in un campo di circa un centinaio di R.M. (anticarro), abbastanza regolare, con mine a distanza di circa 2 m., situato ai Prati di S. Lazzaro a circa 10 km. a SE di Bologna.

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Gli operai civili erano restii ad effettuare i brillamenti in posto. Ho fatto saltare due mine contigue con due operazioni distinte e con successo, dopo di che gli operai stessi hanno provveduto nella giornata (28/8) a eliminare tutte le rimanenti mine del campo.

5 - Procedimenti come quello sopra indicato escludono l'infortunio o, quanto meno, lo riducono al caso di pura fatalità che non si può eliminare nel maneggio di esplosivi.

Essi debbono essere applicati con assiduità; occorre una buona sorveglianza sul personale, buon addestramento, assimilazione, più che conoscenza, delle norme di sicurezza, frequenti turni di riposo, specie nelle ore di calura, sorveglianza sul vitto e sulle bevande. Tutte questioni risolubili con provvedimenti d'organizzazione e di disciplina del lavoro.

Anche la dotazione di mezzi tecnici, molto migliorata in questi ultimi tempi, deve essere ulteriormente perfezionata.

Difettano in genere miccia e capsule, il che, si è già detto, costituisce un incentivo per trascurare la norma di distruggere mina per mina. I cerchini sono a mio parere poco utili ed in talune circostanze possono risultare anche dannosi, se il lavoro non è informato alle possibilità del mezzo tecnico ed alle caratteristiche del campo minato. Peraltro esercitano una favorevole azione psicologica sul personale al lavoro ed in talune circostanze sono effettivamente utili, quando per le piccole dimensioni dell'ordigno ricercato o per la sua sensibilità (mine "5" e proiettili di piccolo calibro con bottoni innescenti) l'impiego dell'asta di sondaggio può risultare inefficace od anche pericolosa.

Occorre assegnare alle squadre rastrellamento degli esplosivi elettrici e, naturalmente, anche capsule elettriche. La disponibilità di tali mezzi di brillamento consentirà di economizzare miccia e, quel che più con-

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Le disposizioni in proposito sono già in corso di esecuzione, coll'assegnazione di alcuni esplosivi elettrici alla Zona R.C.M. EMILIA.

6 - Del trattamento economico accenno solo per memoria, perchè esso è in via di risoluzione sia per gli operai civili, sia per i militari di tutti i gradi.

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1 - In conformità degli ordini impartiti dal Sig. Direttore Generale ho proceduto nei giorni dal 24 al 29 agosto c.a. all'ispezione dei lavori di bonifici campi minati della Regione EMILIA, con particolare riguardo alle cause dell'alta percentuale d'infortuni avvenuti presso quella Zona ed ai lavori urgenti d'interesse pubblico di amminamento concernenti il ripristino degli argini dei fiumi della "Bassa Emiliana".

Per la maggior parte del tempo ho avuto compagno di ispezione il Megg. REAKES dell'A.C.-Leo.Gov.Sub Coma. ed in particolare ho usufruito dei mezzi dell'A.C. per il viaggio Roma-Bologna(aereo) e Bologna-Roma(auto).

In relazione al tempo disponibile - tre giorni lavorativi con interposta una domenica - ho orientato il programma delle visite essenzialmente all'attività delle squadre operai civili e delle squadre militari rastre. mine ed ai sopralluoghi sui campi minati, per avere esatta nozione delle modalità di lavoro in atto, dello stato d'animo del personale civile e militare e dell'entità del compito di bonifici nella regione EMILIA.

Sono stati di conseguenza lasciati da parte i contatti con le autorità civili amministrative (prefetture e comuni) e tecniche (uffici compartimentali e provinciali del Genio Civile) e ciò a ragion veduta e per diversi motivi, dei quali il più importante, oltre quello della disponibilità del tempo, è il fatto che il Comando Genio di Bologna ha preso per suo conto e tempestivamente i contatti del caso colle accennate Autorità ed io non avevo alcuna intenzione di interferire in merito, date le dirette e costanti responsabilità del citato Comando per l'opera di bonifici mine.

In base a tale criterio ho potuto prendere esaurienti contatti coi reparti e colle maestranze civili al lavoro ed in edestramento. Da questi contatti sono derivati alcune impressioni e convincimenti che possono considerarsi i risultati più importanti dell'ispezione.

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2 - In genere l'ambiente di lavoro benifica campiminati è in crisi, per quanto la crisi non sia nè profonda nè incurabile.

Ne sono la causa le condizioni morali ed economiche degli ufficiali, le condizioni generali di rischio di tutto il personale addetto ai lavori, la scarsa disponibilità (in qualche caso dovrebbe dirsi mancanza) di mezzi indispensabili.

Malgrado ciò, per merito essenzialmente dell'attività intelligente del Magg. ICI, comandante della Zona B.C. M. EMILIA, e dell'interessamento per i propri dipendenti del Cap. SPAMPANATO l'organizzazione dei lavori, sia nel

Per contro esso è alla base di ogni leganza ed in particolare molti militari, evitano licenza, hanno richiesto di parlarmi in proposito espendendo le consuete rimostranze.

I militari delle op.rastr.mine ricordano i larghi emolumenti consentiti dalla soppressa circ. 139 G.M. 1944 e richiedono di ritornare a quel trattamento.

Ciò mi porta a parlare della situazione disciplinare e tecnica delle op.rastr.mine.

L'inquadramento è buono come comandanti di compagnia, deficiente per almeno il 50% negli ufficiali subalterni. Buoni relativamente i sottufficiali, la truppa al presente poco bene e si dimostra scarsamente disciplinata. I metodi di lavoro non sono del tutto adeguati alle disposizioni ministeriali, nè il lavoro è risultato sempre bene organizzato. Ho dovuto fare spendere d'urgenza un lavoro di rastrellamento in un campo di mine "B" immediatamente adiacente alla spalla destra del Ponte dell'Emilia sul Senio, che aveva corso in condizioni tali da provocare numerose vittime in lavoratori del finitimo ponte ed in passeggeri del traffico stradale, nel caso di esplosione fortuita di mine.

In genere le op.rastr.mine mi hanno dato l'impressione di reparti in crisi latente, di limitato rendimento affettivo, che si reggono in gran parte sull'azione personale del Cap.SPAMPANNO, che ha curato la formazione e l'addestramento delle tre op. dislocate nelle Regioni EMILIA.

Per il sopravvenuto congedamento della classe 1915 sono per perdere circa 150 soldati, con una ulteriore riduzione delle immediate possibilità lavorative. Sono stati richiesti "via breve" i corrispondenti complementi.

7 - Gli operai civili rastrellatori mine non hanno dato luogo a rimarchi particolari.

Il loro rendimento unitario non è elevato, ma è funzione della difficoltà del lavoro e dell'inquadramento.

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Il loro rendimento unitario non è elevato, ma è funzione della difficoltà del lavoro e dell'inquadramento. E' da ritenere comunque che coll'aumento del numero degli ufficiali, molto necessario, e della mobilità di quest'ultimi (automezzi) si potranno avere sensibili miglioramenti.

L'organizzazione civile è suscettibile di grande incremento, quale del resto è necessario per dare al lavoro di bonifica un'impulso corrispondente all'entità del compito di bonificare campi minati dell'Emilia.

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L'incremento si conseguirà aggiornando i criteri di formazione degli operai specializzati rastrellatori mine. Sino adesso si è provveduto ad addestrare lo stretto indispensabile per le esigenze contingenti delle Zone e Sottosone, limitate sensibilmente dalla scarsa disponibilità di mezzi di trasporto. Ma la bonifica nel suo complesso è anche un fatto d'impiego di mano d'opera specializzata, che deve rendersi disponibile in larga misura. Bisogna pertanto a mio parere entrare nell'ordine d'idee e d'azione che consenta di addestrare il maggior numero possibile di operai; nella massa degli idonei i comandi sono sceglieranno quelli e quanti riterranno di potere impiegare, in relazione allo sviluppo raggiunto dai lavori in amministrazione.

Gli altri non saranno elementi perduti, perché in un terreno minato come l'EMILIA lo sminatorio è inevitabilmente portato a sminare: essi potranno lavorare per conto di privati o d'impresa, isolati o riuniti in cooperative, costituendo la grande massa di lavoro senza la quale non si può pensare risolvibile il problema di cui trattasi.

E se anche l'Amministrazione dovrà affrontare una spesa che potrà essere rilevante per attuare questo addestramento - spesa che potrà in parte ridursi mediante forme di rimborso a carico degli enti che impiegheranno gli operai -, detta spesa è da considerarsi senza dubbio fruttifera, tale è l'importanza della formazione di un ingente numero di operai civili specializzati.

8 - Le possibilità effettive attuali della Regione sono rilevanti.

L'attività dei rastrellatori mine si è divulgata e molti operai richiedono la frequenza ai corsi per entrare nell'organizzazione della Zona B.C.M.

L'esempio offerto dalla Sottosona B.C.M. di Fer-

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L'esempio offerto dalla Sottosquadra B.C.M. di Ferrara è istruttivo: un primo corso ha contato 23 allievi, un 2° corso 54, un 3° corso 135 aspiranti.

Sarebbe molto facile effettuare a Ferrara, Bologna, Ravenna e Forlì corsi di 150 - 200 allievi rastrellatori e passare rapidamente dagli attuali 200 operai al lavoro e 175 in addestramento a 1000 operai in servizio di bonifica e 500 in addestramento.

Né si ritiene che la disponibilità di automezzi possa costituire remora alla espansione del servizio sino ai totali accennati, perchè la Regione EMILIA è ricca di autocarri e non deve risultare impossibile

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noleggiarne un numero adeguato con caratteristiche adatte (portata sui 10 q.li.), pagando i prezzi corrisposti sulle singole piazze.

Maggiori difficoltà si incontreranno verosimilmente per l'inquadramento ma la disponibilità ufficiali aumenterà senza dubbio coll'applicazione del nuovo più favorevole trattamento economico e non mancherà nemmeno la richiesta di ufficiali reperibili in sito di entrare nella organizzazione.

3 - Comunque, anche a prescindere da provvedimenti straordinari, l'organizzazione della bonifica si perfeziona nell'Unità in conformità del progetto approvato da questa Direzione Generale: è stata costituita oltre la Zona di Bologna e la Sottosona di Ravenna-Ferrara, la Sottosona di Ferrara e si costituirà in questi giorni la Sottosona di Pesaro-Ancona.

Per quanto concerne la bonifica nelle Venezia, senza ormai accertato che le esigenze di bonifica mine della regione non siano che di modesto rilievo e che il maggior lavoro consista ivi nella eliminazione delle bombe di aereo inesplosive.

Ho trattata la questione in Bologna col Gen. PROPERZI che ho avuto occasione d'incontrarvi e col Gen. ROSTAGNO, come caso particolare del più complesso argomento: occupazione dei servizi gine ed artiglieria nel campo della bonifica mine e del rastrellamento e brillamento proiettili. Dati i precedenti accordi raggiunti in sede, ci siamo trovati del tutto concordi nel definire i campi d'azione dei due servizi senza possibilità d'interferenza.

Tale concordanza di vedute ha valso a definire l'attività da svolgersi nella Venezia propria, che, come è noto, è stata oggetto di particolare interessamento dell'A.C. dietro pressioni dell'A.M.G. VENEZIA, in previsione di un imminente ritorno al Governo italiano dell'amministrazione.

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Sarebbe stata intensificazione dell'A.C. che il servizio B.I.M. inglobasse l'intera attività già organizzata ivi a mezzo di operai civili. D'altro canto risultava che il maggior lavoro verteva sulla rimozione di bombe d'aereo.

Il Direttore Generale d'artiglieria ha pertanto disposto che l'esistente organizzazione civile passasse alle dipendenze del Comando d'artiglieria di Padova.

Per il rastrellamento mine si sarebbe provveduto colla costituzione di una Sottosezione VENEZIA a Padova, da affidare, ove nulla osti, al Cap. RUOTA, per il quale il Magg. REALES, nel prendere atto degli accordi, dava il nulla osta, in relazione alla funzione sinora svolta di ufficio di collegamento cogli Enti A.M.G.

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La Sottosena di Padova dipenderà dalla Zona B.C.M.
EMILIA.

10 - Gli eventi di guerra hanno profondamente danneggiato gli impianti di bonifica idraulica ad E di Bologna.

La loro situazione, all'ingrosso, si può prospettare nei seguenti termini. Esistono nell'EMILIA 37 consorzi di bonifica, dipendenti per il tramite degli Ingegneri Capo del Genio Civile del Provveditorato OO.PP. della IX Regione. Le bonifiche romane ha compiuto i ripristini degli argini per quanto riguarda i cavi di sua dipendenza (ruvi secondari, rispetto ai principali demaniale). Le altre bonifiche ad E di Bologna (circa 20) sono nelle seguenti condizioni: Valle Isola è sott'acqua, Argenta ha la potenzialità di $\frac{1}{3}$ del normale, Codigoro di $\frac{1}{2}$. Le bonifiche ad W di Bologna sono in ottime condizioni.

Il problema grosso è quello del contenimento delle piene e questo dovrebbe essere risolto prima della fine di settembre.

Il lavoro concerne il ripristino degli argini, che sono molto rovinati da apprestamenti difensivi per lo più traversanti il territorio. Per il ripristino degli argini occorre provvedere preliminarmente allo smantellamento delle zone di golena, del petto, della cresta e della spalla degli argini maestri, sino ad un punto a 10 m. verso campagna dall'anghia della scarpa esterna, su di una fronte, nella sezione normale, di circa 100 m.

Non avendo ottenuto un numero di militari o prigionieri di guerra adeguato all'entità del lavoro nei limiti previsti di tempo, il Provveditorato OO.PP. ha messo in corso i lavori di bonifica mine in base al criterio di affidarne una parte alle 3 op.rastr.mine poste alle dipendenze del Comando Genio di Bologna, di affidare la parte residua a ditte idnee.

centi degli argini per quanto riguarda i cavi di sua dipendenza (rami secondari, rispetto ai principali denunciati). Le altre bonifiche ed E di Bologna (circa 20) sono nelle seguenti condizioni: Valle Isola è sott'acqua, Argenta ha la potenzialità di $1/3$ del normale, Codigore di $1/2$. Le bonifiche ad W di Bologna sono in ottime condizioni.

Il problema grosso è quello del contenimento delle piene e questo dovrebbe essere risolto prima della fine di settembre.

Il lavoro concerne il ripristino degli argini, che sono molto rovinati da apprestamenti difensivi per lo più traversanti il territorio. Per il ripristino degli argini occorre provvedere preliminarmente allo smantellamento delle zone di golenza, del petto, della cresta e della spalla degli argini maestri, sino ad un punto a 10 m. verso campagna dall'anghia della scarga esterna, su di una fronte, nella sezione normale, di circa 100 m.

Non avendo ottenuto un numero di militari o prigionieri di guerra adeguato all'entità del lavoro nei limiti previsti di tempo, il Provveditorato OO.PP. ha messo in corso i lavori di bonifica mine in base al criterio di affidarne una parte alle 3 cp. rast. mine poste alle dipendenze del Comando Genio di Bologna, di affidare la parte residua a ditte idruce.

11 - Di conseguenza le 3 cp. rast. mine hanno ricevuto compiti di lavoro che si possono sintetizzare come segue:

- 552° cp. - smantellamento argini F. Reno tra Bastia di Argenta ed il mare;
- 563° cp. - smantellamento argini F. Genio tra la Via Emilia e la confluenza nel F. Reno;
- 564° cp. - smantellamento argini F. Santarno tra la Via Emilia ed il F. Reno.

La 564° cp. rast. mine è giunta in zona il giorno 29/8/o.a.

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Dislocazione dei cmi di cp.: 562°cp. a S. Alberto (a N di Ravenna), 563°cp. a Faenza, 564°cp. a Masselom-barda.

Poichè S. Alberto è località fortemente malarica - la cp. ha registrato in pochi giorni già 15 casi di malaria - ho consigliato l'immediato trasferimento del reparto nella zona di Ravenna. Il Comando Genio di Bologna ha approvato il provvedimento.

Nei precedenti termini le op.rastr.mine hanno assunto circa il 50% del lavoro di bonifica delle zone arginate. La parte residua è stata assegnata ad imprese civili che hanno già parzialmente iniziato i lavori.

