

ACC

10000/105/729

/729

MINE CLEARANCE, ACCIDENT IN VIAREGGIO
JUNE - SEPT. 1945

minute 9

To Exec: Comm's office.

Ref minutes 6 and 7

1. Has Exec Comm's seen minute 8 and Folio 2A
2. A copy of Folio 2 has been passed to MMIA for their views.

CASee

31 Aug 45

H.H.S. Wadley, Col

10

CH

Exlens has seen. Thanks

3/5.

Exlens Office

101

CAC Ex. Com. has seen. Prints

Ex 3/5.

Ex. Com. Officer

100

Local Govt. S/C.

7

It would be appreciated if you would inform me what steps are being taken in connection with the report at Appendix A. - As for Comm's question at min 6.

Carla
1948

Minute 8

ML 23/2
(Change. CA.9).

To: Executive Commissioner:

1. Reference your Minute No. 7 above.
2. The position as set out at Appendix "A" by Major Reakes called for action with regard to:
 - a) the use of surrendered personnel; and,
 - b) the supply of equipment for this personnel, if allotted.
3. Accordingly, the following action was taken:
 - a) 25 July 45. Letter from Local Govt. S/C to AFHQ Reference AC/53.1/LG pressing for a reply to this Commission's proposal for the use of 10,000 surrendered personnel. This, in fact, was the third reminder.
 - b) 7 Aug 45. Letter signed by VP Civil Affairs Section, Reference AC/53.1/LG, requesting the special provision of 2,000 German POW to work on the drainage systems in the Province of FERRARA.
 - c) 10 Aug. 45. A conversation took place between the VP Civil Affairs Section and Colonel Parsons G-5 Section, AFHQ.
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 - ii) asking that the demands for equipment both

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- c) 10 Aug. 45. A conversation took place between the VP Civil Affairs Section and Colonel Parsons G-5 Section, AFHQ.
 - i) pressing for an answer regarding the use of surrendered personnel; and
 - ii) asking that the demands for equipment both for use by surrendered personnel and civilians be made and that Colonel Parsons personally investigate the matter.
- d) 11 Aug. 45. This conversation was confirmed in a letter reference AC/53.3/LG.

4. A reply has now been received from AFHQ stating that no German surrendered personnel will be available. Furthermore, other letters have been received indicating to the Economic Section that the requisitions put through by this Sub-Commission for mine clearance equipment are likely to be considerably cut and that many items which are essential for the employment of this equipment, e.g. batteries, should be found from Italian sources. As a result of this information a memorandum has been addressed to Civil Affairs Section, a copy of which is at Folio 2a.

R. R. Criffts
R.R. CRIFTS, Colonel
Director
Local Government Sub-Commission

20 August 1945.

To. C.S.O. Ex. Commission.

When discussing some time ago the explosion at Viareggio. I instructed your interest to see the report. It is at all in this file.

Ex Commission might like to see also.

There is little that we can do, except to emphasize again to all concerned that the storage of mines is prohibited. This has been done to A.G. Committee through Regins; To the Ministry of War it has been pointed out that unexploded land mines are the property of the Allies and that under existing orders of A.G. they will be destroyed.

R. A. Clipp
et.

L.G.S.E.

10th August 45.

5

Ex. Comm.

Please Encryps' Remarks at 4 and Major Reuter's report.

14/8.

6

CSO

Thank you. What is happening to 10...

Appendix A.

14/8

Minute sheet.

1.

Col CRIPPS.

1. On 18th July a dump of Mines blew up in VIAREGGIO causing over 90 casualties (36 fatal) - the majority of them being American troops.

2. Attached is my report on investigations carried out by me. A report is awaited from the CAO VIAREGGIO.

3. I have also attached a Statement on the present position of Mine Clearance in ITALY setting out what is the ITALIAN Government's attitude to the matter.

4. If you approve will you please submit the Report and Statement to the VP for onward transmission to the Executive Commissioner.

25th July 45.

John A. Reaker Maj.
Local Government Sub Commission.

2.

To C.A.S.

Report by Major Reaker on Viareggio Explosion is submitted for information.

With regard to appx. A to the report. There is no doubt the use of German Gas and is urgently required if any land way at all is to be made.

The Italian Gov. with not at present in view the appropriation of the Min of War who let it expand the present scheme. Program is therefore extremely slow.

L.G.S.C.

3.

R. L. G. S. C.

L.G. / VP may like to see this on his return. In the meantime you have, I think, pressed again but all depends on the directive to L of C for clearing battlefield. An excellent report. L.G. S. C.

4.

To CSO, Co. Section.

Ref. minute 3 file brought forward
for V.P. as requested.

6 Aug. 45

Philip A. Leach, Maj.
Local Govt. S.C.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED COMMISSION
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUB COMMISSION

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Date _____ File _____

Please read attached and initial:

- TO: Col. CRIPPS *RC*
Maj. TEMPLE */*
Maj. REAKES
Maj. WILLIAMS
Capt. LEWIS
Capt. CUNNINGHAM
Capt. SHANKS

REMARKS

*File this. Am agreed
sum. to be done
from this. 9.2.44*

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

REMARKS

File the. One signed
same K h clear
from the. 9/26/44

1034

53
MILITARY LIAISON OFFICER
ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
VIAREGGIO (Provincia di Lucca)
Lucca
Govt

Ref: VR/III/28- Rep.4

SUBJECT:

Date 21 August 45

CONFIDENTIAL

23 SEP 1945

TO: REGIONAL COMMISSIONER - Liguria Region
O.C. BOMB DISPOSAL SECTION
Allied Commissioner - ROME

Herewith report of Viareggio mine explosion as per conversation I have held these papers pending the finish of the Military Court of Inquiry. The result of the latter is as far as I can obtain information that several member of the Division are in various degrees responsible

Borelli, the expert in charge of the mine lifting, will shortly be before the Civil Tribunal on a charge of negligence. I understand the case is liable to go badly for him.

Almond
(G.W. WEST) M.L.O. Viareggio
CAPT. R. SIG.

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

Almond
(G.F. WEST) N.I.C. VIETNAM
GATE, R. STG.

1033

Encl. 24

TO GO ONLY FOR HIM.

ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT

VIAREGGIO (Provincia di Lucca)

Ref: -

Date 24 July 1945

SUBJECT: REPORT ON MINE EXPLOSION AT VIAREGGIO ON JULY 18th. 1945

TO: -

I took up duty at Viareggio on approximately 20th. June. On 26 June I received information that land mines etc., were stored in Villa Montauti, Via Carducci corner Via D'Annunzio. On that same day I wrote to G-1 92nd. Division informing him of the situation and asking him to arrange disposal (see exhibit 1. VR/I/33 of 26 June). I received a reply to this letter dated 1st. July from G-1. (Exhibit 2.) in which he stated that the matter had been sent to the proper section.

Nothing transpired during the next few days and I contacted various Officers of the Engineers in connection with the matter all of whom promised assistance, but stated they were hampered by Army regulations. Also pressure was brought to bear on the civil Authorities with a view to getting the mines removed.

Some ten days before the explosion I saw that the house was being cleared. I, on inspecting the premises the next day found that no mines existed.

I kept an observation on the villa and to my surprise some three or four days after seeing the house had been cleared, found that another lot (or the same ones returned) were again in the house. I immediately requested the civil Authorities to take urgent action and also arranged with Capt. Steele of 92nd. Div. Ordnance U.S. Army, to clear the mines by dumping them at sea. I arranged through the Sindaco that a Civil mine clearing gang, was to work under Capt. Steele. The work was to commence on the Monday prior to the explosion.

I can affirm that the Civil mine clearing squad reported to Capt. Steele on the due date.