Non sono riuscite a conoscere gli estrani o la classe principale dei contratti relativi, ma dalle notizie non ufficiali che mi sono pervenute ho tratto l'impressione che le aggrinzioezioni abbiano avuto luogo sulla base di prezzi unitari molto elevati.

12 - La previsione del Comandante del Genio di Bologna, in conformità relazione del Cap. STAMPAZZO, è che il complesso dei lavori affidati alle op.rastr.mine possa avere termine entro il 25/10/o.a.

Per valutare la possibilità di lavoro delle citate cp. è da tener presente che sono lavorano in zone dal più al meno malarica; che in seguito all'ordine di sgombramento della classe 1915 perdono 150 u. su 430 presenti. E' bensì vero che per il 1/3/o.a. erano annunziati 154 u. al complemento (foglio A/110/19 del 2/7/o.a. della M.M.L.A.), ma questo personale non sarà subito impiegabile, perchè dovrà essere in precedenza addestrato. Altri complementi sono da richiedere senz'altro - ne converrà circa 200 - ma essi non potranno essere impiegati nei presenti lavori.

Di conseguenza sembra imperai una limitazione degli attuali compiti affidati alle op.rastr.mine, che assicuri il complemento dei lavori di mantenimento con meno d'opera militare prima della fine di settembre.

11. La parte residua è stata assegnata ad imprese civili che hanno già parzialmente iniziato i lavori.

Non sono riuscito a conoscere gli estremi e le cifre sole principali dei contratti relativi, ma delle notizie non ufficiali che mi sono pervenute ho tratto l'impressione che le agguinzature abbiano avuto luogo sulla base di prezzi unitari molto elevati.

12 - La previsione del Comandante del Genio di Bologna, su conforme relazione del Cap. STAMMATO, è che il compimento dei lavori affidati alle op. rast. mine possa avere termine entro il 25/10/o.a.

Per valutare la possibilità di lavoro delle citate op. è da tener presente che esse lavorano in zone dal più al meno malariche; che in seguito all'ordine di accoglimento della classe 1915 perdono 150 u. su 450 presenti. E' benal vero che per il 1/3/o.a. erano annunziati 154 u. al complemento (foglio A/110/19 del 2/7/o.a. del la M.M.L.A.), ma questo personale non sarà subito impiegabile, perchè dovrà essere in precedenza addestrato. Altri complementi sono da richiedere senz'altro - ne occorrono circa 200 - ma essi non potranno essere impiegati nei presenti lavori.

Di conseguenza sembra imporci una limitazione degli attuali compiti affidati alle op. rast. mine, che assicuri il compimento dei lavori di armamento con meno d'opere militare prima della fine di settembre.

In questo senso ho già fatto presente al Gen. PETRO-MILLI, che lo ha accolto favorevolmente. Si ritiene pertanto opportuno confermarlo con lettera a firma del Direttore Generale.

13 - Il Gen. GERICA, Comandante del Territorio Militare di Bologna, nella visita da me compiuta il 28/8, oltre che interessarsi dell'armamento dei lavori di bonifica mine nel territorio di giurisdizione, mi ha incaricato di segnalare al Direttore Generale le condizioni del passaggio su galleggianti sul Po sulla direttrice Piacenza-Milano, in previsione delle piene del Po. 965

Tattasi di un ponte su barconi della portata di 20 T. e di due traghetti, sul cui esercizio non si può contare in caso di piene anche modeste. All'inizio del Le morbide il ponte dovrà ripiegarsi e sostituirsi con un nesso analogo di passaggio, di adeguata potenzialità e rendimento.

Il Comandante del Genio di Bologna, cui ho segnalato l'intervento del Gen. CERICA, mi ha informato che era previsto l'impiego di un traghetto a motore e che delle caratteristiche e delle modalità d'esercizio del traghetto avrebbe fatto immediata comunicazione al Comando Militare del Territorio.

14 - Per quanto concerne i due infortuni avvenuti in data 20/3/52, dei quali è rimasto vittima il Ten. GAIFFO a Ferrara e cinque rastrellatori (quattro morti e un ferito) a Madrid, ho accertato sui luoghi le circostanze di fatto nelle quali si sono svolti.

Nel primo infortunio si è in presenza di un vero caso di fatalità. Durante una istruttoria d'addestramento in aula, il Ten. GAIFFO stava spiegando agli operai la costituzione ed il funzionamento dell'accenditore italiano, costituito, come è noto, da un percussore comandato da una molla cilindrica; normalmente trattenuto da una epina di sicurezza. L'istruttore aveva assicurato all'atletica a ciò destinato una capula ordinaria e tenendo l'ordigno nella mano sinistra aveva colto la destra messo in tensione, forse solo parziale, la molla cilindrica. Ad un dato momento ha verosimilmente lasciato il percussore che è partito, ha colpito la capuletta determinandone la detonazione di questa e della capula. L'ufficiale riportava lo sfacellamento della mano destra, che successivamente è stato necessario amputare.

Il tavolo dell'istruttoria porta ancora le tracce dell'esplosione, che ne ha scheggiato il piano orlato di legno per circa 10 cm.

14 - Per quanto concerne i due infortuni avvenuti in data 20/3/a.e., dei quali è rimasto vittima il Ten. GAITO a Ferrara e cinque rastrellatori (quattro morti e un ferito) a Budrio, ho accertato sui luoghi le circostanze di fatto nelle quali si sono svolti.

Nel primo infortunio si è in presenza di un vero caso di fatalità. Durante una istrusione d'addestramento in aula, il Ten. GAITO stava spiegando agli operai la costituzione ed il funzionamento dell'accenditore italiano, costituito, come è noto, da un percussore ed mandato da una molla cilindrica, normalmente trattenuto da una epina di sicurezza. L'instruttore aveva assicurato all'estremità a ciò destinato una capsula ordinaria e tenendo l'artiglio della mano sinistra aveva colto la leva messo in tensione, forse solo per sbaglia, la molla cilindrica. Ad un dato momento ha verosimilmente lasciato il percussore che è partito, ha colpito la capsula e ha determinato la detonazione di questo e della capsula. L'ufficiale riportava lo sfollamento della mano destra, che successivamente è stato necessario amputare.

Il tavolo dell'insegnante porta ancora le tracce dell'esplosione, che ne ha scheggiato il piano orissontale di legno per circa 10 cm.

Ho visitato all'Ospedale Civico di Ferrara il Ten. GAITO, portandogli una parola di conforto anche a nome del Direttore Generale.

15 - Le cause e le circostanze del secondo incidente sono meno chiare.

Una squadra di 6 rastrellatori (squadra n. 1), agli ordini del Capo Rastrellatore MARVELLI, era addetta allo smantellamento dell'argine destro del T. Idice, all'altezza del Ponte di Budrio.

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 La propria iniziativa si sono allontanati dagli argini, portandosi in un campo minato in proprietà privata nel quale sono tuttora impiantate numerose mine R.M. 43 (anticarro); il campo è delimitato.

Avevano tolto una dozzina di mine, disattivandole, quando due R.M. sono esplose pressoché contemporaneamente, facendo a pezzi quattro operai e facendo leggermente un quinto. Della squadra sono rimasti indenni solo il capo rastrellatore ed un operaio che erano lontani dal luogo del sinistro.

Circa le causali non si possono fare che intuizioni più o meno fondate.

Occorre rilevare anzitutto che precedeva alle disattivazioni, anziché al brillamento delle mine. Le mine disattivate erano ancora visibili al momento del mio sopralluogo; il giorno dopo sono state distrutte perché pericolose. E' da ritenere che mentre la mina sino allora disattiva non rappresentavano detonatori suicidari, una delle mine in corso di disattivazione e precisamente quella cui attendeva l'operaio BARTOLOTTI fosse unita di camello antirimozione o di altro dispositivo troppo la. L'operaio avvertito il pericolo deve aver dato l'alarma pochi istanti prima dell'esplosione; ciò può aver determinato il panico degli altri tre, che con movimento inconsulto si sono inavvertitamente e contemporaneamente portati su di una mina, determinando l'esplosione. Occorre ricordare in proposito che basta il peso di due uomini per provocare il bruciamento dei fili di comando della farfalla di una degli lamecchi 2.2.42 di cui è unita la mina R.M. 43 e talora un peso anche minore, quando la mina è sensibilizzata.

All'infortunio hanno fortitamente assistito alcuni civili, ed alcune diecine di metri di distanza; essi sono stati violentemente proiettati a terra dall'esplosione ma non hanno riportato gravi ferimenti; quanto hanno riferito non contiene elementi che valgano a chiarire causali e circostanze.

Coccorre rilevare anzitutto che procedeva alla disinfezione, anziché al brillamento della mina. Le mine di attivata erano ancora visibili al momento del mio sopralluogo; il giorno dopo sono state distrutte purché pericolose. E' da ritenere che mentre la mina mine allora disattivata non rappresentavano detonatori sussidiari, una delle mine in corso di disattivazione e precisamente quella cui attendeva l'operaio BATTOLINI fosse munita di qualche antirimozione e di altro dispositivo troppo la. L'operaio avvertito il pericolo deve aver dato l'allarme pochi istanti prima dell'esplosione; ciò può aver determinato il panico degli altri tre, che con movimento inconsueto si sono inavvertitamente e contemporaneamente portati su di una mina, determinandone l'esplosione. Coccorre ricordare in proposito che basta il peso di due uomini per provocare il trascinamento dei fili di comando della farfalla di uno degli inneschi Z.L.42 di cui è munita la mina M.L.43 e talora un peso anche minore, quando la mina è sensibilizzata.

All'infornio hanno fortitamente assistito alcuni civili, ad alcune decine di metri di distanza; essi sono stati violentemente proiettati a terra dall'esplosione ma non hanno riportato gravi danni; quanto hanno riferito non contiene elementi che valgano a chiarire casuali e circostanze.

In conclusione, un grave caso d'indisciplina di lavoro che è stato pagato colla vita da coloro che ne sono stati colpevoli. Al capo rastrellatore, il quale è un abile operaio ed ha affermato di non essere stato al corrente di quanto stavano facendo i propri dipendenti, è già stata inflitta una sanzione disciplinare da parte del Comandante di Zona.

15 - Nel riassumere le impressioni della rapida visita compiuta nella Regione Emilia, ritengo necessario mettere ancora una volta in rilievo il peso del lavoro di bonifica che incombe a quella Zona B.C.M.

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Riferendoci alle province più colpite, il lavoro ancora da fare può sintetizzarsi all'ingrosso sulle seguenti percentuali del lavoro totale:

Bologna	-	99%
Ferrara	-	99%
Rovenna	-	80%
Forlì	-	25%.

Nel complesso un lavoro molto ingente, in confronto del quale le forze attualmente a disposizione debbono ritenersi del tutto inadeguate.

Se ne trae la conseguenza che occorre provvedere ad un sollecito ed adeguato incremento di quadri e mezzi, se, per raggiungere quei totali che assicurino provvedimenti efficaci e solleciti, pari all'urgenza del caso.

Questo incremento deve anzitutto consistere gli uffici floiali e nottuffici floiali d'addestramento e d'inquadramento. L'attuale Comando di Zona, Magg. ICI è un ufficio superiore dotato di buona qualità d'organizzazione e di direzione, che si dedica con applicazione e rendimento al suo lavoro, ma ormai egli comincia a dichiararsi stanco. Occorre pertanto destinare a breve scadenza di tempo un altro ufficiale superiore al Comando Zona, possibilmente in sostituzione al Magg. ICI; inoltre sono necessari due capitani per le sottosezioni di Ferrara e di Pesaro (a Forlì vi è da poco il Cap. FALCOLI, che sembra fare bene il suo lavoro). Inoltre il Comando Zona e le sottosezioni dovranno disporre ognuna di almeno 4 - 5 ufficiali subalterni, dei quali un'aliquota dovrà essere utilizzata per la sostituzione degli elementi più anziani di servizio di bonifica, che desiderano riposo.

Anziché incremento dovranno avere i mezzi auto.

In molti casi il Comando Zona applica il criterio di subordinare l'intervento delle squadre alla concessione dei mezzi di trasporto da parte degli enti interessati ai singoli interventi di bonifica, con risultati pessimi.

un raccolto ed adeguato incremento di quadri e mezzi, per raggiungere quei totali che assicurino provvedimenti efficaci e solleciti, pari all'urgenza del caso.

Questo incremento deve anzitutto concernere gli uffici e sottufficiali d'addestramento e d'inquadramento. L'attuale Comandante di Zona, Magg. ICI è un ufficiale superiore dotato di buona qualità d'organizzazione e di direzione, che si dedica con applicazione e rendimento al suo lavoro, ma anch'egli comincia a dichiararsi stanco. Occorre pertanto destinare a breve scadenza di tempo un altro ufficiale superiore al Comandante Zona, possibilmente in sostituzione al Magg. ICI; inoltre sono necessari due capitani per la Sezione di Ferrara e di Pesaro (e Perli vi è da poco il Cap. PACCOLI, che sembra fare buon lavoro). Inoltre il Comandante Zona e le sottesezioni dovranno disporre ognuna di almeno 4 - 5 ufficiali subalterni, dei quali un'aliquota dovrà essere utilizzata per la sostituzione degli elementi più anziani di servizio di bonifera, che desiderano riposo.

Analogo incremento dovranno avere i mezzi auto.

In molti casi il Comandante Zona applica il criterio di subordinare l'intervento delle squadre alla carenza dei mezzi di trasporto o di perdita degli enti interessati ai singoli interventi di bonifera, con risultati positivi.

La spesa dei mezzi di trasporto (solo noleggio) raggiunge già le 30.000 lire al giorno, ma dovrebbe essere di almeno 50.000 lire se la 3ª squadra attualmente in servizio presso la Zona fossero adeguatamente attrezzate. Legittimamente detta spesa aumenterà proporzionalmente coll'aumento della mano d'opera. Da mettere in rilievo che all'ingresso le spese di noleggio mezzi di trasporto eguagliano le spese per la mano d'opera.

Assolutamente inquadramento o mezzi di trasporto non ritengo di presentiranno difficoltà particolari per incrementare la mano d'opera, secondo i criteri di cui ho

già fatto cenno. Per contro l'addestramento di operai civili presso le op.rastr.mine è destinato ad incontrare difficoltà, essenzialmente per le contemporanee esigenze d'addestramento complementari che, come si è già accennate, si manifestano presso detti reparti.

Ciò posto e considerata l'opportunità generica di mantenere separati gli elementi civili - amministrati dal Comando Zona B.C.M. - e gli elementi militari delle op.rastr.mine, ritengo opportuno il provvedimento preso dal Comando Genio di Bologna di affidare l'addestramento degli operai civili rastrellatori mine esclusivamente al Comando di Zona ed a quelli di Sottosona B.C.M.

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La presente relazione mira ad essere uno schizzo rapido ma per quanto possibile fedele della situazione della bonifica mine nella Regione EMILIA, una delle regioni più colpite dal flagello e pertanto più meritevole di sollecito ed efficace interessamento da parte delle Autorità centrali.

Il problema, relativamente circoscritto, della bonifica delle zone originali dei fiumi romagnoli è in via di risoluzione ed è da ritenere che questa sarà tempestiva, se si terranno presenti le raccomandazioni fatte a proposito della riduzione dei compiti affidati alle op.rastr.mine.

Il problema, da considerare contingente, della sicurezza dei lavori è anch'esso risolvibile con provvedimenti di organizzazione e disciplina dei lavori stessi e considero che immediati progressi potranno essere avvertiti subito in questo campo.

Il problema generale delle bonifiche mine dell'EMILIA deve invece trovare ancora la sua soluzione, dato che il lavoro svolto non rappresenta nemmeno il 5% di quello da svolgersi e l'attuale organizzazione non

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Il problema generale della bonifica mine dell'EMILIA deve invece trovare ancora la sua soluzione, dato che il lavoro svolto non rappresenta nemmeno il 5% di quello da assolvere e l'attuale organizzazione, per quanto prevista di qualità positive, non rappresenta che un abbozzo, che deve essere perfezionato e completato.

D'altronde l'opera è così ingente che i mezzi non saranno mai eccessivi, per giungere a provvedimenti integrali e solleciti.

Dovranno parteciparvi operai civili nell'ordine del migliaio, in luogo dell'attuale centinaio al lavoro in amministrazione diretta, ed un adeguato numero di imprese idonee e di cooperative di lavoratori.

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Naturalmente il coordinamento, la direzione, la sorveglianza ed il collaudo di così complessa attività di lavoro, l'entità delle gestioni in contanti ed in materiali che ne conseguono, richiederanno un personale direttivo di sicura capacità tecnica ed amministrativa, in uno parole un'organizzazione più completa e più efficiente di quella in atto.

Alla realizzazione di siffatta organizzazione dovendo tendere l'opera dell'Ufficio Centrale B.C.M.

Ad essa si dovrà presumibilmente pervenire per gradi, colle contemporanee risoluzioni dei problemi chiave del servizio, ormai in gran parte avviati a pratiche soluzioni, problemi che hanno un aspetto ed un'importanza comune per tutte le regioni d'Italia afflitte dalla presenza dei campi minati, ed un poco senza confronto più ingente per quelle piaghe, come la Regione EMILIA, che ne sono più gravemente colpite.-

IL GENERALE DI BRIGATA
(Ing. P. Supino)

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IL GENERALE DI BRIGATA
(Ing. P. Supino)

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Report by Major J.S. REAKES
on his visit to Emilia Region
and Venezia Region.

1. I arrived in BOLOGNA on 24th August at 1200 hrs.
General Supino of the Ministry of War accompanied
me. We were met by Major Igi and Lt. MacNab.
2. In the afternoon a meeting was held to discuss the
various aspects and problems of mine clearance in
Emilia Region, military and civil. There were pre-
sent General Supino, Major Igi, Lt. MacNab and
myself. The main difficulty is transport which
has become more acute since the Region withdrew.
The Artillery units engaged on bomb disposal have
now to use horses no motor transport being avail-
able. I pointed out that this was a problem which
the Italian Government would require to straighten
out themselves.
3. It was also explained at the meeting that Lt. MacNab
would now act as Liaison Officer and be present to
give advice and render assistance when asked. He
however represented AC in so far as the Companies
were concerned. The Companies were however for all
practical purposes under command of the Ministry of
War and would take their orders from them through the
Genio Militare in so far as they were employed in
Emilia Region. The Zone have indicated that they
desire to retain the services of Lt. MacNab as long
as possible.
4. Later in the afternoon a meeting was held between
the General in charge of Artillery, General Supino

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4.

Later in the afternoon a meeting was held between the General in charge of Artillery, General Supino and myself to discuss the problems arising in Venezia Region. General Supino explained that the problem was mainly a bomb disposal one and considered that it was one for the Artillery and not for the Engineers. After some discussion it was agreed that the Artillery would be responsible for Bomb Disposal and the Zone for Mine Clearance. A sub zone will be set up probably under command of Captain Niutta to look after Venezia. The General of Artillery agreed to give me a letter for the Director of Artillery in Padua explaining the situation to him and stating that he had the power to enrol civilians for this work. In effect the men employed by the Region would be divided into two bodies, i.e. those trained in bomb

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disposal and those trained in mine clearance. Those trained in mine clearance would probably not exceed 20.

5. At 17 hrs I visited the Commander of the Genio Militare and had a long talk with him on the work he was doing in connection with the reconstruction of River banks in RAVENNA province and the employment of the three Companies. Attached is a sketch plan showing were the companies are being or to be employed. Civilian Contractors are also being employed on mine Clearance. Many hundreds of civilians have also been engaged for the work of reconstruction. The Commander of the Genio Militare was well informed and knew the extent of the work required. He had it organized into priorities and I am satisfied that the Genio Militare is doing essential work first. The three Company Commanders are responsible to the Commander of Genio Militare direct. I explained to him that he would give the orders and it was up to him to make periodic checks to see how the work is being carried out. He stated that if he could complete the work by the end of October, which he hoped to do, there would be very little flooding of importance.

6. On Saturday 25th August we left BOLOGNA at 0800 hrs for Ferrara. In Ferrara we visited an officer in hospital who had blown his hand off with a detonator. The officer was recovering. It is a pity these accidents happen but this one was due to the careless handling of a detonator. The Italians seem to consider detonators safe and although their attention was drawn to the way they handled them they still continue to do so in their usual way.

7. We also called at the school in Ferrara. They have recently enrolled 242 workers many of them partisans. This is the largest school I have seen and they were enthusiastic. The Instructors were satisfied that they had

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We also called at the school in Ferrara. They have recently enrolled 242 workers many of them partisans. This is the largest school I have seen and they were enthusiastic. The instructors were satisfied that they had good pupils and it looks as if this area will not lack Mine Clearers. General Supino spoke to them and warned them to treat mines with respect and not to take risks. It is most heartening to see such a good response.

8.

We moved on to ARGENTA where we visited several Minefields and saw men at work. Here we saw them clearing agricultural land and they were getting on with the job. The men impressed with their eagerness to show what they had done and what they were doing. We were sometimes greeted with the Communist salute but on departing received the normal touching of the cap. These workers are very appreciative if they think their work is being recognised.

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9. At RAVENNA we called at the Headquarters of the 563 Company and met several officers and NCOs. This Company is well billeted. The Officers and NCOs are on the whole good. One Sergeant to whom we were introduced had cleared 2000 mines last month. The morale is good the chief complaint being shortage of cigarettes. They do however get their rations which is small.

10. We passed through FORLI and visited the detachment working on SENIO River. The River banks at the point near to the road have been heavily mined with Anti tank and Anti personnel Mines. Owing to the nearness to the river the vegetation is thick and will prove difficult to clear. The main task is to clear a path for civilians and vehicles to get along to do the repairs. They were a little disorganised as they had only arrived there the previous day. They will require more precise instructions as to what they have to do as obviously they cannot clear all the ground in the time. This matter is however being taken up with the Genio Militare. One important point emerged and that was the need for marking tape. The Company estimated that in 15 days they would complete their task, but I think this was being optimistic.

11. On Sunday the 26th August we paid a visit to the school at FORLI. Being Sunday no instruction was taking place. The lecture rooms were well fitted up and the Instructors are good. This was the school started by Major Harrison who had done a good ~~job~~ piece of work.

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12.

On Monday I went with Lt. MacNab to PADUA where I had a meeting with Lt. Col. GREEN and Capt. FORSTER. We discussed Mine Clearance in Venezia but the impression given was that Mines are not the problem. Their problem is the clearance of ammunition dumps and bomb disposal. I explained that the ammunition matter was one for them to take up with War Material Disposal and POWs Sub Commission which they said they would do.

957

13.

In so far as Bomb Disposal is concerned I gave them the letter to the local Artillery Commander and told them to get him to take on to his payroll those men who are engaged on Bomb Disposal and removal of un-

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-4-
guardedammunition dumps.

14. In so far as Mine Clearance is concerned I asked Capt. Forster to prepare a list of all personnel trained and used for Mine Clearance. Emilia Zone is prepared to create a Sub Zone which should only be a small one and will be operated under Captain Forster's control. Capt. NIUTTA will probably be made Sub Zone Commander operating from BOLOGNA.

15. On Tuesday 29th August we visited several squads operating in and around BOLOGNA.

16. Information was received that the 564 Company had left PESCARA and transport was laid on for its road lift to the area in which it is to work. The Company arrived during the night of 29/30th August. Prior to leaving for Rome we paid a visit to the Station and spoke to some of the officers of this Company.

Conclusion

17. The transport situation is getting worse much worse than it was when Region was operating. The tempo of the work will slow down as transport becomes more difficult to obtain. Quite a number of contractors withdrew their transport when Region pulled out and sought and obtained more remunerative hires elsewhere. AFHQ have, however, laid down that the Italian Government must solve this problem from the transport allotted to them and this Commission cannot help further in the matter.

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18. If the Italian Army takes over Mine Clearance they should be able to help with military transport.

19. The present position is that the Italian Ministry of War are now operating Mine Clearance over all Italy and I am satisfied that they can and will carry on. One question which will arise is one of finance. So long as AC/AMG could order work to be done irrespective of the cost much was done but I feel that the Italian Government will think twice before agreeing to the expenditure on the scale it was under AC/AMG.

956

20. This Sub Commission has on the civil side set up a very good Zone Scheme in Italy and every part of the country where Mines are encountered lies within one Zone or another. On the Military side the Districts are well suited to controlling and carrying out Mine Clearance through Genio Militare working in conjunc-

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46
tion with the Genio Civile. So whether Civil or Military (or a combination) is to be the system under which the scheme is to continue to function I feel that the Italian Government can carry on.

21. The present difficulties are transport and equipment-, practically none of which has been supplied. These difficulties are present whether AC or the Italian Government runs the scheme.

22. I therefore recommend that the Italian Government be informed that while AC will continue to advise and to help; (by trying to procure further equipment) they must now assume full responsibility for Mine Clearance in Italy

William Leahy Maj

30 August 1945
Major
Local Government Sub Commiss.

HOW ESSENTIAL FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LINE CLEARANCE IN

Italy

William Leahy

Major

Local Government Sub Commiss.