At the same time as the negotiations were proceeding with Capt. Steele the Sindaco had arranged with the mine clearing school at Pisa to collect. This organization arrived on the day prior to the incident and finding that Capt. Steele had not removed all the mines, so collected them took them to Pisa. Here apparently the school refused to accept

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Other statements are attached as appendices 1 to

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CAPT. R. SIG.
(G.W. WEST) C.A.O. VIAREGGIO

ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
VIAREGGIO (Provincia di Lucca)

EXHIBIT N° 1

(COPY)

Ref: VR/I/33

Date : 26 June 1945

SUBJECT: Pro Station at 40 Via San Francesco; Viareggio

TO: G-1, 92nd. Inf. Division

1. The following points have arisen during the last few days, and your assistance in clearing them would be esteemed.
 - a) Pro Station at 40 Via S. Francesco. When the station was installed the house was unoccupied. After the departure of the Division, the owners returned and occupied the house. With the return of the Division, the Pro Station automatically re-opened much to the discomfort of the occupiers of the house, since there appears to be but little seclusion for the users of the station. There are three families in the house with several young children and it would be appreciated if other premises could be found for the necessary Pro Station.
 - b) Early information would be esteemed with regard to officially requisitioned premises.
 - c) The gang clearing land mines in this area are storing these at Villa Montauti, Via Carducci. Would it be possible for you to arrange disposal of these explosives?
 - d) The matter of requisitioning the ice factory is, at moment, causing various difficulties. I have no official knowledge that the factory has been requisitioned, and it would be supplied. At present, appreciated if early information might be supplied. At present, a certain quantity of ice is essential to the Town, for example for the Fishing Boats, the Hospitals, etc.

G.W.WEST
Capt. R. Sig.
C.A.O. VIAREGGIO

(C O P Y)

EXHIBIT N°2

INTEROFFICE REFERENCE SHEET
HEADQUARTERS 92nd. INFANTRY DIVISION
Office of the AG of S.G-1*****
SUBJECT

DATE	FROM	TO	
1 July 45	G-1	AMG	1. In reply to your xxxxx communication of 26 June 1945, this section has made inquiries regarding the Pro Station located at 40 - Via S. Francesco.
		Attn:	
		Capt.	2. It is imperative that we have a Pro Station in this vicinity. We have made a thorough search of the area and there is no other vacant building in this locality. If you are able to place this Pro Station in other building in the same section of Viareggio we will move. Our one requisite is running water.
		WEST	3. The other points raised in your communication has been passed to the proper sections for reply.
			signature: MOCK G-1
			Note in pencil of the Capt. WEST: GENIO, please deal urgently s/Capt. WEST.

Ap. 1
TRANSLATION

REPORT OF THE MAYOR OF VIAREGGIO.

After the liberation of the town of Viareggio, the first preoccupation of the Communal Administration was that of freeing the beach of the numerous mines ~~that~~ deposited by the Germans.

The Provincial Commissioner of A.G. was approached, but he informed us that all his squads were working in the Garfagnana; I therefore contacted the V Zone at Pisa, from which 2 squads were obtained.

Work however was proceeding very slowly and it was also pointed out that the manner in which they were working would not give satisfactory results, and that it would be better to have the entire beach dug so that no mines could be overlooked.

A Committee was therefore established in Viareggio called "Pro-Viareggio", and with funds collected from the population, the said Committee undertook, under its direction, the removal of mines from the beach, engaging Borelli, who is specialised in the work, and his staff. It was afterwards heard that the mines cleared from the beach, had been unloaded and deposited in a Villa in Viale Carducci. I immediately arranged that Municipal guards and Carabinieri be placed on guard, and at the same time endeavoured to have the mines taken away. I urgently and insistently solicited first the Direction of the Marble Quarries at Carrara, (where explosives are employed), and then the Command of the V Zone at Pisa where one of the Officials of the Commune was sent for this purpose.

At last, on 14 July 1945, a Lieutenant of the above Unit called, and assured that, on the following Monday, 16 July, as he was taking some squads to Forte dei Marmi, on their return the mines would have been loaded on available trucks, and taken to Pisa. In fact, on the morning of Monday 16 July, the mines were loaded and taken to Pisa.

When I came to the Office on the Tuesday, I learnt that the explosives had been brought back the previous evening, and deposited again in said Villa.

I was again, and even more, preoccupied, and rearranged for guards to be stationed there, and I called for the Officer of the V Zone and also Mr. Borelli who had removed the mines. Between

...and his staff. It was afterwards heard that the mines cleared from the beach, had been unloaded and deposited in a Villa in Viale Carducci. I immediately arranged that Municipal guards and Carabinieri be placed on guard, and at the same time endeavoured to have the mines taken away. I urgently and insistently solicited first the Direction of the Marble Quarries at Carrara, (where explosives are employed), and then the Command of the V Zone at Pisa where one of the Officials of the Commune was sent for this purpose.

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I was again, and even more, preoccupied, and rearranged for guards to be stationed there, and I called for the Officer of the V Zone and also Mr. Borelli who had removed the mines. Between the two they agreed to temporarily transfer the mines to the Arsenal which is situated in an isolated spot and sufficiently distant from the town, and later the Command of the V Zone would have transported them to Florence.

On the Wednesday morning, the Lieutenant and his men commenced work, and after two journeys, the truck broke down, and a small quantity of the mines remained in the Villa.

Before the third trip could be made (this would have been the last), at about 1600 hrs, the explosion took place.

I must point out that the grounds of the Villa where the mines were deposited, was under the windows of the premises of the American Red Cross Club (coloured troops), which was always full of soldiers, and in the later hours, also by civilians, especially women.

Bilingo notices had been placed indicating the presence of mines, and the Manager of the Red Cross Club and also the soldiers were aware that the mines existed, and notwithstanding this paper, rubble, empty bottles, cigar and cigarette butts were being thrown out of the windows. The men on guard warned the soldiers not to throw anything out of the windows.

Mayor's report (cont)

It is surmised that the flame in the garden, caused ^{that} the explosion was provoked by a cigar or cigarette but being thrown out of a window by one of the soldiers as, a few moments prior to the explosion, the guard on duty and other persons observed the commencement of a fire on the ground.

Viareggio 20 July 1945

THE MAYOR
AVV. Corrado Ciompi.

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

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TRANSLATION

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT. BY MAYOR.

Comandante Piazzoglio,
MINISTRE DE LA DEFENSE

(undated)

I expose in more detail with regard to the incident which occurred Tuesday 17 inst.

Borelli and the Commander of the Arsenal, and informed me that the ammunition warehouse of the Arsenal, (where it was proposed to transfer the mines), was without doors and was serving as a meeting place of coloured troops and women.

I sent Borelli and Ing. Tabellini to inspect, and as Borelli (owing to certain explosions which could be heard) informed me that they were destroying mines removed from the Beach at Forte del Mornai, I immediately sent a guard with instructions to stop these explosions.

The ^{Officer} ~~Assistant~~ of the V Zone called on me. (He who on the previous day had brought the mines back from Pisa. He told me that the mines which they were blowing up were those that had been deposited in the Villa Montauti. In the meantime, Borelli and Ing. Tabellini returned. The question of what should be done was discussed at length. The Lieutenant from Pisa proposed that a portion should be taken away every day and destroy them on the eastern beach. This proposal was accepted and the Lieutenant guaranteed that by the following Saturday all the mines would have been destroyed.

The following day, (after the explosion had taken place and upon my return from Lucca where I had been on urgent business for account of the Comune and where I had been in conference with the Prefect until the afternoon), I was informed that the plan set up by the Officer from Pisa could not be carried out as an American Captain had opposed to the mines being blown on the beach, and that he had arranged that the mines be sunk at sea, and later rescinded this method, as it had been pointed out to him that the fishermen were liable to drag the mines in their nets; it was then decided to take them to

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COURT OF ENQUIRY ON EXPLOSION IN VIAREGGIO 18 JULY 1945.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF AVV. CORRADO CIOMPI - MAYOR OF VIAREGGIO. 26/7/45

(The witness' report was first read aloud in court)

Q. When the work of clearing the mines was started, what did you know of Borelli before employing him?

R. I did not know him. He was presented to me by the Committee of Liberation who recommended him to me. Manfredini (President of CLN) was with me and he told me that Borelli was an expert in mine clearing.

Q. According to your knowledge, the best man in the town was employed; When were the mines first put in the Villa?

R. I do not know. I heard about it afterwards; perhaps from the beginning of June.

Q. According to your declaration, you immediately took some action.

R. I at once arranged for a service of guards and made arrangements for the mines to be removed and sent Borelli to load them. An Engineer then came and said he would send a truck for them; Afterwards, seeing that it did not arrive, I sent to Pisa.

Q. Did Borelli at any time tell you why he could not move these mines??

R. No; you understand, the mines were mines and Borelli did not worry about them; he thought they were safe.

Q. Did this Contractor ever explain why he did not remove them?

R. He said they were safe, that there was no danger.

Q. And perhaps you too, seeing that this was said by an expert, thought that there was no danger.

(witness shrugs his shoulders).