30 August 1945

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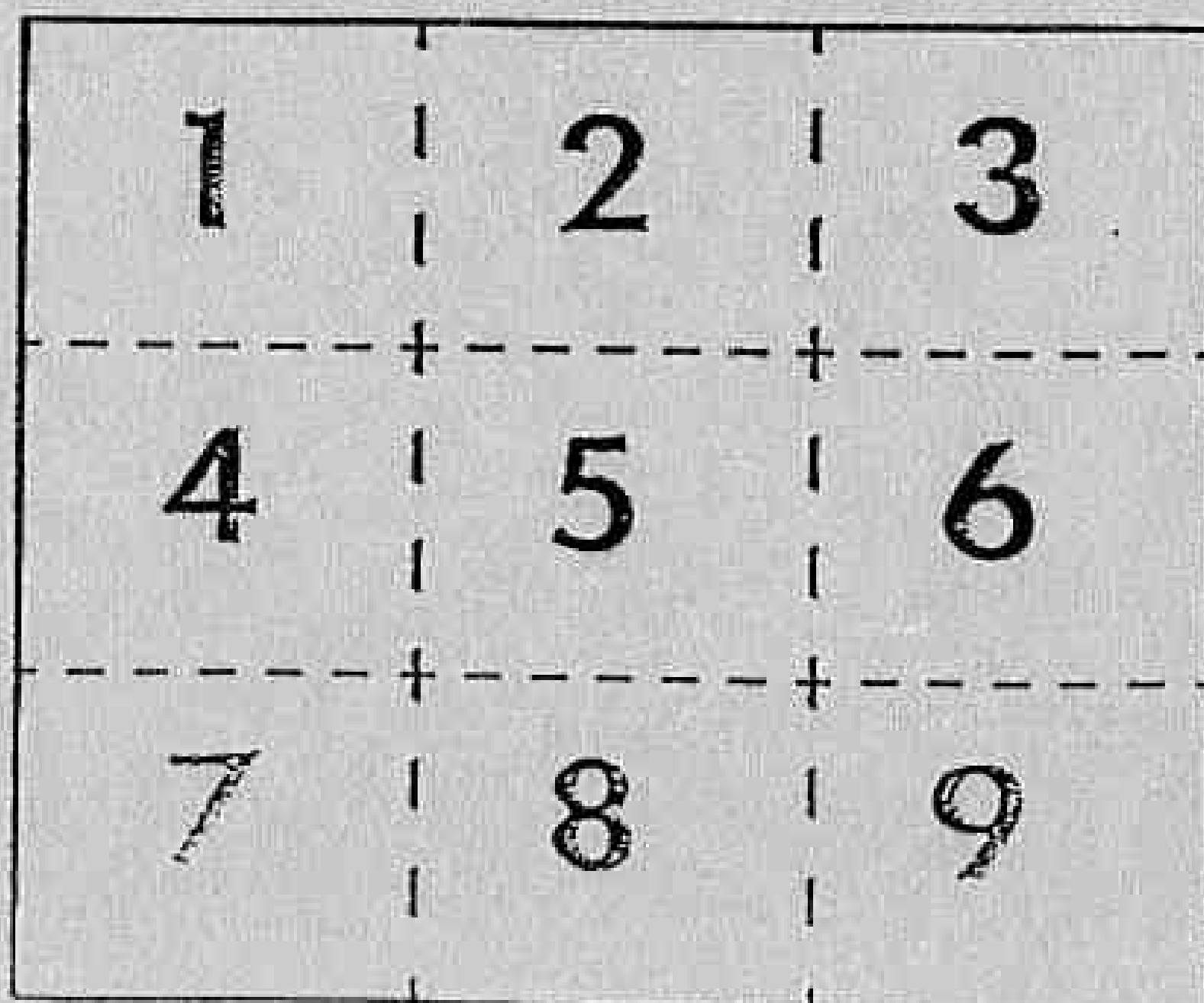
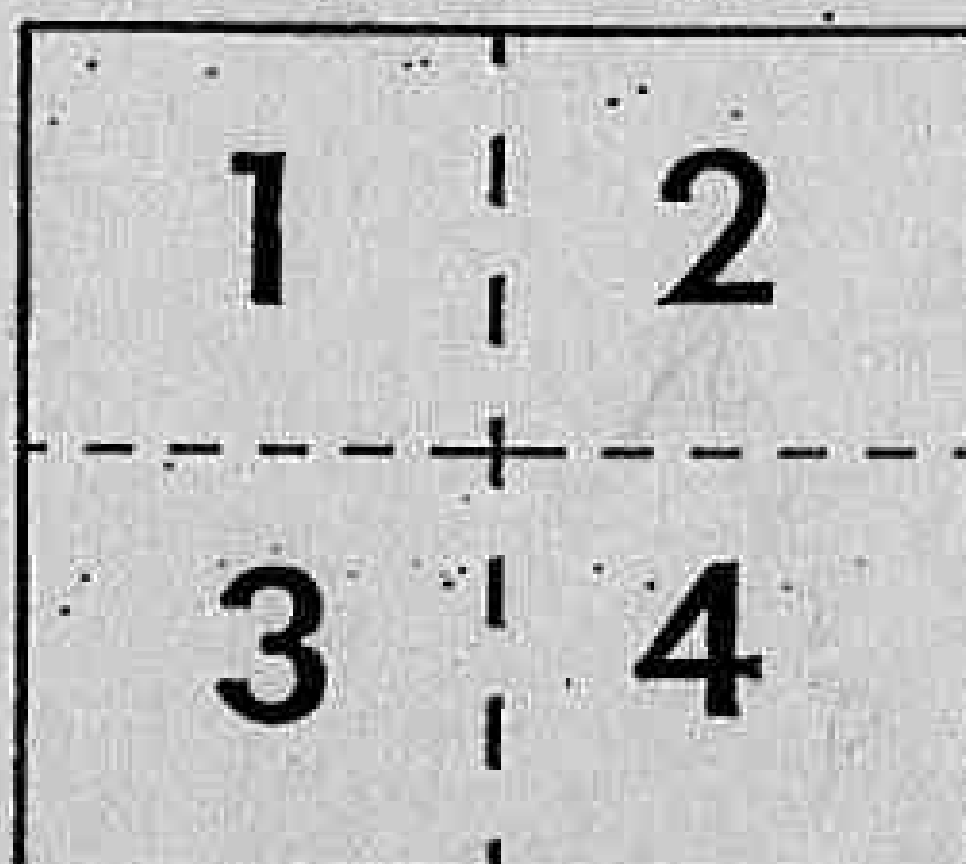
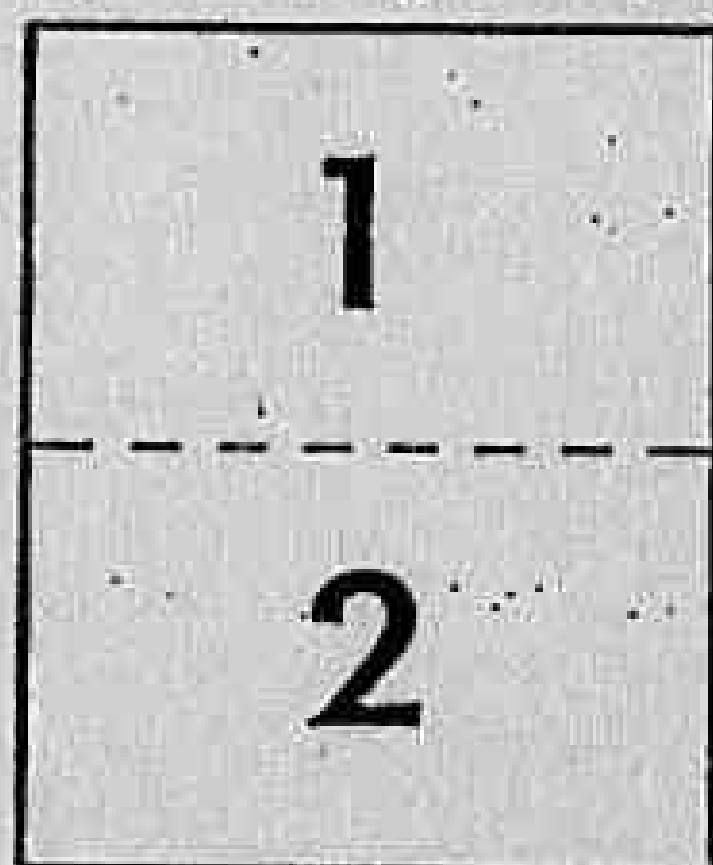
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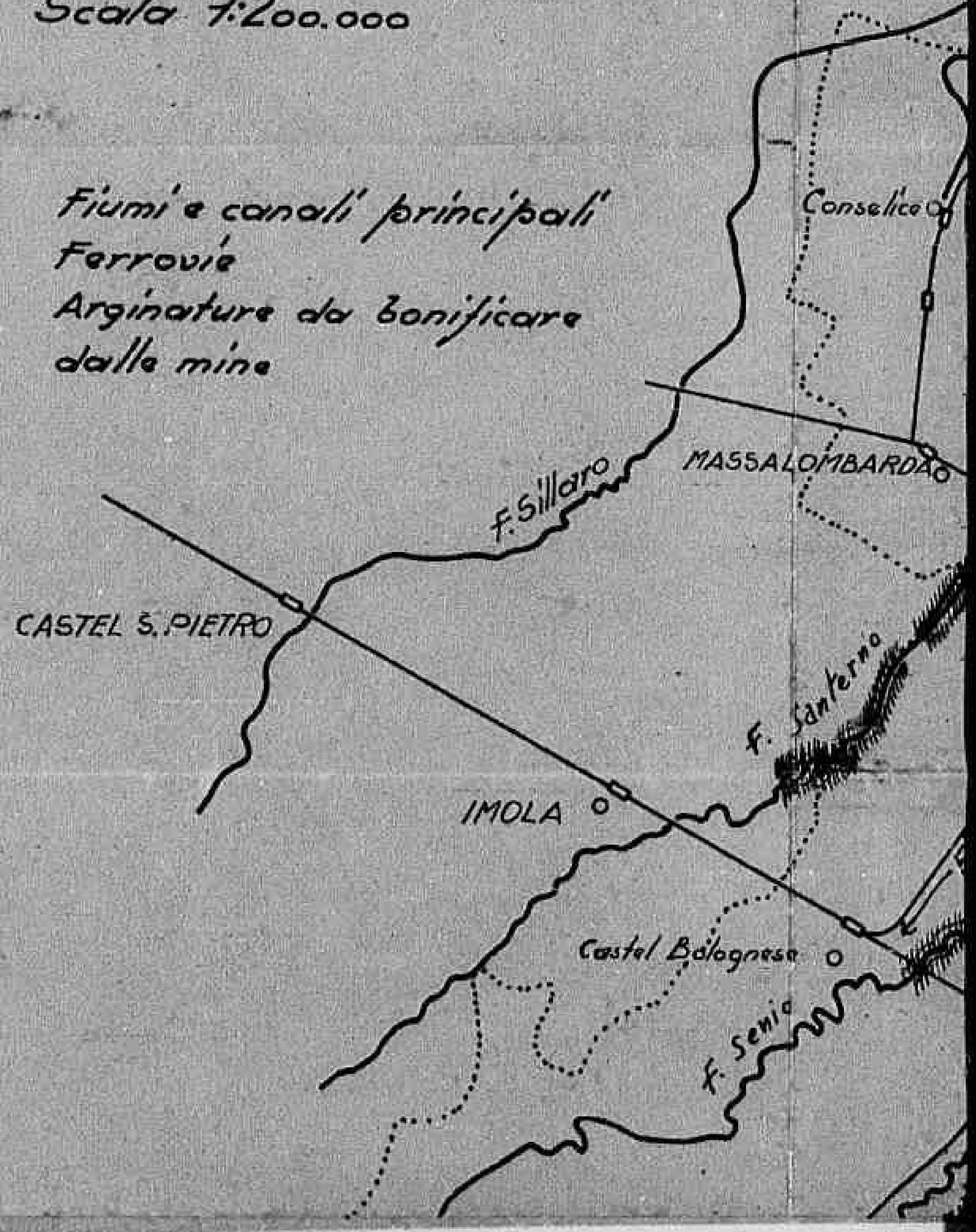
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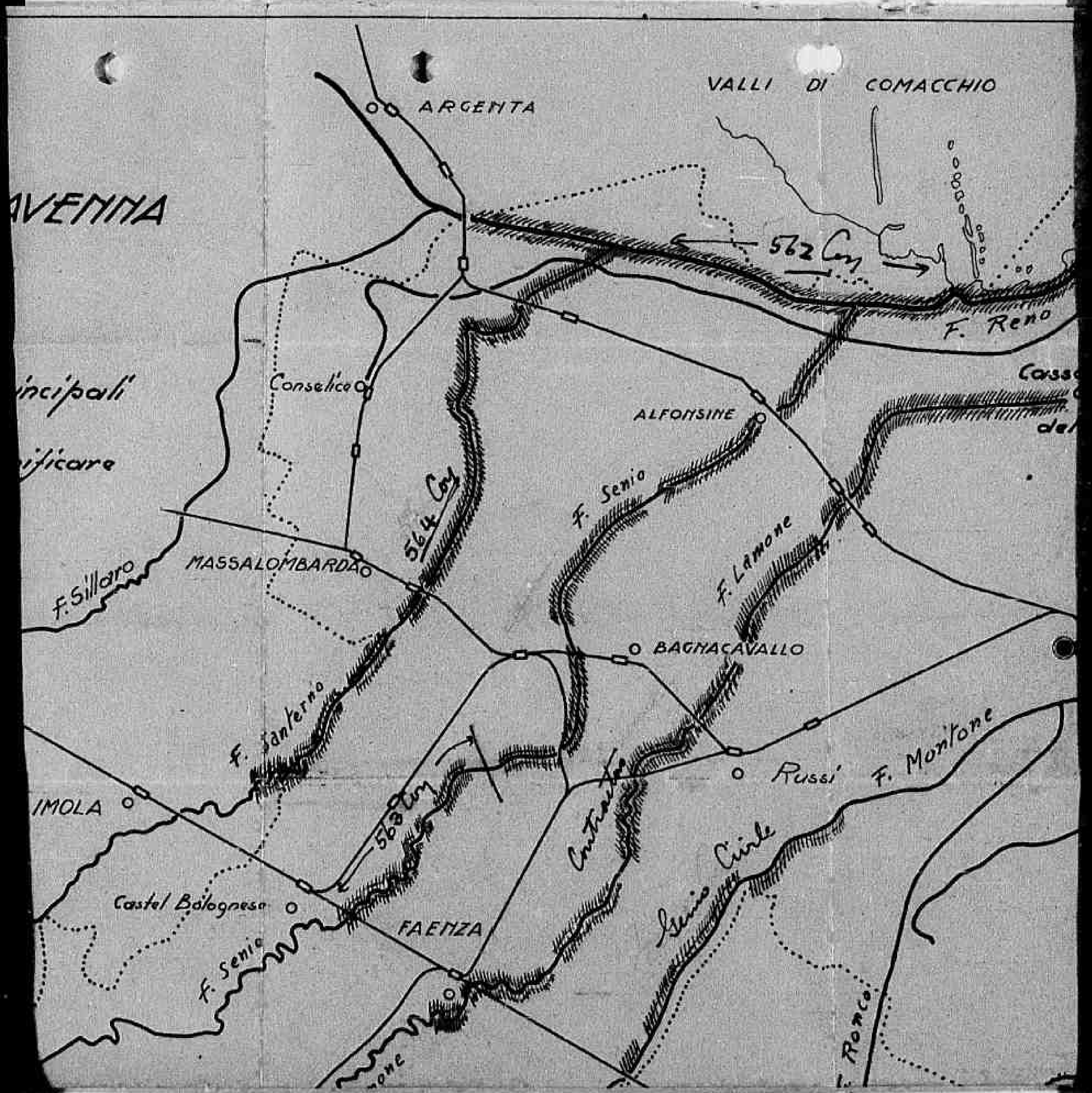
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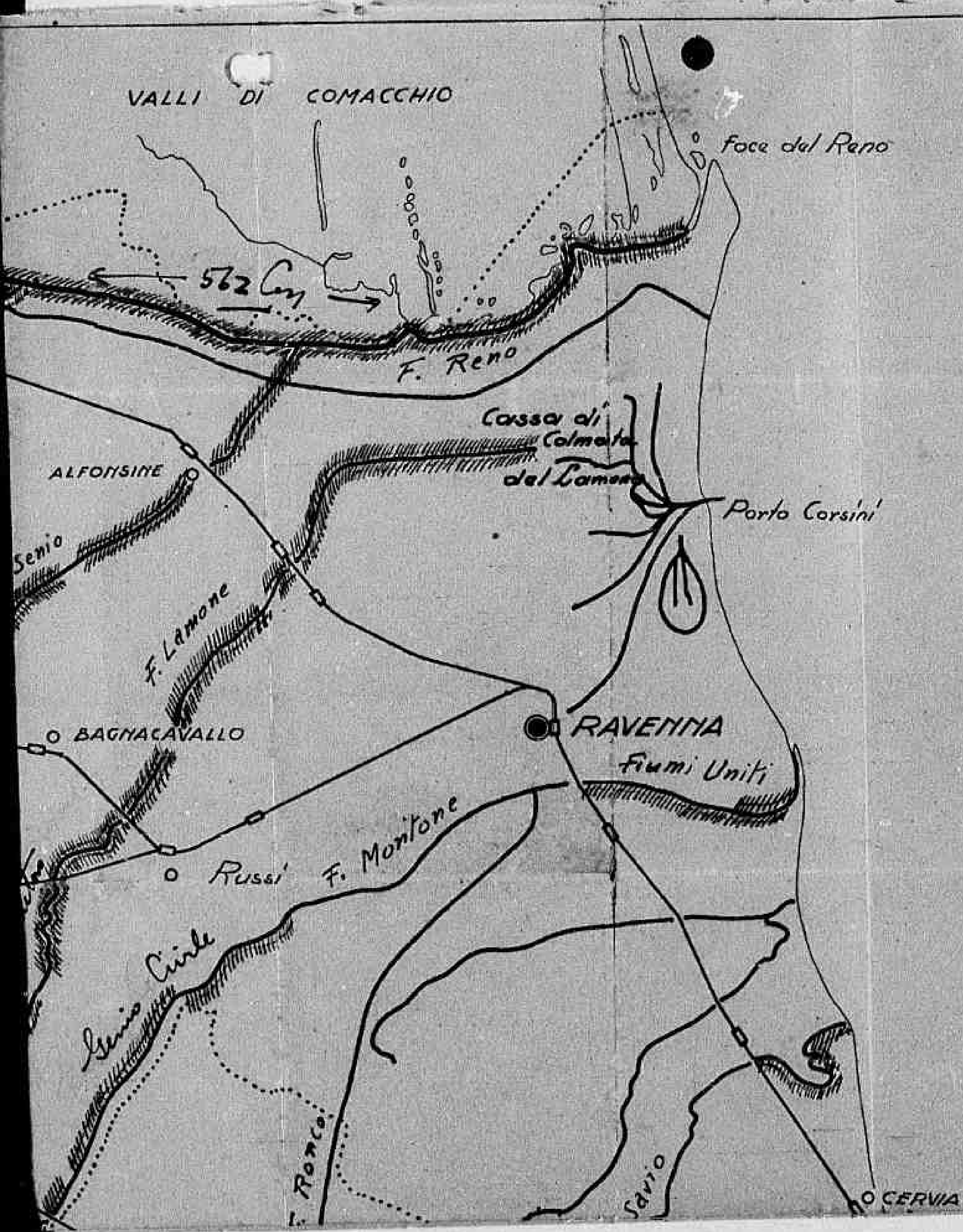


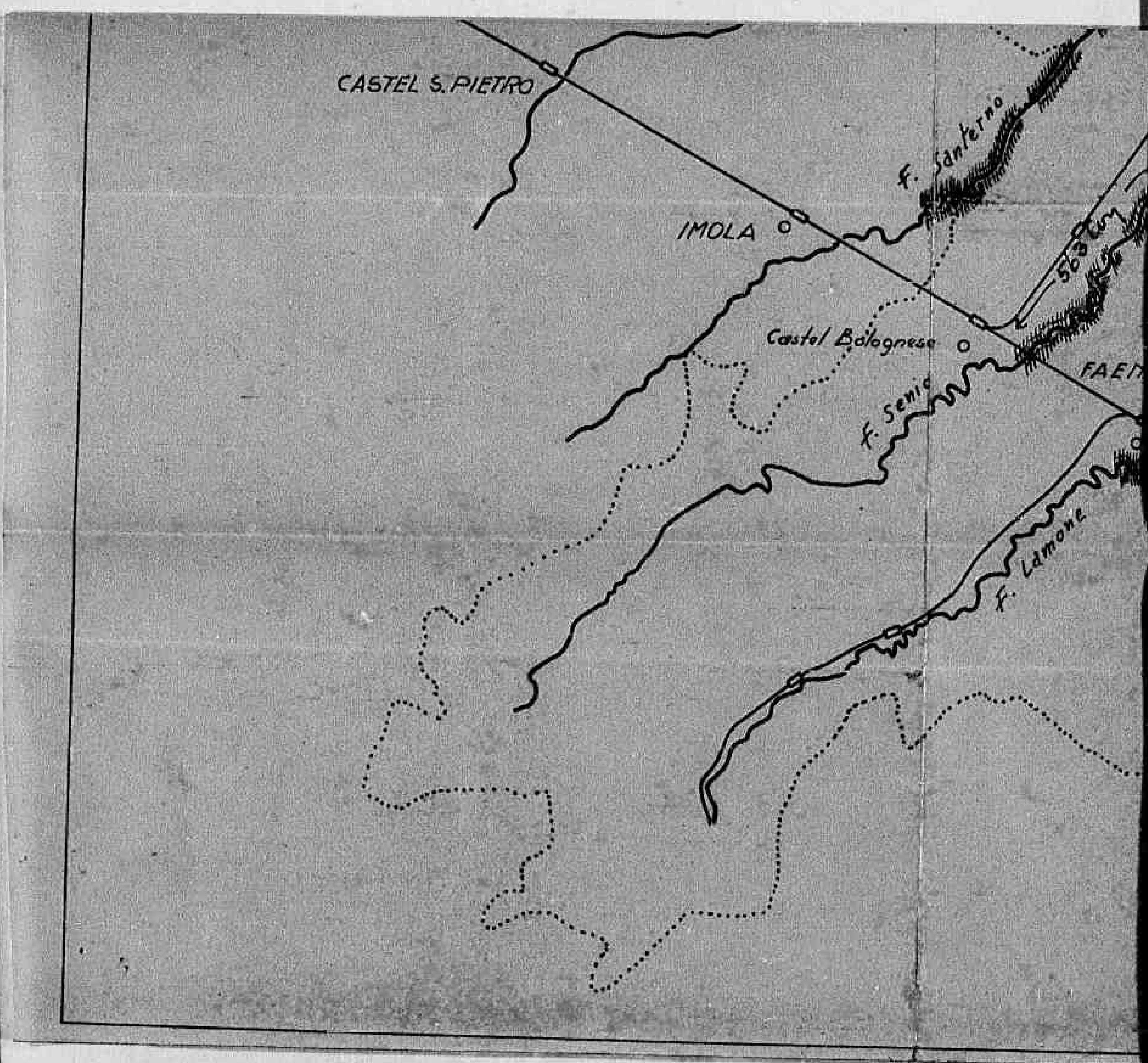
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CARTA
della
PROVINCIA DI RAVENNA
Scala 1:200.000