Witness is dismissed.

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Q. And perhaps you too, seeing that this was said by an expert, thought that there was no danger.
(witness shrugs his shoulders).

Witness is dismissed.

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TRANSLATION

COMUNE OF VIAREGGIO
CHIEF ENGINEER'S OFFICE.

REPORT.

The work of clearing the beach of the numerous mines, deposited by the Germans, was in the first place started by a special de-mining squad of the 5th Zone Pisa, and then continued by digging in the sand.

This work was not ordered and executed by the Comune, but was due to private initiative and especially of the "Pro-Viareggio" Committee, who collected funds amongst the population to finance the work; The work was undertaken and carried out on behalf of the "Pro-Viareggio" Committee by the Fira Gino Borelli, who disposed of expert men; but as the Committee ran out of funds to pay this firm, the Comune, at a certain moment, contributed by advancing some of the funds.

We afterwards heard that the mines (which the firm Borelli stated had been unloaded), removed from the Beach had been placed in the Villa Montauti, on the corner between Viale Carducci and Via D'Annunzio.

The Municipal Administration at once arranged for a service of Guard by the Municipal Police, and at the same time requested the Commander of the Carabinieri to arrange for a similar service. The Administration also, in the first instance, made pressure on the Management of the Marble Quarries in Carrara, (who use similar explosives) and afterwards on the Command of the De-Mining Service of the V Zone, Pisa.

The A.M.C. Office was also informed by the writer of the existence of these mines, because it was dangerous material involving Military Personnel and civilians, and also because, should some of said material be remove abusively, it consisted of material which could have been used for terroristic purposes and for disturbing Public order.

Following repeated requests, a Lieutenant of the V Zone came to Viareggio on the 14 July, and gave his assurance that on the 16th July the mines would have been removed to Pisa.

On the morning of the 17th July, the writer heard that on the preceding day, the mines removed from the dump had been returned

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Following repeated requests, a Lieutenant of the V Zone came to Viareggio on the 14 July, and gave his assurance that on the 16th July the mines would have been removed to Pisa.

On the morning of the 17th July, the writer heard that on the preceeding day, the mines removed from the dump had been returned to Viareggio and re-placed in the same Villa; I therefore proposed to the Sindaco, (who was seriously worried about this matter) to have the mines loaded on a truck, which on that morning was available, and to have them transported to the eastern beach and deposited there in groups at intervals from one to the other (at the south of the Arsenal in an an-inhabited area) and to have each group blown up; otherwise, if this was not possible, to transport them forthwith to the Arsenal and to place them inside, where, far from inhabited areas, the peril was less.

On ~~xxx~~ instructions received from the Mayor, the writer together with Mr. Borelli, went first to the Naval Command (Viale 1025 Manin) and then to the Arsenal, where permission was obtained from the Chief Gunner to transport the mines there. Upon returning to the Office, I informed the Sindaco and renewed the proposal of transferring the material at once.

On the morning of the 18 July, (Wednesday), the writer went to Lucca on duty, where, in the afternoon the news of the explosion was learnt.

The Engineer.
/s/ Tabellini

CROSS EXAMINATION OF ING. TABELLINI, CHIEF ENGINEER COMMUNE OF
VIAREGGIO. 26 July 1945

Q. First of all, your report will be read in public and then I will ask you a few questions.

(Witness' report is read aloud)

Tell me, was this report made by you voluntarily on your own accord?

R. Yes. It would have been the duty of my Office to take care of this case had the Commune taken on the work directly, but as the Commune did not order the work, I had no knowledge of same and did not direct it.

Q. Who engaged this man?

R. The "Pro-Viareggio" Committee.

Q. Did not the Commune take any interest in all this?

R. No! because this work was of a private aspect.

Q. The work was executed by a private Contractor, but as an Official of the Commune, you surely had some interest in it.

R. No, I came into the case on 17 July at the request of the Mayor.

Q. Can you tell me something about this Contractor Borelli etc?

R. In what way?

Q. Were they experts for the job?

R. They seemed to me to be experts because during the time the beach was being cleared, *nothing happened.*

The witness is dismissed.

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The witness is dismissed.

1024

ap. 3

TRANSLATION

Report by GIUSEPPE PARENTI in charge of Pisa Squad.

On the morning of 14 July, the Commander of Unit 13, Lt. Palazzo, requested me to go to Viareggio to inspect a Villa, in which mines and other explosives had been deposited, and to ask the Sindaco what had become of the material taken up by our Squads. The interview with the Sindaco took place in the presence of Mr. Borelli, engaged by the Comune to de-mine the beach at Viareggio, and they confirmed to me that all the mines etc. had been accumulated in the Villa by Borelli's squad for the reason that it was in a central position, and that they knew nothing of the material removed by our teams which had commenced the work of clearing the beach.

When the interview was over, Mr. Borelli informed me that our men had given some "tritolo" to the Chief Gunner of the Arsenal for the demolition of some bases.

Upon returning to my Command, I reported that there were about 30 quintals of explosives, (of which approximately one half loose in cubes of 200 grams wrapped in black paper, others packed in "J.C.S." or "Teller" containers, and that others were grenades or booby-traps.), and that the Sindaco would furnish a lorry providing this grave peril was eliminated.

On Monday, 16 July, I went on the spot with 7 men of this Command, following orders received from the Chief of the Section, Mariotti, and a lorry load of loose explosive was taken to Pisa, believing it to be material recovered on behalf of the State and seeing the interest taken in the "tritolo" by the chief of our Unit.

At the Pisa Command, whilst we were already unloading the truck, Capt. Spataro Tommaso, who was present when we arrived, seeing the great quantity and learning that the total of loose explosive would require 3 other loads, ordered me to take it back to the same dump at Viareggio, and he stated that he would write immediately to the Command at Florence to ask where this considerable quantity of "tritolo" was to be taken.

Upon returning to my Command, I reported that there were about 30 quintals of explosives, (of which approximately one half loose in cubes of 200 grams wrapped in black paper, others packed in 50.S" or "Teller" containers, and that others were grenades or booby-traps.), and that the Sindaco would furnish a lorry providing this grave peril was eliminated.

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The Command also arranged for me to return to Viareggio with a group of men during the following days in order to remove and destroy the mines, from which the explosives could not be removed, and to blow up the still existing "live" mines. This was to take place in a spot selected by me.

During the return journey, I contemplated dealing with the matter differently, but fearing to go against orders received I returned again on the Tuesday 17 July with 2 squads, and started by destroying 170 "Tellers" on the beach in the locality called "Città Giardino".

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Before ceasing the daily work, I spoke to the Mayor who also summoned Borelli, and it was agreed that all the explosives would be destroyed by Saturday 21 July by licenced men of the S.B.C.A., in the above named locality, which had been chosen on account of it not being too far and because it could be reached by asphalt roads without many shocks, and because it is sufficiently far away from inhabited areas.

On Wednesday 18 July, I went to continue the work with 2 squads, but found 3 young men who refused me entrance to the Villa, stating that these were orders of Capt. Steele who was personally attending to the removal of the mines, and the

Report by Giuseppe Parenti (cont)

sinking of same at sea.

I called on said Capt. Steele at Lido di Camaiore, and found that this was true. Before returning to Pisa, I went to the Town Hall to inform the Mayor but he was at Luoca. Just as I was leaving, I met Borelli and told him about it. Borelli was not pleased with the decision taken by the Allied Officer, pointing out that the mines sunk at sea could very easily be caught in the fishermen's nets, and also that the work was being handled by inexperienced men.

These reasons were explained to Capt. Steele by telephone, through the intermediary of an interpreter of the C.A.O., and it was arranged that licenced men would transport the mines to the Arsenal during the day.

This occurred in the morning between 8 and 8.30. It was hoped to be able to complete the transport during the same day but the lorry was placed at our disposal by the C.I.A. only at 11.40. Nevertheless work was started and at 12.15 the truck left at walking pace with a load of 210 "C.S." = 1050 Kilos, and a wide detour was made to reach the Arsenal. More time was again lost because one of the men had to be sent to call the Chief Gunner at his house and the material was unloaded in a spot near the sea indicated by him. It was then 13.45.

The Alfa Romeo truck was not in good working condition as it had just returned from a trip to the Garfagnana, and as it was then too late for a second journey, (our men's contract ceasing at 1500 hrs and there not being sufficient time to dear everything) and not contemplating any immediate danger if the place was well guarded and people not permitted to go near the mines, it was decided in accord with Borelli, to continue the work the following day.

In order to execute this work quicker and with more caution, I borrowed five expert men from Borelli to load and unload the lorry.

I was ordered on this job and I suggested ^{xxx} them taking every precaution as shown by the fact that in 3 days of work not even a minor incident occurred. I have done my best to remedy

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In order to execute this work quicker and with more caution, I borrowed five expert men from Borelli to load and unload the lorry.

I was ordered on this job and I suggested ~~that~~ ^{that I suggested them taking} every precaution, as shown by the fact that in 13 days of work not even a minor incident occurred. I have done my best to remedy the mistake of having accumulated so many mines and explosives in the centre of the town. By the way I was directing the work, all the workmen and drivers with me felt safe, and there was never cause of having to force them to work. The peril existed but not so grave if nobody, except us, tampered with the material.

Giuseppe Parenti.

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CROSS EXAMINATION OF GIOVANNI PARENTI (Lieutenant in charge of Pisa de-mining squad) - 26 July 1945.

Q. First your report will be read in public; then I will ask you a few questions.

(Witness' report read aloud)

Was this report made out on your own initiative?

R. Yes; after the incident.

Q. According to your opinion, are Berelli and his men experts?

R. I have known only five of them who were called for loading and unloading.

Q. This Berelli, who had the contract of de-mining the beach, was he competent according to your opinion?

R. I don't know because I do not know anybody. I came to Viareggio on the 14th of this month. I met him on the 14th when I went to speak to the Mayor.

Q. Do you know whether Berelli was trained for this work? What do you know of the courses which are held at Pisa?

R. I don't know. Yes the last course was conducted by me at Pisa.

Q. During these courses, is it true that you teach the men that when they locate a mine, same must immediately be removed to a safe spot far from inhabited areas?

R. Yes. If the case is easy, they can be taken away at once and transferred to a safe spot.

Q. Can mines be destroyed on the spot or not?

R. It can be done if there is no danger, otherwise they are carried far from inhabited areas with caution.

Q. When the men find a mine and have orders to destroy it and cannot carry it to another place, can they destroy it or bury it deposit it where it was found?

R. No.

Q. The Contractor, according to instructions and teaching received

competent according to your opinion?

R. I don't know because I do not know anybody. I came to Viareggio on the 14th of this month. I met him on the 14th when I went to speak to the Mayor.

Q. Do you know whether Berelli was trained for this work? What do you know of the courses which are held at Pisa?

R. I don't know. Yes the last course was conducted by me at Pisa.

Q. During these courses, is it true that you teach the men that when they locate a mine, same must immediately be removed to a safe spot far from inhabited areas?

R. Yes. If the case is easy, they can be taken away at once and transferred to a safe spot.

Q. Can mines be destroyed on the spot or not?

R. It can be done if there is no danger, otherwise they are carried far from inhabited areas with caution.

Q. When the men find a mine and have orders to destroy it and cannot carry it to another place, can they destroy it or ~~bury it~~ deposit it where it was found?

R. No.

Q. The Contractor, according to instructions and teaching received at the school, had he the right to put the mines in a house?

R. I do not know where he attended the school as I do not know him.

Q. I am asking you whether it is generally taught that when a mine cannot be destroyed on the spot, it must be carried away or thrown at sea?

R. Certainly, if it cannot be destroyed on the spot, it must ~~be~~ destroyed in a place distant from houses.

Q. According to you, is it right to put mines in a place near occupied houses.

R. No. They must always be carried far away.

Q. Had you the permission to have the mines stored in town?

4.
R. No.

Q. Since you have been working with the contractors, what information can you give us about them?

A. I have never worked with the Contractors; I was working under a Captain.

Q. In the work of mine lifting, is it taught that when a mine cannot be blown up on the spot, it must be taken to a safe place?

A. Yes.

(Witness is dismissed)

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

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(Witness is dismissed)

TRANSLATION

R. COMMISSARIATO P.S.
VIAREGGIO

18 July 1945

Explosion at Mine Dump in Viareggio.

In Viale Carducci, at 1600 hours (approx) today, a mine dump exploded in the Villa owned by Avv. Montauti of Lucca.

This explosion caused the entire destruction of the Villa, and also the adjoining ex H.Q. of the Fascist Party requisitioned by the American Red Cross, and caused damage to the neighbouring houses.

Amongst the Civil population, greatly frightened, 2 dead and 41 wounded have been reported, of which 4 seriously and 15 detained in the Hospital; First aid was also given to about 100 persons. It appears that other wounded were transported to the Pisan Hospital on Military vehicles.

Said explosion appears to have been provoked by coloured soldiers throwing lighted cigarette and through one of the windows of the premises requisitioned by the A.R.C., which probably fell on the dry grass of the garden, where the mines were located.

Political reasons or sabotage are to be excluded.

Provincial and local authorities intervened.

Results of further investigations will be communicated.

s./ G. Mazzaglia, Commissario

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Political reasons or sabotage are to be excluded.

Provincial and local authorities intervened.

Results of further investigations will be communicated.

s./ G. Mazzaglia, Commissario

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EXPLANATION

Op. 6

CC.ER. VZAMINGLO

18 July 1945

At 1600 hours, in Viale Arduno, Varese, a mine dump exploded in the Villa owned by Avv. Gustavo Montanari of Intra.

Through this explosion the following casualties have been, so far, ascertained: 44 civilians of which 2 serious, 1 dead, also an unknown number of colored soldiers, of which 3 dead.

Both the Villa and the building occupied by the American Red Cross have been completely destroyed, whilst neighboring houses were badly damaged.

It is presumed that the causes which determined the explosion are to be traced to important military soldiers who probably threw a lighted cigarette and through one of the windows overlooking the Villa Montanari. Political reasons or sabotage are to be excluded.

Provincial and local authorities intervened.

Further information will be communicated.

/s/ G. C. V. ZAMINGLO
Capt. CC. ER.

It is presumed that the causes which determined the explosion are to be traced to ineptness of soldiers who improperly handled explosives and through one of the mines overlooking them a lighted cigarette and through one of the mines overlooking the Villa Montebello. Political reasons or sabotage are to be excluded.

Provincial and local authorities informed.

Further investigation will be conducted.

/s/ U. G. G. G. G.
Capt. G. G. G.

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TRANSLATION

24 July 1945

DECLARATION BY MUNICIPAL GUARD GHILARDUCCI ILIO.

On 18 July 1945, I was ordered on Guard Duty at the Villa Montauti, in Viareggio.

At about 1545 hours, I noticed a flame on the ground between the premises of the American Red Cross, and the spot where the mines were deposited in the garden of the Villa.

Seeing the impossibility of extinguishing the fire, I immediately gave the alarm to passers-by, and then ran at once to warn the soldiers who were outside the Red Cross Club, making all those who were on the stairs, run away.

I intended entering the premises in order to inform those who were inside, but at that moment, the explosion took place.

Two days previously, i.e. 16 July, being on guard in the same place and observing that the mines had been stowed in the garden instead of in the interior of the Villa, I made a written report to my Commander, pointing out the danger. My report was passed on to the Sindaco.

Another similar report was made on the 25 June by one of my colleagues, whose name I do not remember. Also this report was forwarded to the Sindaco.

I have nothing else to add.

/s/ GHILARDUCCI ILIO.

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Another similar report was made on the 25 June by one of my colleagues, whose name I do not remember. Also this report was forwarded to the Sindaco.

I have nothing else to add.

/s/ GHILARDUCCI ILIO.

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App. 4

CLAMORATION

COMUNE OF VIZARRATO
Command Municipal Guards

18 July 1943

To A.M.G. Viareggio
Sindaco Viareggio

At about 15:45 hrs., whilst the Municipal Guard GALLARDUCCI ILLIO was on duty at the mine dump (Villa Montauti), Viale Carducci, corner of Via D'Annunzio, he noticed that in the interior of the Villa, in the garden adjoining the American Red Cross Club, owing to the great heat, a fire had broken out and was spreading. The said guard at once tried to put out the fire, but seeing ~~that the flames were rapidly approaching the mines~~ was impossible and that the flames were rapidly approaching the mines which were lying in the garden he immediately ran out to warn the people of the danger and ran also to the Red Cross Club, on the steps ~~number of which were many Allied soldiers; he then tried to mount~~ the steps in order to warn those inside the club, but having mounted only one step, there was a terrific explosion and he remained senseless on the spot, but without injury.