-  *Fiumi e canali principali*
-  *Ferrovie*
-  *Arginature da bonificare dalle mine*

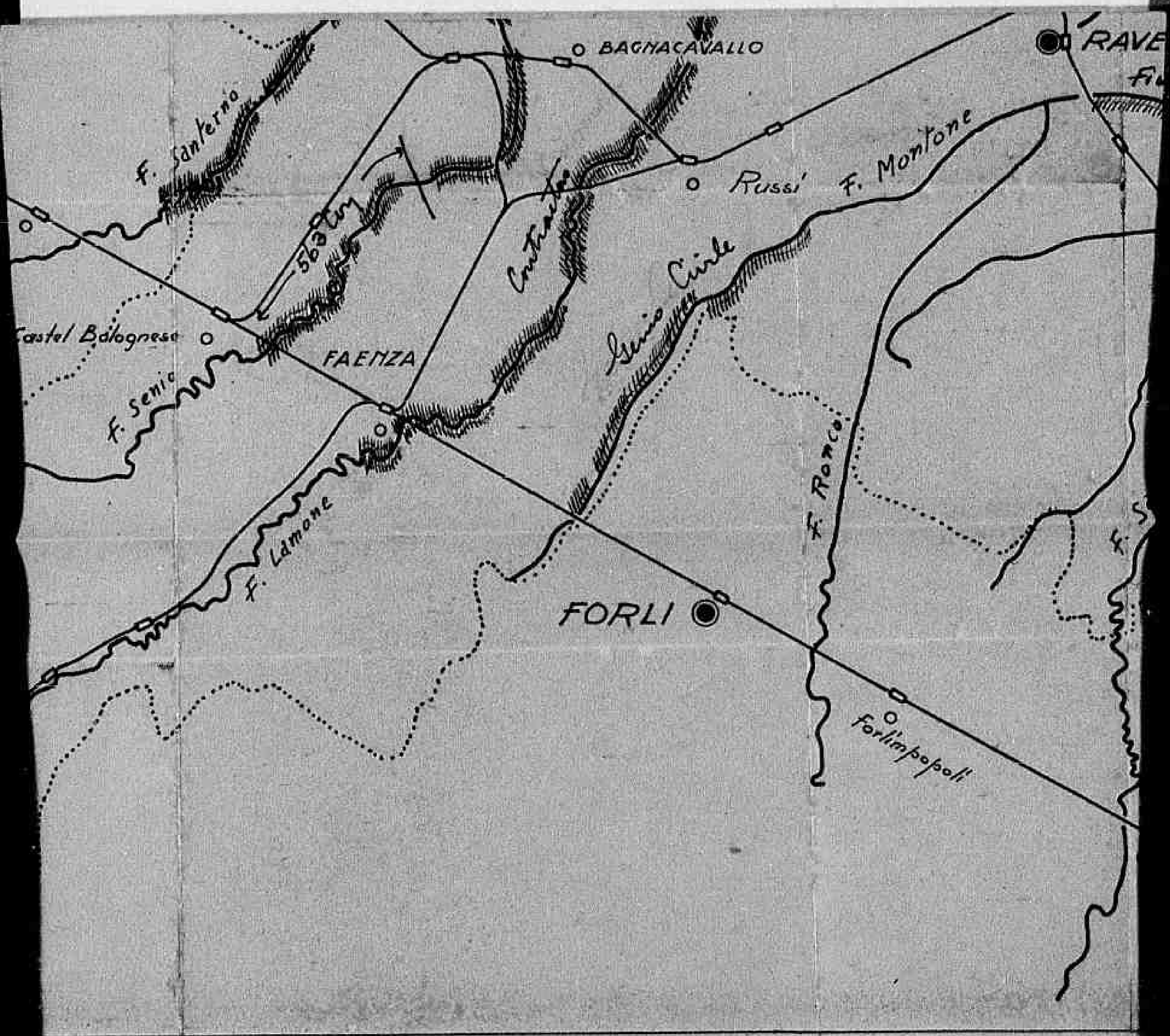






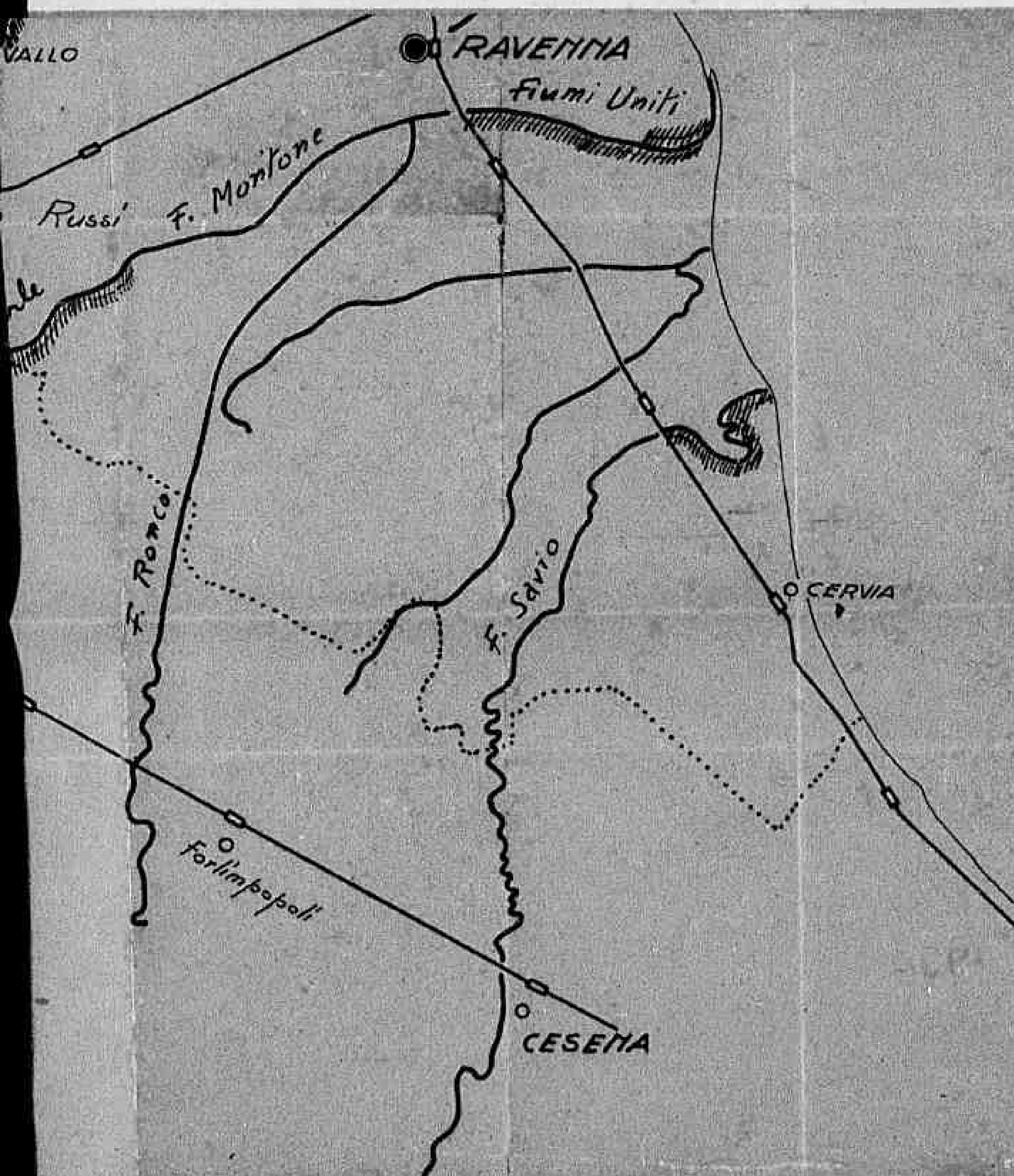


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Memorandum to Civil Affairs Section.

Subject: Mine Clearance.

BACKGROUND

1. Since the entry of the Allies into Italy the problem of Mine Clearance has been dealt with by three agents : (a) MMIA, (b) Allied Commission, and (c) the Italian Ministry of War. Originally there was no organisation in AC to deal with this matter but some elements of the Italian Army were used for the clearance of mines. Their work was almost entirely confined to SARDINIA and CALABRIA. As Italian troops began to be used operationally, this work was discontinued.
2. In July 1944 Allied Commission was allotted two companies of Italian Engineers to work on mine clearance for civilian needs. These Companies have been augmented to four at which number they still stand. It will be appreciated, considering the large number of mines laid in this country, (probably running to six millions), that this is a very small number of men to work on this vast problem. Their activities have been almost entirely confined to the essential needs of the civilian population, i.e. clearance of bridge surrounds, water and power lines, towns and villages, railways, etc. There remain, however, large areas of agricultural land and other less important public utility installations still to be cleared.
3. The Italian Government have charged the Ministry of War with the responsibility of Mine Clearance in Italy but the Ministry is denied the use of Italian Military personnel other than those mentioned above which are under the direct control of this Commission. In conjunction with Civil Affairs Section the Ministry of War drew up a scheme for the employment of civilian personnel which is now in operation. MMIA provided a nucleus of instructors to initiate the scheme. Some comments on the work of the Italian Military companies and the Italian

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MILITARY COMPANIES

4. The two Companies originally allotted were, in July and August 1944, given the duty, in addition to Mine Clearance work, of instructing two recruit companies in mine clearances. After a short period of six weeks the two original companies were withdrawn, leaving this Commission with the two new Companies. One Company was put to work in the East of Italy and the other one in the West of Italy. While the work of mine clearance from its very nature is slow, these companies may be said in general to have given a good account of themselves in spite of many difficulties. Personnel has been frequently changed, clothing has been difficult to get, they

- 2 -

are lacking in transport, and mine detectors were very difficult to obtain and still are.

5.

The two Companies have between them lifted or destroyed 439040 mines. These figures have been accepted by the Ministry of War but this Sub Commission considers them to be on the high side. The casualties suffered by the Companies are 86 killed and 73 injured and mutilated. These casualties are due to various factors, i.e. the high sensitivity of mines which have lain a long time, the growth of grass etc. which hides the usual signs of minefields, bad minefield discipline and a degree of recklessness which is inherent in the Italian due to familiarity with mines, despite casualties.

6.

Two further Companies were later allotted in the Winter of 1944 and the Spring of 1945. The last Company has only just completed its training and has been put to work on last Winter's battle line.

CIVILIAN ORGANISATION

7.

The civilian squads set up by the Ministry of War, in spite of great difficulties which included not only lack of equipment, food and first aid, but clothing and housing, have expanded gradually to an approximate number of 1,500 workers. They are continually hampered by lack of transport and are inclined to become demoralised when casualties occur. It can be well understood that men engaged continuously on this dangerous work are bound to be affected by such disadvantages and their morale will be lowered when they cannot even get transport to take wounded and injured to hospital. It may be added here that the fact that suitable equipment has not been made available is not due to any lack of initiative or hardwork on the part of the officers concerned in this Headquarters who over a period of some 9 months, have continually pressed for the provision of equipment and transport. Their efforts, how-

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8. The civilian mine clearing squads are much less expert than the military but are well paid. The casualties are 96 killed and 75 injured and mutilated. The stage has now been reached when it can no longer be expected that civilians will come forward for this work, and an expansion of the scheme by using civilians is impossible. The costs of using civilian labour are prohibitive.

USE OF GERMAN POWs.

9. In agreement with the Acting President of the Allied Commission this Sub Commission made application to AFHQ in

- 3 -

June of this year for the use of 10,000 surrendered personnel, with the necessary equipment to be provided from military sources, for mine clearance work. The numbers that it had been found possible to employ among the civilian population and the four companies allotted to this Commission were considered insufficient to make any appreciable headway in clearing up the large number of mines in this country and that only with the addition of a large number of personnel could any substantial progress be made. It was therefore suggested that 10,000 POWs should be put to work and if this ran successfully a larger number might well be employed. After a period of 3 months AFHQ now state that no surrendered personnel can be made available to this Commission for the purpose of Mine Clearance. Further, severe cuts in the equipment to be made available are contemplated.

10.

The position, therefore, is precisely as it was three months ago. There are still insufficient personnel at work to really make headway in the clearance of mines, which daily becomes more difficult and dangerous, since the mines which have lain for a considerable time, are more sensitive and more difficult to find. They are taking a daily toll of life in considerable numbers and of all ages. Casualties among the civilian population are estimated to be not less than 5000 killed and 6000 injured and mutilated (these figures are incomplete, full returns not being available).

It might be argued that the work could be carried out by contractors. Experience shows however, that, not only is this an extremely expensive way of doing the work, but it is also extremely difficult to control and supervise, and it is open, owing to the Italian mentality, to a possibility of recurrences of the recent explosion which took place at Viareggio and which resulted in a considerable loss of life.

There can be only one conclusion: namely, that a very much larger and properly administered organisation is required to tackle this immense problem.

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There can be only one conclusion: namely, that a very much larger and properly administered organisation is required to tackle this immense problem.

11. It is my view that the organisation which should and could tackle this work already exists, - it is the Italian Army, and the matter of mine clearance should be made a high priority responsibility of that Army.

12. This view is upheld by the fact that mine clearance itself is basically a military operation as it can only be satisfactorily done under strict disciplinary conditions, which cannot be established with civilians. Civilians are disinclined to do the work and cannot be got in the numbers required. The technical equipment both for laying and removing mines is essentially military and can only be obtained from military sources.

13. I therefore recommend that the Italian Army not only become immediately responsible for all mine clearance work in

Italy, but also that it be given the opportunity and necessary assistance in the way of the supply of equipment to carry out this immense task which involves the removal of an estimated number of over four million mines.

14.

There is every advantage in this responsibility being taken by the Military, and so far as I can see, no disadvantage at all. Military operations in this country are at an end and there must be Italian Military personnel available to do the work, even if they have the secondary role of guard battalions. The problem is a national one and should be treated as such. There are Engineer Combat Units already trained and equipped which should be used for mine clearance. Further equipment required can be transferred direct through normal military channels from Allied Military sources to the Italian Army. There are available to the Italian Military authorities military schools, buildings etc., for training infantry in this work. It is, in fact, one of the normal functions of any infantryman to lift mines if necessary and I can see no objection to more men being found from infantry to augment the engineer element in the Italian Army for the purpose of mine clearance.

A really first rate performance in tackling this problem by the Italian Army would go far to raise its morale and prestige in the eyes of the general public.

22 Aug 45.

Director
Local Government Sub Commission

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Director
Local Government Sub Commission

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34
Report by Major J. Stewart REAKES
on his visit to PIEMONTE Region.

1. I left ROME by plane on 11th July and arrived in TORINO at 1400 hrs.
2. Col. BIRCHETT had gone to ROME but I was met by Major ROBB who was acting for him. He introduced me to an Italian Officer Captain V. DINI who has been responsible for the organisation of Mine Clearance in the Region.
3. There are some 30 men employed on the removal of mines in the Region. They are all ex-soldiers and were artillerymen. They have operated during the past three months without casualties.
4. The 30 men have been attached to the Comando Genio Militare for payment of wages and general administration. There are doubts as to whether the Genio Militare would be able to continue to pay them wages &c. and it was desired to bring them within the Mine Clearance Scheme. They are all trained men and no instructors are needed.
5. It was decided to create a sub-zone operating under LIGURIA Region, and to bring the workers on to the scale of wages operating in other Zones subject to a daily deduction for food which PIEMONTE Region had managed to provide for them.
6. The men will be asked if they wished the extra Insurance. I gathered that they will not but should they wish it then this can be arranged by the Zone who now know the drill.