The explosion which Gallarducci had foreseen, caused the house in which the mines were deposited, to collapse and greatly damaged the nearby house, and also caused part of the Red Cross Club to collapse.

Owing to the rain of stones and debris, etc., there were a certain number of civilian wounded, 41 (forty) whilst zero are dead.

A list of the wounded is attached.

A large number of Municipality guards were immediately sent on the spot, who, notwithstanding the constant danger, distinguished themselves in aiding the wounded. A signal service of the traffic has been organized and vehicles have been requisitioned temporarily, to carry the wounded to the Hospital.

Guards will be kept on the spot also during the night in order to avoid looting in the damaged area.

The families which remained homeless have been removed to other

in order to warn those inside the club, but having remained only one step, there was a terrific explosion and he remained senseless on the spot, but without injury.

The explosion which shattered had foreseen, caused the house in which the mines were deposited, to collapse and greatly damaged the nearby house, and also caused part of the Red Cross Club to collapse.

Owing to the rain of stones and debris, etc., there were a certain number of civilian wounded, 41 (forty) whilst some are dead.

A list of the wounded is attached.

A large number of Municipality guards were immediately sent on the spot, who, notwithstanding the constant danger, distinguished themselves in aiding the wounded. A signal service of the traffic has been organized and vehicles have been requisitioned temporarily, to carry the wounded to the Hospital.

Guards will be kept on the spot also during the night in order to avoid looting in the damaged area.

The families which remained houseless have been removed to other houses and Hotel.

This Command holds at the disposal of the Authorities the guards which may be required and which will be withdrawn from other duties.

The Commander Municipal Guards.
(Ja/ Vendo De Ambría)

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CROSS EXAMINATION OF DR. MAZZAGLIA (Commissario P.S.) 26 July 1945

Q. Do you think this explosion was accidental or caused by other means?

R. I exclude any act of sabotage; I have received orders from my superiors to investigate and I have in hand precious elements.

Q. I only ask whether you can confirm that there has been no sabotage?

R. No. I will refer the rest later; there is not . . . (witness is interrupted and dismissed).

=====

CROSS EXAMINATION OF Capt. of CC.RR. CIRIMINNA. 26 July 1945.

Q. Only one question; according to your opinion, was the explosion accidental or caused by other means?

R. I do not think it was an act of sabotage; I am investigating the matter and when I knew the mines were being put in the Villa I went several times to the Comune and advised them to remove them.

(Witness is dismissed)

=====

Municipal Guard Ilie GHELARDUCCI and Commander of Munic. Guards DE AMBRIS

Q. Was it sabotage?

De Ambris. I exclude it.

Q. Did you see anybody before the fire?

Ghelarducci. Nobody.

Q. How long before the explosion did you notice the flame?

Ghelarducci. About one minute before.

Q. Were you conscious of the danger you were running by remaining near there.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF Capt. of CC.RR. CIRIMINNA. 26 July 1945.

Q. Only one question; according to your opinion, was the explosion accidental or caused by other means?

A. I do not think it was an act of sabotage; I am investigating the matter and when I knew the mines were being put in the Villa I went several times to the Comune and advised them to remove them.

(Witness is dismissed)

Municipal Guard Ilie GHELARDUCCI and Commander of Munic. Guards DE AMPRIS

Q. Was it sabotage?

De Ambris. I exclude it.

Q. Did you see anybody before the fire?

Ghelarducci. Nobody.

Q. How long before the explosion did you notice the flames?

Ghelarducci. About one minute before.

Q. Were you conscious of the danger you were running by remaining near there.

Ghelarducci. Yes I was.

Q. I congratulate you for your bravery. (witnesses dismissed)

THE MAYOR AVV. CIONPI IS RE-CALLED.

Q. I wish to ask you whether the advice received from Perelli was given as being an urgent matter or not.

A. Never.

Q. That is all.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF GIRO BORELLI - 26 July 1945

- Q. Where did you attend the course?
- R. The first at Civitavecchia, the second at Aree Felice (Naples) and the third at Siena.
- Q. By whom were you instructed?
- R. By an American Captain.
- Q. When?
- R. In February 1944.
- Q. Why were the mines placed in the Villa?
- R. At first they were dumped on the beach but as we found that they were handled by boys and others, it was thought to put them in a safer place where they could not be touched and therefore to avoid accidents.
- Q. Why did you not do as you were taught at the school, that is destroy them where they were found?
- R. At first we did destroy them, but someone opposed themselves to this.
- Q. Who gave you orders not to destroy them any more?
- R. I don't know; The Mayer sent for me because many new window panes had been replaced and with the explosion of these mines they were liable to break again.
- Q. Why were not the mines taken away from the town as you were taught at the school?
- R. Because I had no premises at my disposal, but I advised the Authorities at once of this.
- Q. Which Authorities?
- R. The Mayor.
- Q. As one of the first things you were taught, why were not the mines taken far away from the town?
- R. They were placed there for the time being pending that they

a safer place where they could not be touched and therefore to avoid accidents.

Q. Why did you not do as you were taught at the school, that is destroy them where they were found?

R. At first we did destroy them, but someone opposed themselves to this.

Q. Who gave you orders not to destroy them any more?

R. I don't know; The Mayer sent for me because many new window panes had been replaced and with the explosion of these mines they were liable to break again.

Q. Why were not the mines taken away from the town as you were taught at the school?

R. Because I had no premises at my disposal, but I advised the Authorities at once of this.

Q. Which Authorities?

R. The Mayer.

Q. As one of the first things you were taught, why were not the mines taken far away from the town?

R. They were placed there for the time being pending that they gave me a more suitable place to which to transport them, such as the Arsenal, etc.

Q. You knew from your training that the mines could not remain there.

R. I repeat; they were there for the time being.

Q. Why were't they taken at once to the Arsenal?

R. For me it was the same. I was waiting for them to give me a suitable place.

Q. Where do you live?

R. In Viareggio, in Via Ugo Foscolo.

Q. Since when?

6.

R. I was born here and did not move for twenty years.

Q. As a citizen of Viareggio and therefore familiar with the town, could you not find a more suitable and safe place?

R. It was a delicate matter, I could not take the responsibility, the authorities ought to have thought about all this.

Q. You should have acted in accordance with the rules of the school

R. My job was to remove the mines from the beach. To deposit and transport same was not my job.

Q. Which contractor did you engage?

R. It was arranged with other friends to clear the beach. I did not engage other contractors because the mines do not belong to me. I put them aside so that someone could come and pick them up.

Q. If you are not a contractor, why did you undertake this work?

R. I am licenced; I have three licences.

Q. The licensee which you have for this work make you necessarily responsible for all the work undertaken. On the basis of your licence, everyone thought that you would have carried out the work according to your learning.

R. The mines are government property and I cannot touch them; I would have been sued; they weren't bricks which the contractor can take home; they belonged to the State.

Q. Why did you not do exactly as you were taught at the school?

R. I did do exactly as I learnt because I cleared the mines from the beach according to the rules and nothing happened.

Q. An essential point which is taught at the school is that as soon as a mine is located it must be destroyed on the spot or else taken far from the town.

R. I repeat; whilst I was waiting for a suitable place, the mines were left on the beach, but they were being handled and therefore it was decided to take them to a safe place.

Q. Knowing that they could not remain in this house, why did you

- R. It was arranged with other friends to clear the beach. I did not engage other contractors because the mines do not belong to me. I put them aside so that someone could come and pick them up.
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- R. I did do exactly as I learnt because I cleared the mines from the beach according to the rules and nothing happened.
- Q. An essential point which is taught at the school is that as soon as a mine is located it must be destroyed on the spot or else taken far from the town.
- R. I repeat; whilst I was waiting for a suitable place, the mines were left on the beach, but they were being handled and therefore it was decided to take them to a safe place.
- Q. Knowing that they could not remain in this house, why did you not ask the Mayer to have them removed at once.
- R. Immediately. I went to the Mayer at once and in fact a service of guards was arranged immediately.
- Q. Are you prepared to say that you warned the Mayer?
- R. Yes. I told him that they were to be destroyed or removed because they could not remain there.
- Q. Can you say why they were put there in the first place?
- R. I repeat; they were put there because they used to be taken away from the beach.
- Q. Don't you think that two months are too long to have kept them there.?

R. Yes. Much too long.

Q. Why did you not press the authorities about it?

R. I did so many times; twenty, thirty times.

Q. Why could you not transport them yourself?

R. I did not have a place; I am not an Authority; It was not my job.

Q. The Mayor considered you an expert, a technician.

R. The mines worried me too and I always made pressure to remove same.

Q. I have been handling explosives for eight years, and even those that are harmless I treat as dangerous; did they also teach you this?

R. Yes; precisely.

Q. What do you think was the cause of the explosion?

R. According to what the guard said that he saw a fire, it can be surmised that this fire was the cause.

Q. Could only a fire have caused the explosion?

R. Perhaps yes; because even by hammering on the mines they would not have exploded.

Q. When you removed the mines, why did you not tell the Mayor that they were not safe there?

R. Exactly; I wanted to take them to the Villa Peroni in Via Zara, but I was told that the Villa was without windows and doors.

Q. But why move them from one Villa to another?

R. Because this Villa is farther away from the town and safer, and the mines would have been placed there pending their transportation to Florence or another suitable place.

Q. Why did you insist on putting them in a house?

R. After having removed them from the beach, I advised the Authorities that it was necessary to transport them and to take action.

that are harmless I treat as dangerous; did they also teach you this?

R. Yes; precisely.

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R. Because this Villa is farther away from the town and safer, and the mines would have been placed there pending their transportation to Florence or another suitable place.

Q. Why did you insist on putting them in a house?

R. After having removed them from the beach, I advised the Authorities that it was necessary to transport them and to take action.

Q. Why did you not transport them yourself?

R. I did take the matter up with the Collecting Centre in Pisa and then with other Units in Florence.

Q. Contrary to what was taught to you, why were the mines put in a house?

R. Temporarily.

Q. The school teaches that mines must not be placed in a house not even for a minute; therefore you should have found a place for them before moving them.

R. In the first place it was arranged to leave them on the beach, but, I repeat, they were handled and touched, and therefore it was decided to put them in a safe spot until the Authorities

took a decision about them.

Q. Why were they put in that Villa?

R. Because I had a warehouse there.

Q. Why did you not find a place outside the town beforehand?

R. Because I thought I would be able to leave them on the beach without having to take them elsewhere.

Q. Where are the mines you are lifting now being taken?

R. To the Arsenal.

Q. Where have the mines that have been collected during the past two months been taken?

R. First to the Villa and then to the Arsenal.

Q. If this was the work of the Pisa and Florence Units, why were not arrangements made with them?

R. My job was to remove the mines from the beach; the rest did not interest me.

Q. When a job is entrusted to an expert, he should bring it to an end.

R. When it can be completed, yes; but my work was only to remove them from the beach, and destroy them.

Q. The school teaches that a contractor is bound to complete the work.

R. I offered my services because I am competent, but I am not a Contractor; I do not receive money.

Q. Have you worked free all this time?

R. No, I was paid as a labourer.

Q. Seeing that you have been paid and that you are a licensed worker, and at the same time a Contractor, you should have carried out the work in accordance with the teaching of the school.

R. Had the work been done on my own account, the Mayor would not have had guards placed at the Villa in which the mines were

two months been taken?

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Q. Seeing that you have been paid and that you are a licensed worker, and at the same time a Contractor, you should have carried out the work in accordance with the teaching of the school.

R. Had the work been done on my own account, the Mayor would not have had guards placed at the Villa in which the mines were deposited.

Q. Are the licenses issued at the end of the course?

1011

R. Yes: The mines were to be blown up but they made us desist.

Q. Seeing that they made you stop destroying the mines, you should have taken them to a place where there would be no danger.

R. Precisely.

Q. Had you told the Mayor that it is not allowed to keep mines in a house, certainly he would have arranged to have them removed.

R. Certainly, but I did tell him; even a child knows that it is dangerous. On the 14th they were put there and on the 15th I told the Mayor.

Q. Why did you not come to me ?

R. I went to my Authorities.

Q. Don't you think the safety of the public means more than anything else ?

R. I did my duty because I referred to the Mayor.

Q. Do you think the Mayor is an expert in the matter ?

R. I don't know.

Q. You were in a position to be able to advise the Mayor, why did you not do it.?

R. I did do it. On the 15th I went at once to Carrara.

Q. Did you go to Carrara on your own initiative ?

R. No; the Mayor asked me to go and I went with Sani (an employee of the Commune)

Q. Were you aware of what you were doing ?

R. Yes.

Q. Knowing that this was dangerous, why did you continue doing it ?

R. Because I had been assured that they would have had the mines removed.

(witness is dismissed)

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Q. Did you go to Carrara on your own initiative?

A. No; the Mayor asked me to go and I went with Sani (an employee of the Commune)

Q. Were you aware of what you were doing?

A. Yes.

Q. Knowing that this was dangerous, why did you continue doing it?

A. Because I had been assured that they would have had the mines removed.

(witness is dismissed)

1010

CROSS EXAMINATION OF LOMBARDI SAURO (Labourer employed by Berelli)
27 July 1945.

Q. Are you licensed for this work?

R. No; I work as a labourer.

Q. Have you ever attended a course of instruction?

R. Never.

Q. Do you know anything about mine lifting.

R. I have always worked, but always as a labourer.

Q. You can go.

=====

FABERI FRANCESCO (Labourer employed by Berelli) 27 July 1945.

Q. Do you know anything about explosives and mines?

R. No.

Q. What were you doing with this squad?

R. I was called for work of loading.

Q. What was your job before?

R. I was a sailor.

Q. How long have you worked with the squad?

R. From the beginning; when the work started, that is about a month ago.

Q. From the beginning of July or June?

R. June when the work commenced.

Q. Did you ever work on the beach when Berelli was not there?

R. No; always under his guidance.

Q. I repeat; you did no work when Berelli was not there?

R. When a mine was located he always came to see it.

=====

FABERI FRANCESCO (Labourer employed by Berelli) 27 July 1945.

Q. Do you know anything about explosives and mines?

A. No.

Q. What were you doing with this squad?

A. I was called for work of loading.

Q. What was your job before?

A. I was a sailor.

Q. How long have you worked with the squad?

A. From the beginning; when the work started, that is about a month ago.

Q. From the beginning of July or June?

A. June when the work commenced.

Q. Did you ever work on the beach when Berelli was not there?

A. No; always under his guidance.

Q. I repeat; you did no work when Berelli was not there?

A. When a mine was located he always came to see it.

(Witness is dismissed)

1009

FABERI FRANCESCO (Labourer employed by Berelli) 27 July 1945.

Q. Do you know anything about explosives and mines?

Q. What were you doing with this squad.?

R. I was called forwork of loading.

Q. What was your job before?

R. I was a soldier.

Q. How long have you worked with the squad?

R. From the beginning; when the work started, that is about a month ago.

Q. From the beginning of July or June?

R. June when the work commenced.

Q. Did you ever work on the beach when Berelli was not there?

R. No; always under his guidance.

Q. I repeat; you did no work when Terrell was not there ?

R. When a mine was located he always came to see it.

(Witness is dismissed)

11

BARSOTTELLI ALBERTO (Labourer employed by Borelli) 27 July 45

Q. Are you licenced in mine work ?

R. No.

Q. What were you doing ?

R. Labourer.

Q. How long have you worked ?

R. From the beginning about a month ago.

Q. Have you ever worked on this job without the presence of Borelli ?

R. No; with him or others.

Q. Who were the others ?

R. Two technicians.

Q. Where did these two technicians come from ?

R. One from Rimini and one was a Greek.

Q. What did these two technicians do ?

R. They unloaded the mines.

Q. Do you know why these two men were given the work ?

R. No.

Q. How long did they work ?

R. All the time; two months.

(Witness is dismissed)

GINO BORELLI IS RECALLED .

Q. One of the witnesses said that you had two technicians.

R. Yes; two men who were capable of unloading the mines; but they were there more for surveying the work.

Q. Tell us something about these two men.

R. One came from Rimini and one from Siena where he was with an

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R. All the time; two months.

(Witness is dismissed)

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GINO BORELLI IS RECALLED .