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 6. The men will be asked if they wished the extra Insurance. I gathered that they will not but should they wish it then this can be arranged by the Zone who now know the drill.
 7. The Region will also be able to hire the necessary vehicles (three in number) the cost of hiring of which will be paid by the Zone or Sub-Zone. Region can provide the necessary POL.
 8. I met Major MARTILLINI who has been in charge of operations in the field. He was unwilling to become Sub-Zone Commander but put forward two names. The Commander of the Genio Militare (Gen. NICOTRA) suggested Captain FEDERICO TOMBOLINI an engineering Officer. Captain LINI and Major MARTILLINI considered him suitable and in agreement with Major ROBB it was decided to ask the Ministry of War to confirm the appointment of this officer to act as Sub-Zone Commander under Lt. Col. CARINI. So soon

- 2 -

as the appointment is approved the Ministry of War should advise Gen. NICOTRA that Captain TOMBOLINI is Sub-Zone Commander.

9. Captain TOMBOLINI's firststep on assuming command will be to report to Lt.Col. CARINI for information and with the names of the 30 men so that they may be included in the Zone Pay Roll.

10. The Sub-Zone Commander will receive his Instructions from Col. BIRCHETT or his nominee as to the work to be done, priorities &c.

11. PIEMONTE Region do not have the same trouble with regard to Mined areas and minefields as EMILIA or LIGURIA. There are a number of mined areas, shells, prepared demolitions and UXBs on essential routes which must be cleared. The 30 men they have are sufficient for their purpose and they estimate that they can clear all the Mines within two or three months. There are no teller mines. They find Schu Mines, S Mines, Box Mines and prepared demolitions. They have removed over 400 mines during the past month.

12. The men have no mine detectors but are getting along without them and in view of the number of wooden mines it is better that they should not have detectors. They prefer to carry on without detectors. I have promised to send them some books of instruction and one or two first aid boxes if they cannot get supplies locally.

13. The Sub-Zone is functioning very well and all that is required of the Zone Commander (Lt.Col.CARINI)

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The Sub-Zone is functioning very well and all that is required of the Zone Commander (Lt. Col. CARINI) is for him to take them under his wing administratively. He does not require to visit this Region at present as he has much to do in LIGURIA and it is not necessary.

14.

I also visited 151 Sub Areas and asked if they had a Bomb Disposal team which could be used by the ^{Y-40} Region. They explained that they now had instructions not to use Allied personnel on Bomb Disposal unless it was necessary for the safety of Allied soldiers or equipment.

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- 3 -

15. Conclusion. A Sub-Zone will be formed in PIEMONTE Region and Captain TOMBOLINI appointed Sub-Zone Commander. Wages will be adjusted between the Sub-Zone Commander and the Zone Commander probably round about 400 lire per diem. Transport will be hired by the Sub-Zone and paid for by the Zone in the usual manner.

16. I returned to ROME on 12th July.

12 July 1945

William Realey May

Major

Local Government Sub-Commission

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

785014

Major

Local Government Sub-Commission

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12 July 1945

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
CIVIL AFFAIRS SECTION

REPORT ON MINE CLEARANCE IN ITALY

1 The clearance of mines is carried out by:

- (a) Italian Mine Clearance Companies operating under AC.
- (b) Civilian Mine Clearance Squads operating under AC.
- (c) Civilian Squads operating under the Italian Ministry of War.

2 Mine Clearance Companies.

At present there are two mine clearance companies actually working - the 561 and the 562. The 561 Company has recently been moved from GASTA to LIVORNO where it is coming under the temporary command of the 35 CRT, LIVORNO for the purpose of clearing mines in and around LIVORNO. The 562 Company is at present operating in PESCARA and district. A new Company - the 563 - is mustering at CAPUA and will shortly move to PESCARA for training. When trained, the 563 Company will work along with the 562 and gain practical experience of the methods and organization as applied by that company.

3 Civilian Squads.

- (a) Civilian squads have been formed in TOSCANA Region and at present are operating at PISA, LUCCA, PISTOIA, VIAREGGIO and FLORENCE. Civilian squads are also operating in AND 8 Army territory under EMILIA Region.
- (b) The Italian Ministry of War have civilian Mine Clearance Squads in TOSCANA, LAZIO-UMERIA and ABRUZZI-MARCHES Regions and in Southern Italy.

4 Personnel

- (a) The strength of the Mine Clearance Companies is 209 all ranks each. The number of civilians employed in mine clearance squads is about 400. Including the new Mine Clearance Company, the total personnel operating in Italy on Mine Clearance work is about 1,000.
- (b) In addition to the use of direct labour and the military, the Italian Ministry of War have some civilian contractors working in different

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- (b) In addition to the use of direct labour and the military, the Italian Ministry of War have some civilian contractors working in different parts of the country and while figures are not available, there must be two or three hundred men employed by these contractors on mine clearance.

5 Progress.

Progress has been continuous and the following figures show the number of mines lifted up to the end of February, 1945:

561 Mine Clearance Company	2,100
562 "	250,000
Civilian Squads operating under AC:	4,600
PISA	4,500
LUCCA	5,000
PISTOIA	500
VIAREGGIO	5,000
FLORENCE	

Cont.

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Cont.

Civilian Squads and Contractors

operating under the Ministry of War:

TOCCANA	10,000
LAZIO-UMERIA	98,000
ABRUZZI-MARCHE	24,000
Southern ITALY	
(Including SARDINIA)	270,000
TOTAL	<u>673,700</u>

These figures take no account of the many thousands of mines which have been moved by the military of which no record is available. Estimates of the number of mines laid by the enemy in Italy cannot be given but the figure must run into millions and it is possible that 3½ millions is an under-estimate.

6 Mines.

Workers are paid wages at the rate of 200 lire per day or more, depending on the locality in which they are working, with a bonus of 5 to 15 lire for each mine lifted. Military personnel are paid at the normal service pay for L of C Troops with a bonus of 35 lire per mine lifted. Contractors make their own arrangements for paying the men employed by them. All men employed on the mine clearance are covered against injuries and fatal accidents. They are also granted rations on the heavy workers' scale.

7 Training.

The country is divided into zones corresponding to Regions and the Ministry of War have headquarters in each zone where Centres of Instruction are set up and workers are trained. Centres of Instruction have been set up in places such as SPOLTO, PERUGIA, PISA, FLORENCE, LUCCA and PISTOIA and civilians are enrolled for training at these centres. Instructors are provided by the Ministry of War who run these Centres. A number of the instructors have been trained at the Allied Military School of Engineering at CAMBRIDGE.

8 Future Planning.

Steps are being taken to set up zones in N.W. Italy as soon as the territory falls and a demand has recently been made to allot a hundred

Workers are paid wages at the rate of 200 lire per day or more, depending on the locality in which they are working, with a bonus of 5 to 15 lire for each mine lifted. Military personnel are paid at the normal service pay for L of C Troops with a bonus of 35 lire per mine lifted. Contractors make their own arrangements for paying the men employed by them. All men employed on the mine clearance are covered against injuries and fatal accidents. They are also granted rations on the heavy workers' scale.

7 Training.

The country is divided into zones corresponding to Regions and the Ministry of War have headquarters in each zone where Centres of Instruction are set up and workers are trained. Centres of Instruction have been set up in places such as SPOLTO, PERUGIA, PISA, FLORENCE, LUCCA and PIACENZA and civilians are enrolled for training at these centres. Instructors are provided by the Ministry of War who run these Centres. A number of the instructors have been trained at the Allied Military School of Engineering at CAMBRIDGE.

8 Future Planning.

Steps are being taken to set up zones in N.W. Italy as soon as the territory falls and a demand has recently been made to allot a hundred further instructors to count against the ceiling of 3,000 (Italian Military) allotted to AC. A further request has been made for the formation of a fourth Mine Clearance Company, also to count against the ceiling of 3,000 Italian Military personnel allotted to AC.

9.4.5

9 Transport.

Transportation is the biggest problem of mine clearance work. At present there is a great shortage of transport which leads to inability to keep workers fully employed and much time is lost moving to and from work sites which has prevented a wide expansion of the mine clearance scheme. With the withdrawal of powers of requisitioning from Regional Commissioners, the scheme will be considerably restricted and of necessity confined to towns and larger villages where local labour is to be employed. The Companies have very little transport, totally inadequate for their purposes but this to some extent is overcome by dispersing them over a wide area. The ideal is that one vehicle should be available per 10 men - one vehicle to every 20 men will make 100% improvement. The provision of transport would solve many problems such as movement of civilians, rations, equipment and disposal of mines. The scheme can be extended only in ratio to the amount of transport made available.

10. Mine Detectors.

- (a) 10 Mine Detectors (Allied Type) have been made available by AFHQ. This is inadequate. It is estimated that one mine detector is required per squad (5 - 10 men). The Italian Government have supplied a number of Italian Mine Detectors but it is preferable that either the American pattern or the British should be made available. The supply of batteries and replacements has been difficult to maintain. Mine Detectors cannot be used to detect all types of mines but it has been found that confidence and morale increase if mine detectors are available and can be provided. A request was submitted to AFHQ for 150 mine detectors and there is still a need for them although much of the work can and must be done without using detectors - i.e. by prodding. This is particularly so where wooden mines are encountered or when clearing railway tracks.

11. Clothing, etc.

This is always a problem when dealing with civilians, many of whom are refugees. This is being solved by the allocation of salvaged clothing, blankets, etc., to the Ministry of War for distribution.

12. PAO.L.

Allocations are usually smaller than required.

- (a) Attached is a map of part of Italy prepared by the Ministry of War. It is a collation of information gathered by the Ministry from all sources and largely supplied by this Commission. It demonstrates clearly the size of the problem and the wide-spread nature of the minefields. There appear to be some inaccuracies in the map, however, and there is every reason to believe that more cleared areas should be shown than are indicated. As an instance, the town of PESCARA is shown in red (uncleared); in fact the whole town has been cleared for some considerable time but there are still minefields on the beach and in the locality.
- (b) A comparison of the yellow spots is also somewhat misleading. As an example, while there are numerous yellow spots in the vicinity of UCCA, the number of mines lifted in that area is only about one-tenth the number lifted near CHIETI where the 562 Company has lifted over 250,000 mines in a very thickly mined belt.

14. In conclusion, the main need for assistance to the Italian Mine Clearance is to transport and after hostilities cease it is considered that every

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14. In conclusion, the main need for assistance to the Italian Mine Clearance Service is transport and after hostilities cease it is considered that every available assistance should be given in the clearance of mines by Italian Troops who are not required for operations, of which it is concluded there will be a considerable number. The fact that the Italian Ministry of War is at present responsible for this work will not make it difficult for the service to be extended in this way.

R.R.C. y:2

R.A. CRIPPS, Col.,
CSD CA Section.

12 Mar 45.

Report by Major J. Stewart REAKES
on his visit to LIGURIA Region &c.

1. I left ROME on Sunday 1st July en route for GENOVA. I spent the first night at LA SPEZIA where I met the Provincial Commissioner and his officers.
2. LA SPEZIA is badly damaged in places and there are many UXBs, Sea Mines, and land mines. Many places are also booby trapped. It was agreed to send down at least one instructor and a squad of soldiers from the 561 Mine Clearance Company to get started on clearing essential mines (land). I was informed that 100 partisans were willing to join the army and it was thought that there would be no difficulty in getting recruits to join the civil squads in Mine Clearing. The Public Safety Officer is to make enquiries into recruiting for the civil squads.
3. I arrived in GENOVA on Tuesday 3rd July and met Capt. SHORT the Mine Clearing Officer.
4. We visited the 561 Company and met the Company Commander. He reported that he had a strength of about 180 but 90 or thereabouts were at present on leave. I consider this too many to be on leave at one time and mentioned this to the Company Commander. Three of his Officers were also away sitting examinations and would not be back till the 15th July. I informed him that he would be coming back under AC Control again and that he would take his instructions from Captain Short.

This is scandalous. Strongest representations

*I quite agree over the
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Will be going out of*

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This is scandalous. Strongest representation to Impino please.

We also visited 57 Area who stated that they were doing mine clearance in the port and also had a Bomb Disposal Unit working. I stated that we had a few bombs to get rid of and was informed that they would help. Captain Short is to find out where the bombs are and to write to Area HQ for their assistance.

941

6. The situation in LIGURIA is different from say EMILIA Region. It never became a battle area but was heavily defended against sea attacks. Many of the mines and booby traps laid were laid down in 1942/3 and are of the old type. Some unusual types have been found but there are none of the later types as found in EMILIA. They are mainly Italian type and SCHU Mines.

9588

*I quite agree over the
leave position. They
are an idle lot &
need "boobying up".
Will Impino get rid of
the 4/5 by 9/10/5.*

- 2 -

- 24
7. As however most of the town is built close to and in some places over the sea it is essential to get down to the job of clearing mines. There have been many casualties among the civilian population especially among the children who have been unable to get to the sea while the Germans were in occupation.
8. I met a representative from the Province of IMPERIA. This place is heavily mined and it was thought that there would be no difficulty in getting Partisans and others to come forward and be trained. It was arranged that an Instructor and squad of Italian Soldiers be sent up to start the work and the training.
9. The number of mines lifted during the month was 1557.
10. The Zone Commander is Lt. Colonel CARINI who has been engaged for some time on Mine Clearance and knows about the work. I had a talk with him. He has to make very large and comprehensive returns to the Ministry of War and as arranged in EMILIA Region I have told him to cut them down. So long as he keeps good records and I believe they are good there is no need to make daily, weekly and monthly returns. Short weekly returns are sufficient. In any case he has only three officers and their whole time is taken up with getting information for these returns instead of being with their squads.

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11. The Insurance question is now settled and local adjustments are being made with the local branch of the Insurance Company. They are pleased about this.

12. Captain Short's territory will cover PISA, LUCCA, LIGURIA Region and if necessary PIEMONTE Region. It is not known if there are many mines in PIEMONTE Region to warrant another Mine but Captain Short will visit them in due course. I shall pay a visit to PIEMONTE as soon as possible.

13. Captain Short is awaiting a signal from this HQ that the 561 Company is under his control. I have spoken to MMIA and they are today sending off a signal to No. 2 District accepting return of the Company in its present location with a

- 3 -

copy to Captain Short and to Local Government Sub-Commission.

14. It was arranged that Captain Short will send a squad of Italian Military to LA SPEZIA and IMPERIA as soon as possible. He will at an early date visit PISA and LUCCA probably when he is down at LA SPEZIA to find out the position there.
15. Captain Short will with the return of the 561 Company have a few more. Instructors at his disposal. It will be necessary to use two or three of them to instruct civilians until more Instructors are sent up.
16. I went to BOLOGNA where I met Lt. MacNAB. I informed him that the 561 Company will remain in LIGURIA and that the 564 Company at present training in PESCARA would be sent to EMILIA Region as soon as possible whether their training was complete or not. He is to send Captain SPAMPANATO down to PESCARA to have a look at the Company and its training. I may go through to see the Company next week. Lt. MacNAB thought he could arrange transportation of the Company by road rather than wait until a train move could be arranged.
17. Captain NIUTTA will remain at BOLOGNA at present but should Captain Short require his help he will get him for a period up to two weeks.
18. I also met Captain FORSTER who was in charge of mine clearance in TOSCANA Region for a time. He agreed that PISA and LUCCA required all the assist-

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18. I also met Captain FORSTER who was in charge of mine clearance in TOSCANA Region for a time. He agreed that PISA and LUCCA required all the assistance they could get as there were still many mines in that Region.

19. There is still a deficiency of fuse wire. Clothing is required in these Regions and the Ministry of War will be asked to send up as soon as possible some of the clothing recently allotted to them by this HQ. White marking tape is also required.

Y39

20. The question of wages has now been settled in both Regions and in EMILIA Region the workers are satisfied about the new Insurance and have gone back to work from which they had been absent for the past few days. As this Insurance was one between the workers and the Insurance, they should never have been allowed to stop work.

Ymk. G.R.

22

21. In conclusion I should like to say that the Zones are operating well though inclined to be overburdened with paper work. They are too small in numbers to permit of much paper work and I consider that the scheme is suffering to some extent as a result. More instructors are definitely required and should be made available at an early date for Regions EMILIA, LIGURIA and at PISA and LUCCA. The Companies are doing well but the 561 will require to be overhauled.

22. I arrived back in ROME on 5th July.

6 June 1945.

Major
Local Government Sub Commission.

W. S. Peaker

Again!

6 June 1945.

W. W. Keener
Major
Local Government Sub Commission.

930

Calderon has seen
 274 21
 Report by Major J. Stewart REAKES
 on his visit to EMILIA Region.

1. I left ROME by plane and arrived in BOLOGNA in the forenoon on 16th June, where I was met by Lt. MacNab.
2. Among the points discussed were,
 - (a) Recruits for the Companies.
 - (b) Rates of pay, Insurance &c.
 - (c) Clothing for the Companies and civilians.
 - (d) System of priorities &c.
 - (e) Transport.
3. I met the Regional Commissioner and was invited to attend the Regional Commissioners meeting on Saturday morning 17th June which I did.
4. In the afternoon I had a long meeting with Major IGI the Zone Commander who raised a number of points which were causing difficulties.
5. Major IGI produced a new type of prodger which he is using. It is made of bamboo and has a steel rod for prodging of about 14 inches. This prodger is light and easy to handle. I have asked him to produce 1000 of these and he expects to do so in about two weeks.
6. Major IGI raised the question of wages and after some discussion we agreed the amount of wages to be paid in EMILIA Zone. The wages agreed to are in conformity with the new scheme proposed by the Italian Ministry of War. There is attached a document prepared by Major IGI setting out the various matters agreed to.
7. Insurance.

The additional insurance for the workers has been received enthusiastically but neither Major IGI nor Captain SHORT in EMILIA Region can get the local representatives of the Insurance Company to take up the risks. It would appear that instructions have not gone out or not been received from the Italian Government. It would appear that so far as the Istituto d'Assicurazione Genova are concerned they insist on the payment of a yearly

How settled

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8. Persomel

It is imperative that more Officers have be sent to EMILIA Region and other places. The following numbers are immediately required,

Zone EMILIA	at least	8
Zone LIGURIA		4
Zone VENEZIE		4

It is suggested that Venezia be operated as a Sub-Zone under EMILIA Region for the present. I am awaiting information from VENEZIE as to mines but suspect that there are few in that Region. There are however many UXBs.

9588

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9. Clothing.

Clothing for military personnel and civilians are urgently required. I shall request the Ministry of War to instruct the Divisions to whom the military personnel are attached to make an immediate issue of clothing &c. to bring the men up to scale and to replace worn out clothing.

10. Rations.

There are complaints from all sides that the Italian Military personnel are not getting their cigarette and soap rations.

11. First Aid Boxes.

This HQ has obtained 20 first aid boxes which are being sent to EMILIA Region and LIGURIA Regions. At least another 30 are required and can be obtained from ENDSI the Italian organisation set up for distribution of medical supplies. The Ministry of War will be requested to approach ENDSI for supplies.

12. Payment by owners for clearing of their land.

I understand that the Government are to introduce a decree making owners responsible for the costs of clearing their own land. This seems to be improper as I consider Mine Clearance a national project which should be undertaken and carried out by the Italian Government irrespective of where the mines are.

Civilian organisation

(a) at present there are about 220 civilians working in EMILIA Region and LIGURIA Region.

FORLI and RAVENNA	56
BOLOGNA	66
MAZAROTTA	20
GENOVA	80

(b) The civilians in BOLOGNA started work on Monday 18th June. There were two squads working. One squad had some serious casualties 3 killed and 3 wounded. The cause of this was, as on previous occasions due to bad minefield discipline.

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13

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(c) I was very impressed with the type of man who has enrolled in BOLOGNA. They were keen and desired to do the right thing. They asked a number of questions and I wish to record that I said the Zone would be responsible for the funeral expenses. I also said the Insurance scheme was in operation although Major ICI had not been able to adjust matters with the local Insurance representatives.

930

14- Records.

(a) I observed that Major ICI had to make very full and comprehensive returns to the Ministry of War every week. He has not got the personnel to do this and he must not keep so many officers round his Headquarters. These officers must get out with the squads. He has agreed to keep only one Executive Officer with him in future. If necessary he should get civilians to do the work of recording.

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this?

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(b) I have told him to cut down his returns to the Ministry of War as he is being snowed under with paper. This should not be so in such a small organisation. If the Ministry of War feel they must have the information they will require to send up other personnel to do the job as Trained Officers must be in the field with the workers and not kept in the office.

(c) I am satisfied that Major IGI is doing an excellent job of work. His records are good and there would appear to be no need to duplicate them.

14. Visiting Officers

It is desired that officers from the Ministry of War should visit the Zones as they can help to overcome difficulties of administration &c. Should they desire to issue orders to Zones they should issue them through the Allied Officer in charge. ^{This will} avoid confusion of orders and ensure that the Allied Officer in charge is in agreement.

15. Information generally.

(a) I called on AIG in PADUA. They were greatly troubled with unexploded bombs which I explained was an L of C commitment. They explained that they had representatives down from District and Area but so far nothing had been done. There were no mines in or near PADUA and I gathered that there were very few in this part of ITALY.

(b) I called on the PC RAVENNA who said he was having trouble with the civilian squads because they were demanding extortionate charges from landowners for clearing mines. This was a form of blackmail but I explained to the PC that this was a matter for Public Safety men to handle. *The Zone Commander is also taking them all up.*

(c) The Zone Scheme in EMILIA is concentrating on essential work such as water supply and pipe lines.

(d) All mines cannot be removed but lanes can be cleared to enable essential work to be done and to enable people to get to certain points.

(a) One matter which requires to be taken up is the marking of

Blackmail?

- Blackmail?*
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- (c) The Zone Scheme in MILIA is concentrating on essential work such as water supply and pipe lines.
- (d) All mines cannot be removed but lanes can be cleared to enable essential work to be done and to enable people to get to certain points.
- (e) One matter which requires to be taken up is the marking of minefields. This is essentially a job for Prefects and Sindaci. This would cut down casualties. There have been five casualties on one field I visited. The casualties had been caused through people going in and cutting corn. They knew the fields were mined but desired to get the corn. It was a small field and the amount of corn was very small indeed. This was in the village MARZOTTO where 20 volunteers had been obtained but only three came forward for instruction.
16. Conclusion.
- (a) A drive will have to be made through Prefects to get down to this problem. I feel the time has come when the Italian Government should broadcast periodically on this question of mines. I shall take this matter up.
- (b) More Allied Officers are necessary. The Italians work very well under Allied Officers and seem keen to get on with the work. I can do with 6 to 10 Allied Officers working in the Regions. It would speed up the work. Officers experienced in mines are invaluable.
- (c) I should like the question raised of using flail tanks for

4

a period. I believe there are many in ANCONA.

(d) There are some very excellent Italian Officers in this Region. Captain NIUTTA has given good service to the Allied Officers with whom he works. Lt. De TEODORO is a leader and well liked by his men.

(e) One point which crops up from time to time is that of officers pay. It is too small and I consider that they should get larger money along with the men or some form of specialists pay for carrying out the work.

(f) I understand that the military are no longer getting bonus for mines lifted but are getting 1000 lire per month in addition to ordinary pay. This is on the low side when it is considered that the civilians get 250 lire a day danger money for every day they work on the minefields. I consider that the soldier should get at least 3000 lire per month.

It has been proposed to move the 20 men from PESARO. They are engaged on clearing a pipe line. Lt. MACNAB is to go to PESARO and see if they have finished the work they were sent to do.

(h) I visited the Headquarters of Captain Spanpanato. His Companies are doing very good work but are suffering from a depletion in personnel.

(i) The scheme is operating successfully but owing to lack of transport and equipment progress is of necessity slow. I arrived back in ROME on Friday 22 June.

23 June 45.

*This is not correct.
1000 lire p.m.
plus 10-15 lire p.m.*

*Plus as Reaching May
Local Government P.C.*

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23 June 45.

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Local Government P.C.*

934

SERVIZIO DONIFICA CAMPI MINATI
COMANDO ZONA EMILIA

Bologna, 21 June 45.

It has been decided in agreement with Major REAKES:

1. Wages

On the job:

Labourers

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------------|
| (a) | Basic pay (30 or 31 days in the month) gross | L. 81 per day |
| (b) | Increase idem | L. 109 " |
| (c) | Risk Indemnity 9 only on full working days) | L. 250 " |

Foreman

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------------|
| (a) | Basic pay (30 or 31 days in the month) gross | L. 91.70 per day |
| (b) | Increase idem | L. 119 " |
| (c) | Risk Indemnity (only for full working days) | L. 250 " |

During the training

Basic pay and increase as para a and b for labourers

Risk indemnity as above only on the days of instruction on minefields.

2. Insurance

Normal insurance paid by the Government and in addition special insurance taken up from the worker who will pay for this about 40 lire per day. This special insurance entitles the worker to 125,000 lire for permanent injury and his heirs to 100,000 lire in case of death.

3. Out of residence indemnity.

The worker who spends his night out of his own town on duty is entitled to repayment of his expenses up to a maximum of 146 lire per day. The worker who gets food and billet gratis has no right to indemnity.

No one can pay money to Mine Clearance workers for their work in addition to the pay they get from HQ Emilia Zone.

4. Insurance.

(c) Risk Indemnity (only for full working days) L. 250

During the training

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No one can pay money to Mine Clearance workers for their work in addition to the pay they get from HQ Emilia Zone.

4. Insurance.

The Istituto Nazionale Assicurazioni and the Assicurazioni d'Italia at Bologna have no knowledge of the insurance of the workers and they cannot discuss the contract because they do not know the conditions made in Rome for workers. It is necessary that the Istituto Nazionale Assicurazioni of Rome sends orders to its branch of Bologna (through Milano) or Ministry of War sends a copy of their contract to Emilia Zone.

5. Officers

It is necessary to send to HQ Emilia Zone at least 6 Officers.

6. Transport

Is it possible to get those of the German Army?

7. Clothing for military personnel

Very urgent.

933

8. Materials

Three sets of maps Emilia Region, Pesaro and Ancona Provinces
scale 25000
100 First Aid boxes
200 bandages

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

785016

932

REPORT ON MINE CLEARANCE
ACTIVITIES, EMILIA REGION.

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785014

1. I arrived at the HQ, Emilia Region at 1100 hrs on 11th April 1945, where I met Maj. KNELL, Acting Executive Officer. That afternoon I read all the correspondence and reports rendered by Major HARRISSON, Mines Clearance Officer for the Region and from those got a fairly clear picture of the organization within the Provinces of FORLI and RAVENNA, where the civilian squads are working at present.

2. Next day I went to FORLI where I met Maj. HARRISSON who took me round the School there and I saw a number of civilians undergoing a course of training.
Maj. HARRISSON has to assist him a Major and a Subaltern of the Italian Army and one civilian engineer. The Italian Major is purely an administrative Officer and has no technical knowledge of mines, the other Officer and civilian have been trained in all aspects of mine warfare and are responsible for the supervision of the squads operating in the field.

During my stay in the Region I formed a good impression of this Staff in the discharging of their respective duties.

3. In addition 8th Army each week attach a British Sergeant R2E., to the School to act as an instructor. This is not a particularly good policy because it means having a different instructor each week with the result that the standard and method of instruction varies from week to week. I suggest therefore that when Nos. 562 and 563 Companies move into Emilia Region an Officer and senior NCO be detached from No. 562 Company to instruct civilians in the School. I feel certain that this arrangement would ensure a more sound policy of instruction with a resultant decrease in the number of casualties.

of the Italian Army and one civilian engineer. The Italian Major is purely an administrative Officer and has no technical knowledge of mines, the other Officer and civilian have been trained in all aspects of mine warfare and are responsible for the supervision of the squads operating in the field.

During my stay in the Region I formed a good impression of this Staff in the discharging of their respective duties.

3. In addition 8th Army each week attach a British Serjeant R&E., to the School to act as an instructor. This is not a particularly good policy because it means having a different instructor each week with the result that the standard and method of instruction varies from week to week. I suggest therefore that when Nos. 562 and 563 Companies move into Emilia Region an Officer and senior NCO be detached from No. 562 Company to instruct civilians in the School. I feel certain that this arrangement would ensure a more sound policy of instruction with a resultant decrease in the number of casualties.

4. Statistics February 5th - April 5th

Number of located minefields.....	674
Number of mines lifted (all types).....	9000
Number of men employed.....	66
Number of casualties.....	4 killed, 4 seriously wounded

From these figures it can be seen that the number of mines cleared compares favourably with the number of men employed but in actual fact in relation to the number of located minefields it is both literally, and figuratively, a mere scratching of the surface.

5. Maj. Harrison's chief trouble is the old one of lack of transport. He has only one 15 cwt truck to supply the needs of 31 ten squads and as the number of civilian mine clearers increases daily it will soon be quite impossible to supervise them and also "recce" and inspect fresh minefields. I pointed this out to both Maj. Knell and the Regional Transport Officer who said that as far as load-carrying transport was concerned the Region was already

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committed but it seems quite obvious to me that the highly important task of mine clearance is not being given any priority in the allocation of load carrying transport, within the Region. Until this is remedied we will not be able to employ civilian mine clearers on anything approaching the desired scale.

POINTS IN REGARD TO THE PROPOSED MOVE OF THE
562 and 563 COMPANIES TO EMILIA REGION.

1.

With regard to the move of the above Companies I decided that the town of CATTOLICA which Region had suggested as a concentration area was too far away from the mined areas and would increase difficulties of transport and supply, when the Companies started operating.

With Maj. Knell I visited Hq. 86 Area and was able to obtain accommodation for the Companies in the Italian Barracks at CESENA. I then saw the Town Major CESENA who agreed to hold this accommodation until the arrival of the advance party from the Companies.

This accommodation is satisfactory and ample for both Companies.

2.

Emilia Region is the most extensively mined area which it has been our responsibility to clear and I feel that by the time it has been completely evacuated by the enemy it will be found that there are somewhere in the region of a million mines to be cleared. It will also be found that the majority of those mines are the TELLER 4531 (Fibre) and 'SCHU' type against which the Mine Detector is completely useless and must therefore not be used, otherwise casualties will increase and fields will not be efficiently cleared.

As the Companies have never encountered the Teller 4531 (Fibre) type of mine, or the 'R' 43 mine also found here it is proposed that I instruct them in those two types before they start operating.

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3.

It was obvious to me that the Companies would not be able to function efficiently in this Region with its widely separated mine fields, on their present transport basis.

In order to stress the importance of this I pointed out to Lt. Col. HORTON-SMITH HARTLEY, Deputy Regional Commissioner that if the Companies were without transport they could be of no use to the Region, whereby he agreed to attach twelve 15 Cwt trucks to the Companies on a permanent basis whilst within the Region. This I consider a satisfactory arrangement.

4

At the conclusion of my tour of Emilia Region I formed the impression that mine clearance there is an actual fact a major operation and the largest of its kind yet attempted by the Allied Commission. This is due to the fact that last winter the "line" was static and also the Germans have technically improved their already high standard of Mine Warfare.

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C. K. MacNab
Lt. A. MACNAB

Report on visit of Col. CRIPPS
and Maj. REAKES to 561 Mine
Clearance Company at GABTA on
5th February 1945.

1. Clothing conditions.

Considerably improved. There are some shortages which the Company has indented for. They are also arranging for exchanges of boots.

2. Pay.

The pay question is satisfactory but the Company Commander is endeavouring to get the War Ministry to recognise that these men are entitled to danger money as paid to the troops in the line. The War Ministry quite rightly refuse to pay this money, they do however, pay bonus on each mine lifted and it is unfortunate that this Company has not lifted many mines nor would there appear to be many to lift.

3. Accommodation.

Is adequate but very bare.

4. Training.

The Company seems to make no provision for training its own personnel and while the Ministry of War sent on one Instructor they had to withdraw him and the Company is now waiting for a new instructor. It would appear that they should be able to find sufficient instructors from the Company itself.

5. Transport and Equipment.

Satisfactory, except there is a demand for batteries for Mine Detectors.

6. Work been done.

The Unit is clearing land over a pipe line which has been broken in several places by shell fire. They

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6. Work been done.

The Unit is clearing land over a pipe line which has been broken in several places by shell fire. They have been given instructions to clear certain areas over and above the pipe line. As the result it is taking a long time to clear the line which only extends to 25 kilometers the bulk of which is clear of mines. It would be better that they should confine their attentions to clearing the line first, then go back and search the pieces of ground on which mines are suspected.