Q. One of the witnesses said that you had two technicians.

R. Yes; two men who were capable of unloading the mines; but they were there more for surveying the work.

Q. Tell us something about these two men.

R. One came from Rimini and one from Siena where he was with an American Unit; I have not seen them since but they can be traced.

Q. How long did they work ?

R. From the beginning of the work to the end.

Q. Were they licensed for this kind of work ?

R. Yes.

Q. Where did they come from ?

R. From Rimini, from Capt. Til of the SOS .

Witness is dismissed and court of enquiry closed.

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

- 2 -

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 sensitiveness 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 hard work 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 however have only met with partial success.

8. The civilian mine clearing squads are much less expert than the military but are well paid. The casualties are 96 killed

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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

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

- 3 -

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 is, therefore, 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.

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

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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.

- 4 -

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 Commissn

Director
Local Government Sub Commissn

22 Aug 45

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CONFIDENTIAL

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Report by Major. J. Stewart REAKES, RSP., on enquiries made by him in connection with explosion of mine dump at VIAREGGIO.

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

1. I left Rome at 0730 hours on 21st July and arrived in PISA at 1630 hours.
2. I went to the Sub Zone HQ and met the Sub Zone Commander Major. PASQUA. My conversations were carried out through Captain NIUTTA who acted as interpreter and I elucidated the following information.
3. The men working at VIAREGGIO were not employed by the Zone on Mine Clearance. They were acting under the orders of the Sindaco of VIAREGGIO Commune who had contracted with a Sig. BORELLI to remove mines in the Commune. The men were working for the Contractor and so far as had been ascertained had not been trained by the Zone.
4. Major PASQUA stated that his instructions were to destroy all mines and he had done this.
5. Prior to July 9th Major PASQUA was not aware that men were clearing mines in VIAREGGIO but on that date was informed that there was a dump of mines in a building beside the American Red Cross. These mines had been put there by the Contractor. He sent a Lt. PARENTI the local commander of PISA to have a look at the dump and PARENTI began to remove the mines on the 16th July. A truck arrived from VIAREGGIO at the Zone HQ with trotyl, a very high explosive obtained from the mines, but Captain SPATARO refused to have it stored at Zone HQ and sent it back. This explosive was taken back to the dump.
6. The Sindaco realised the danger of this dump and had a police guard on duty all the time. It is believed that the Sindaco told the Contractor that he could use the house as a dump.
7. On 17th July Lt. PARENTI with two squads began to destroy the mines and by 18th July about 500 had been destroyed. Some mines were stored in the house and some in the passage way between the ARC and the dump. They were Italian wooden or Box mines.
8. The 92nd Division were using the ARC and continually threw cigarette stumps down on to the yard in which were stored the mines. They also threw bottles and paper.

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8. The 92nd Division were using the ARC and continually threw cigarette stumps down on to the yard in which were stored the mines. They also threw bottles and paper.
9. On the day of the accident the guard saw smoke coming from one of the mines and endeavoured to put it out. He was unable to do so and ran round to the entrance of the ARC and told them to clear the club. Mr. MILLER in charge of the ARC apparently received the message but treated it as the usual Italian alarmist message. In any case he had no time to act as the dump blew up.
10. Statements by Lt. PARENTI, Maj. PASQUA and others are attached.
11. In some of the mines the detonators and igniters still remained and the contractor BORELLI knew this. I asked why Captain SPATARO had returned the load to the dump instead of there and then taking it to a field or a dump where there was no danger. I never got a direct answer to this question but gathered that
- i) it was highly dangerous and SPATARO did not wish the explosives in his HQ.
 - ii) the Sub Zone had written to the Zone and asked where they could put these mines; (there was a lack of initiative at the Sub Zone HQ but I should not say this was culpable. After all they are not responsible for finishing off a Contractor's job), and
 - iii) they did not have time to finish destruction and removal of these mines which they had undertaken to do.

12. On the morning of the explosion Lt. PARENTE went to the dump with a truck and saw 3 men (civilians) who told him that by order of a Captain Steele of the 92nd Division no one was to touch the mines as he was going to throw them into the sea. PARENTE afterwards met BORELLI who phoned to STEELE and eventually they took another truck load away. The Zone did not have time to destroy or get rid of all the remaining mines that day.
13. Further information elucidated the fact that either the Sindaco or Borelli were attempting to arrange a sale of the explosives to a Quarryowner and to fishermen. The quarryowner eventually said he was not interested and the Sindaco decided he must get rid of the explosives.
14. I then went on to LUCCA and saw Captain HARTLEY, the Provincial Public Safety Officer. He said he knew nothing about it but had attended the Court of Enquiry and told them that he knew nothing about the dump at all. He stated that AMG was not responsible. They gave orders to the Sindaco and it was up to him to carry them out.
15. On the 22nd July I met the CAO for VIAREGGIO in LUCCA. I had a long talk with him. He stated that he had tried to get the Army to move the dump but they refused to help. (This I feel was wrong as the army have instructions only to lift mines if they are likely to destroy Army property or be a danger to army personnel. In this case they were an obvious danger to army personnel). He told the Sindaco to get this cleared. 14 days before the accident he went to the dump, and it was cleared but subsequently it was being used again as a dump. (This is not corroborated by the Carabinieri who maintain that there have been mines there all the time). I did not have an opportunity of telling West what the Carabinieri said.
16. West eventually contacted an Ord. Officer, a Capt STEEL (I thought he was an American but in PARENTE's statement it says "English"), who said he would dump the mines in the sea. WEST warned the AEC to evacuate the building on the morning of the explosion but they did not.
17. WEST proposes to hold a public enquiry on Thursday the 26th at which the press will be invited to attend. He does not propose to come to any findings.
18. The Order of responsibility as far as AC/AMG is concerned would appear to be:

16. West eventually contacted an Ord. Officer, a Capt STEEL (I thought he was an American but in PARETTI's statement it says "English"), who said he would dump the mines in the sea. WEST warned the ARC to evacuate the building on the morning of the explosion but they did not.
17. WEST proposes to hold a public enquiry on Thursday the 26th at which the press will be invited to attend. He does not propose to come to any findings.
18. The Order of responsibility as far as AG/AMG is concerned would appear to be:
- a) The Sindaco (who placed the house at the disposal of the Contractor for storing mines) and who had been repeatedly warned by the Police).
 - b) The Contractor for dumping the mines in this building without paying attention to the normal elements of safety precaution. (Some of the mines were stored in the open).
 - c) The Manager of the Red Cross for practically ignoring the danger and risking the lives of the men who frequented the ARC and for not evacuating the premises as asked.
 - d) Captain STEEL.
- In so far as the ARC is concerned the responsibility is on the shoulders of the Manager of the ARC for not having requisitioned the building and knowing the mines were there risking the lives of American soldiers.
19. I have not added AMG to the list because I feel that when one Officer is responsible for 100,000 or more people and has a hundred and one jobs to do he is entitled to rely on the Sindaco carrying out his instructions. In this case the Sindaco was told several times to remove the mines and the AMG officer had on one occasion gone to see if they were removed and was satisfied that they had been taken away. Since this accident the AMG officer has discovered another dump made by the same contractor and is having this moved.

- 5 -

20. Further investigations are being made and a report is awaited from Captain WEST. The enquiries I have made lead along many channels and only touch the fringe of the investigations. I felt, however, that I had sufficient information for my purpose and did not extend my enquiries to the ARC, Captain STEELE, the Sindaco, or the Contractor. The latter two persons will be interviewed by Captain WEST.

21. The 92nd Division have held a Court of Enquiry.

22. In Conclusion.

- (a) In so far as AMG/AC is concerned culpable negligence rests with the Sindaco and the Contractor. I do not consider that any blame rests with Capt. WEST. His job is to give instructions to the Sindaco and see that they are carried out, but not to carry out the job himself.
- (b) This terrible accident brings notice to the huge task there is in front of the Italians in clearing mines in ITALY and to the great danger which is being run all over the country in getting Contractors to clear mines who, in some cases, try to make money by selling explosives and detonators which necessitates the storing of mines instead of their destruction.
- (c) Attached is a document showing the present position with regard to Mine Clearance in ITALY. I feel it is relevant and have taken the opportunity afforded by this accident of adding it to my report.
- (d) I returned to ROME at 2230 hours on 22nd July 45.

25 July 1945.

Major.
Local Government Sub Commission.

W. H. Leary May

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25 July 1945.