Of this Company only 35 men were working on mine clearance out of the whole Company and the mines they are finding are few.

7. Discipline and Morale.

This is not as good as it might be. It is hoped that with the formation of a third company and the creation of a battalion under good leadership it will be possible to make the company into an efficient unit.

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8. Future Policy.

The Company should be dispersed and should confine its attentions to doing certain essential jobs and particularly to locating and clearing minefields.

It should be moved from GAETA to a place where there are mines and where the men may earn extra money in lifting.

The Company should give instruction to local civilian squads in mine clearance so that they when trained, could clear their own ground. In this connection it should be considered whether a fairly large school should not be set up in ROME for instructing civilians. The school could be widely publicised through Provincial and Communal channels and Communes be encouraged to send teams of 5 or 6 for instruction. By these means it will be possible to make people mine conscious and encourage them to clear their own ground.

7 February 1945.

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

7 February 1945.

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Report by Major BEAKES on his visit to the civilian and Military Mine Clearing Units in PESCARA and CHIETI Provinces.

1. I left ROME and arrived at CHIETI at 1930 hrs. on 21 Jan.
2. At 0900 hrs. on 22nd Jan. I met Lt. SPAMPANATO, Company Commander of the 862 Italian Mine Clearing Company in CHIETI. He took me to the training centre for civilians. The premises were fairly clean and there appeared to be plenty food. The men had no complaints to make as regards food and clothing but did complain of shortage of blankets. They were sleeping on straw without palliasses. The straw was very clean but the Instructor was afraid that if they did not get palliasses the straw would become louse ridden. The question of blankets and palliasses I took up with Abruzzi Marche Region and they said they would try and help. They were not optimistic about the blankets.
3. As far as equipment was concerned they had mine detectors (Italian type) with which they were satisfied. They asked however for wire cutters and Abruzzi Marche Region said they would try and get some.
4. The recruits are mostly from TIRAMO and are nearly all refugees. The fatal casualties were three. One in Novr. and 2 in December.
5. There are only 37 trained civilians with 11 on the present course. I asked if they could not increase this by 100 and was informed that they expected to do this in February when the weather was better. The squads working in the fields are doing satisfactory work and in December cleared about 4000 mines. This I consider good.
6. There main requirements are blankets, wire cutters, spare batteries for mine Detectors and a meter for checking voltage.

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6. There main requirements are blankets, wire cutters, spare batteries for mine Detectors and a meter for checking voltage.
7. I feel that the school is in capable hands and is making progress. Another month or two should be given them to settle down to training and work.
8. In the afternoon I visited the HQ of the 362 Company and was shown round the quarters. The place is tidy and very well organised. Discipline is good, and the men are smart and well turned out. The men have a bearing which augurs well for the future.
9. They keep in this building ^{the}detonators and igniters of all the mines ^{and} they have cleared. These should be destroyed but are being retained until such time as an officer of authority gives them permission to do so. They are evidence of the number of mines removed. While not being a judge on such matters it is obvious that there are many thousands of detonators here and I can well believe there are 90,000 of them.

10. I was shown the house where war materials was being collected. Material is being collected there for the MID & PF Sub Commission.
11. On 23rd Jan. I visited a mine clearing squad working at MIGLIANICO. There they had removed a number of mines and had uncovered many more. This mine belt had been constructed obviously to protect a defended locality. It is not a deep one but extends a considerable distance and there are thousands of mines still to be lifted.
12. I also visited a mine clearance squad working on the main railway line from PESCARA to OSTIA and they were getting on with the job. They were clearing about 1 1/2 kilometers per day and finding many mines. They were using the new Detectors recently given them. The Detectors enable ground to be covered quickly.
13. At MIGLIANICO the mines are a mixture of metal and wooden mines and searching was done by prodding. They worked very quickly. On the railway track the mines were metal and dozens were located within about two minutes. The place was obviously one where the Germans had sown mines thickly.
14. This company is dispersed over a wide area and there are no less than 16 squads. It would appear therefore that the proper way to handle such companies is by dispersion. The work being done covers a wide area and the results are shown in the number of mines lifted. (See Appendix A).
15. The morale and discipline of this company is high and the training is good. Training goes on all the time and when men become stale they are sent back for a rest and given further training. The work, after a time, is a nerve wearing one and a close watch is kept on the men for any signs of what they call "mine fever". As soon as this exhibits itself the men is pulled out and given a change of occupation.
16. There were no complaints as to pay accommodation or dieting. Transport is the old problem and while they

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16. There were no complaints as to pay accommodation or clothing. Transport is the old problem and while they would like more transport they have enough at present.
17. Recreation is well provided for. A concert is taking place on the 25th Jan in which the men and officers have combined their talents. A song has been written by the mine clearance work and is being sung by the men.
18. PWB film unit have been down and have taken a number of shots of the civilians at training and the military removing mines. They are well satisfied with what they saw and this film will be appearing as part of the News reel shown in the Italian Picture houses.

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19. Conclusion.

The company is efficient and well run. The officers are good and the men are well led. The company at GASTA could do with some of the drive and initiative shown by the 562. The Company commander of the 562 is prepared to take some of the men from the 561 and train them and it might be well to take say 50 to 60 HQs and men over to CHIETI and let Lt. Spempanata handle them for say a month. Alternative it might be considered sending the Company commander of the 562 over to GASTA for say a month to reorganise the 561. A third method is to create the third company as soon as possible, form a Battalion and give the company commander of the 562 a position of say second in Command to a good Battalion Commander.

Thus Far Ready May

25 Jan 45.

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

25 Jan 45.

MEMORANDUM showing Mine Clearance and Casualties
Sustained by our forces during period Jun 44 to 31 Dec 44
Pettit S. M. 44 MINE 44
and disposed of by:

Jun to Aug 44	= 2.840
Sep 44	= 7.322
Oct 44	= 12.740
Nov 44	= 37.595
Dec 44	= 95.200

150-687 of which

117.089	were	lifted	in	the	Prov. of CHIETI
33.598	"	"	"	"	" " " PESCARA

Dec 44 = 3.200 in the Province of CHIMBI

Province of CHIETI	= 120.280
Province of PESCARA	= 33.598

153,887

009

approx 300 tons

ABANDONED AMMUNITION AND EXPLOSIVES destroyed or otherwise disposed of by 162 Coy

CASUALTIES 11004 occupation by Allies Jun 44 to 31 Dec 44

SH-11A10

Dec 44

= 3,200 in the Province of CHIETI

TOTAL No of MINES Cleared to 31 Dec 44:

Province of CHIETI = 120,289
Province of PESCARA = 33,598

TOTAL 153,887

UNEXPLODED BOMBS Disposed of by 162 Coy

600

ABANDONED AMMUNITION and EXPLOSIVES destroyed or otherwise disposed of by 162 Coy

Approx 800 tons

CASUALTIES since occupation by Allies Jun 44 to 31 Dec 44

CIVILIANS

Province of	CHIETI	PESCARA	TERAMO	TOTAL
Killed Wounded	Killed Wounded	Killed Wounded	Killed Wounded	Killed Wounded
June	4	24	12	38
July	34	56	3	17
August	16	40	3	8
September	11	33	9	17
October	16	27	6	=
November	21	7	6	8
December	9	21	5	8
<u>TOTAL-CIVILIANS</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>94</u>
			<u>11</u>	<u>166</u>
			<u>53</u>	<u>357</u>

MINE CLEARANCE PERSONNEL

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>
562 Mine Clearance Company	11	42
3rd Mine Clearance Zone (Civilians)	3	6
TOTAL Casualties Mine Clearance Personnel	14	48
TOTAL Casualties Civilians	166	357
TOTAL Mine Casualties in Provinces of CHIMEL, PISCARA & TIRANO	180	405

NOTE : This total does not include many casualties of trivial nature which have not been reported.

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

REPORT BY MAJOR REAKES ON HIS VISIT TO THE

561 RASTRELLAMENTO CAMPAGNA AT GAETA

1 On 15th December I went down to Gaeta to inspect the Italian Mine Clearing Company working in that area.

2 Clothing Conditions.

The present strength of the company is 4 Officers and 129 ORs. I arrived after midday and being Saturday afternoon the company was not working. I met the Company Commander, Capt. Di Marci Natale. He explained to me the difficulties are shortage of boots and clothing of all kinds. The men had one battledress and one pair of boots each, one blanket, and that was more or less all they had. They had no underclothes and what they were wearing they had provided themselves. The boots they were wearing were in a shocking condition. He explained that several attempts have been made to get clothing provided but were unsuccessful. The following is a list of clothing which is urgently required and should be forwarded without delay:

- (a) An extra Battledress for each man.
- (b) Two complete sets of Underclothing.
- (c) One pair of Boots for each man.
- (d) One Overcoat.
- (e) 2 Blankets at least per head.
- (f) Clean straw for palliases.

All this equipment should be provided from Italian military sources and if not available I propose to tell Col. Supino to send down from his stocks 200 pairs of Battledress Trousers and 100 pairs of boots. The question of obtaining Battledress Blouses, Overcoats and Blankets I shall take up with the Italian Ministry of War and Land Forces Sub-Commission (MMA). They have beds and palliases but they require clean straw for this purpose.

3 Pay, etc.

- (a) They need supplies of small equipment such as floor brushes, buckets, etc., and cleaning materials to keep the building in which they are living clean.
- (b) I understand the men are entitled to 54 lire per day plus 5 lire per mine cleared. The money for the mines cleared is collected on a company basis. I understand that this rate of pay (54 lire per day) has been approved. Nothing seems to have been done about

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- (c) Officers and men complain that they are getting no cigarettes. The officers purchase a few cigarettes on the black market. The OC showed me a packet of Woodbines which he had purchased for 95 lire. I don't know if cigarettes are an issue or not but shall find out.
- (d) Medical requirements are satisfactory.

4

Accommodation.

I asked the OC of the company to show me round the quarters. It is a large building with no windows and while the offices, dispensary, and in fact the whole building is kept as clean as possible under the circumstances it has a dingy appearance. The food store was particularly clean. I went through the men's quarters where quite a number were hanging about. They had a brazier or stove burning in each room but this is essential to keep the place dry and warm. It was fairly tidy but there seemed to be no provision for the recreation or relaxation of these men although I understand that the local church does something in this respect.

5 Morale.

While conditions such as these tend to lower morale, I got the impression that if these men received fair treatment with respect to the smaller luxuries of life and they got a number of their major grievances solved they would make a very fine team indeed. Discipline, I consider quite good, and many of the men, in spite of the second-hand garments and dilapidated boots looked smart.

6 Training.

The O.C. pointed out that while they were supposed to have been trained by the 13th Artieri Company, they had in fact received no training in mine clearance at all and have had to learn the subject from books and other sources. I think the result is that these men, having had no expert instruction, have little knowledge on mines and how to remove them. In the circumstances I propose to ask the Ministry of War to send down immediately two instructors with the necessary equipment to train this company. If this was done I think the company could be made into a first class mine clearing company. They had one accident recently in which four men were killed. This had a bad effect on the company.

7 Transport and Equipment.

The Company has four vehicles, three of which are on the road.

They had 12 mine detectors of which six are still functioning but the batteries are getting done.

8 Work being done, etc.

(a) At the present moment they are clearing waterways and an electric cable route but someone has given them instructions to stop work on clearing this cable. They had plans on which they showed me where the mines are.

(b) Gaeta is principally a repair port for small merchant ships and fishing is its chief industry. The Germans destroyed practically every house and even mined the debris. I got the impression that as long as power was forthcoming for repair of ships, of which I believe quite a number are coming here for repair, and that essential houses were cleared, no further time should be wasted in Gaeta. The matter however should be taken up with Lazio-Umbria Region to find out what more they wish done.

(c) In all they said they had cleared, since 6th December, approximately 4,800 mines, but in a place like this, there must be literally thousands

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- (c) In all they said they had cleared, since 6th December, approximately 4,800 mines, but in a place like this, there must be literally thousands of mines. It was pointed out that these men have been doing other work besides mine clearance. They appear to have no instructions as to their future programme. I propose to get into touch with Lazio-Umbria Region on this point and see what essential jobs they wish done.

9 Conclusion.

- (a) I suggest that the next month might profitably be spent in bringing the company up to full war strength; in providing necessary boots, clothing, blankets, etc; in giving the company a further course of training in mine clearance and that weekly reports be rendered to this Headquarters on their state of training, discipline, etc.
- (b) I feel that the Region concerned have to some extent lost interest in the company and suggest that the company be reorganised and made ready to work in the north. They should be held in reserve at Gaeta for a sudden call to the northern areas. In the meantime, as they may remain at Gaeta for some time, someone should go down and map out a plan of work which would be systematically gone through and completed.
- (c) So far as the officers are concerned, I think they are keen and capable but lack direction and while I should like to see at least one of these officers a trained expert on mines I think they should be allowed to remain with the company. At present none of them have had any training in mine clearance.

John W. Reilly May

18 Dec. 44.

Since writing my report on my visit to Gaeta I have had meetings with Col. Caruso - Italian Colonel attached to Lazio-Umbria Region, Col. Clayton Kerr - Land Forces Sub-Commission, and Maj. Coplestone - Land Forces Sub-Commission.

MEETING WITH COL. CARUSO.

Col. Caruso explained that the difficulty he had with the company at Gaeta was one of clothing, equipment, mine detectors, etc., and he had been unable to make any real progress. I went through my report with him in detail and explained that I considered the company was in rather a bad way as far as administration was concerned. I told him I had seen Col. Kerr of MMIA who informed me that MMIA had approved, on the 14th Dec. the issue of the following clothes to the Company:

154 Battledress Blouses
154 Trousers
154 prs. of Boots
154 prs. of Socks
308 Wollen Drawers
154 Overcoats
154 Pullovers (replaces undershirts)

I also said I could not understand why these had not been drawn.

Col. Caruso said that the company had been stopped from drawing this by Maj. Cole, MMIA, who had instructed him to write a letter to Region 4 stating that it was their responsibility. There is obviously some confusion here and it would appear to have arisen earlier on. On the face of it, it appears that Maj. Cole had countermanded an order approved by another Branch; in point of fact these items are debited against their account. I cleared this point later on with Maj. Coplestone. Col. Caruso said he would make enquiries as to the question of pay and why the unit was not receiving cigarettes.

I explained that I thought the training had never been completed and that the whole company should go through a course of training, and said I hoped to get two instructors from Col. Supino for the purpose. He agreed the training was weak but said that at least 50 men were fully trained and he thought they could train the others.

I told him I thought the transport situation was satisfactory.

I informed him that I considered no clear instructions had been given as to the work which had been done. He did not consider this to be correct and said he would send me a note of the instructions that had been given.

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At the close of the meeting he asked me to raise 4 points with MMIA:

1. MMIA to write to the Ministry of War and inform them once and for all that it was their responsibility to equip and clothe this company.
2. To approve ~~the~~ TO/WE.
3. Arrange for a Flame Thrower for each company.
4. To provide a specialist officer who would supervise the removal of shells, etc.

I agreed to do so and have taken these points up with MMIA.

MEETING WITH COL. KERR.

I saw Col. Kerr this forenoon and went over the various points of my report with him. He was satisfied. He had given instructions for the clothing to be provided but as I was not in the picture at the time I did not know the order had been countermanded. I said I would investigate further as to why the goods had not been delivered. He showed me the scale of equipment, saying that when these items were furnished to the unit, they would be up to scale. He did not understand the question of pay at

all as he thought the figure I mentioned was too high. He said he would look into it.

He said that the cigarettes should be drawn with the ration. He said that so far as he was concerned he would do all that he could to help. He said, however, that he had no blankets to spare and that he understood that the men had 2 blankets each when they came over from Sardinia but if they could show they had only one blanket then he would furnish the second one.

MEETING WITH MAJ. COPLESTONE

I went over the points discussed at the previous 2 meetings and Maj. Coplestone has agreed to cover the 4 points which Col. Caruso raised with me concerning clothing, W/E, Flame Throwers, and Specialist Officer for removal of shells. /c

In addition he raised the point of our letter asking for attention of these units. He pointed out that there were several odd units clearing mines up and down the country. In the circumstances he was putting in for the establishment of 3 companies plus training instructors.

18 Dec.

Plutonium Reading May

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