W. A. Leary Maj

Major.
Local Government Sub Commission.

CONFIDENTIAL

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Statement on present position
of Mine Clearance in ITALY

Apr. A.

1. The Italian Government have stated that they will not advance much more money for the clearance of mines in ITALY as it is proving too expensive. The Ministry of War and those working on Mine Clearance have great hopes that at least 10,000 surrendered personnel will be made available soon for the clearance of mines in ITALY.
2. The Italian Government have made it clear that they will not be responsible for the clearance of mines on privately owned property. It is estimated that 80% of the mines in Italy will therefore be made the responsibility of property owners. There will be many more deaths and casualties due to the fact that mines will not be cleared.
3. It is time the position was clarified. Either AC is going to be in a position to help the Italian Government and the Italian people by the provision of transport, equipment, POL and surrendered personnel or tell them that it cannot help any more and that they must shoulder the burden themselves.
4. If the Italian Government get no more assistance than at present then there is every likelihood that owners will be made responsible for clearing their own lands at their own expense. This will result in thousands of mines lying about the country for many years to come (a perpetual source of danger), and will result in inexperienced people trying to clear mines of which they have no knowledge. The death toll will be serious.
5. AMFO must be approached on a high level and asked what the position is. German prisoners are clearing the mines in FRANCE. The Italians know this and wonder why they cannot get assistance. AC have given a lot of help to the Italians and have organised a Mine Clearance Scheme. If no further practical help is to be forthcoming from higher authority and if the scheme quietly folds up after territory is handed back then I consider AC should disassociate itself from this subject now.
6. A tremendous war has been fought in ITALY and so far as the Allies are concerned has been won and is finished but so far as the Italians are concerned will continue to take its victims

personnel or tell them that it cannot help any more and that they must shoulder the burden themselves.

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6. A tremendous war has been fought in ITALY and so far as the Allies are concerned has been won and is finished but so far as the Italians are concerned will continue to take its victims long after the Allies have left ITALY.

7. It is imperative that surrendered personnel be allocated to clear the mines laid by them. A scheme for the employment of surrendered personnel on this work was submitted on 2nd June but so far no reply has been made as to whether the surrendered personnel are to be made available or not.

8. There are indications that approval may not be given but nothing official. I feel that it will be most inhuman to withdraw from Italy and to leave the Italians to solve the problem of clearing the millions of mines which have been laid without giving them some practical help and guidance.

9. If the scheme is not to be approved then at least 10,000 personnel from the Italian Army with transport, POL and equipment should be earmarked now for this work and the Italian Government informed that it must be treated as a national problem and not put on the shoulders of individual owners.

10. There may be high policy of which I am not aware which prevents the use of surrendered personnel on this work but I consider that AC should know now where it stands before much more time is lost.

Plus un Risque May

25 July 1945.

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The morning of the 14th July 45 the OC of the 13 squad Lt. Palazzo Michele asked me to visit Viareggio and to look after a villa where mines and other explosives were stored and to ask the Sindaco what happened to the mines lifted by our squads. I spoke with the Sindaco in presence of Mr. Borelli, the contractor of the Comune in charge of clearing the seashore. They declared that the material is stored in the villa of the Borelli firm for the reason that this building has a central position with regard to the places where the work was going on and that they have no knowledge of the mines lifted by our squads in Viareggio. After this visit Mr. Borelli told me that our men gave some trouble to the chief gunner of the Balipedo for some demolition work.

Returning to the Command I reported that the quantity of the explosive was about 5 tons (half of which was in blocks of 200 gr and packed in black paper, the rest still in the C.S. or Tellermines covers) and that the Sindaco to get rid of this dangerous material will put a truck at our disposal.

On 16th July I went to the dump with 7 workers of the Sub Zone Command and having loaded a truck with loose explosive I directed it to PISA in the belief that it had to be salvaged for the State. Capt. THOMAS SPATARO who was present at our arrival, when made aware of the huge quantity of explosives and that other two trucks were necessary for the transportation of the remainder, ordered the explosives to be taken back to the place from where I brought it and stated that he would inform the Comando Genio of Florence asking to which powder depot the material should be transported. Furthermore, I got instructions to go to the dump with the workers in order to remove and destroy those mines which could not be neutralized. On my way back I had in mind to act differently but I was afraid to act against the orders received. On Tuesday 17th July I returned again with two squads and destroyed 170 Tellermines on the seashore of the Citta giardini. Before finishing the days work I spoke with the Sindaco (Mr. Borelli the contractor was present) and we agreed that the whole material will be destroyed by 21 July by the specialised workers of the Sub Zone Command. The place for the destructions of the mines had been chosen because it was not too far away from the dump and because the road was fairly good so that the load was not too much exposed to shock and was far enough away from inhabited houses.

On Wednesday 18th I went to continue the work with the two squads, but I was met by three young men who impeded my entry to the villa and said that they got these orders from Captain STEELE who would himself remove the mines and throw them in the sea. I went to the Lido of Camaiore to see the Captain and found that I had been told the truth. Before going back to PISA I went to see the Sindaco and to tell him what happened but I could not see him because he had gone to LUCCA. Before leaving I met Mr. Borelli to whom I explained the position.

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On Wednesday 18th I went to continue the work with the two squads, but I was met by three young men who impeded my entry to the villa and said that they got these orders from Captain STELLA who would himself remove the mines and throw them in the sea. I went to the Lido of Gamaio to see the Captain and found that I had been told the truth. Before going back to PISA I went to see the Sindaco and to tell him what happened but I could not see him because he had gone to LUCCA. Before leaving I met Mr. Borelli to whom I explained the position. Borelli thought the orders of the English Officer were unreasonable because mines thrown in the sea very often happen to come into the nets of the fishermen and told Captain STELLA his opinion on the matter by phone through an interpreter of the Governatore and they agreed that a truck given by the C.L.A. and the specialized workers would take the load to Balipedo. This happened in the morning between 8 and 8.30. It was hoped that transportation would be completed during the day but the truck did not arrive until 11.40. The work began by transporting 240 CS Mines, i.e. 1050 Kg with an Alfa Romeo truck to Balinedo. We lost time again because a workman had to go to the flat of the chief gunner. Unloading was finished at 1345. The car was in a rather bad condition having come back from a long trip to Garfagnana and it was too late for a second load as the workers finished for the day at 1500 hours. Seeing no imminent danger if the Carabinieri on guard did not allow anyone to touch the mines or the grenades, I decided in agreement with Borelli to continue the removal next day.

I directed the removal with the greatest care which is shown by the fact that in three days there was no casualty among the workers who together with the drivers felt safe and I never had to compel them to work. I tried to do my best to repair the mistake of storing so many explosives in the centre of the city.

The workers of this Command were:

Mariotti Dero Controzzi Fioravante
Cianfaldoni Tito Badalassi Angelo

Novi Renzo

Grassini Alberto

Sbrana Nello.

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- 2 -

In order to be more careful I asked for 5 experienced workers of the Borelli firm to load and unload the material.

2nd Lt. Giovanni Parenti.

Technical report on the causes of the explosion of the dump of mines and explosives which occurred on the 18th July at Viareggio.

Reference signal of the Prefect of LUCCA of 21st July the Sub Zone Command of PISA formed a technical Commission to investigate the causes of the explosion of the dump of trotyl and mines in Viareggio (Via Giosue Carducci corner Via G. d'Annunzio) which occurred on the 18th July at 1600 hours. The above Commission was composed of Major PASQUA Sub Zone Commander and Lt. CASICCI Trentino, OC of the 13th Squad in PISA.

The Commission visited the site and questioned Mr. BORELLI (director of the Civilian Contractors carrying out mine clearance on the seashore for the Comune) and the guards appointed by the Comune. The following was elucidated:

- a) The Borelli firm began to form the dump in the early days of June;
- b) On the day of the accident, 18 July the mines and explosives located as shown in the attached drawing were
C.S./ Italian type mines in wood N.
Italian Tellermine 350
Trotyl (Blocks) 160
Booby trap mines 800 Kg
Grenade 10
Artillery projectile 1
Empty C.S. Mine Boxes 1
200
- c) As shown on the drawing, the villa Montauti where the material was stored, was separated from the American Red Cross building by a passage of approximately 2.5 metres wide. In this yard were stored C/S type mines, Tellermine, artillery projectiles and empty C.S. mine boxes. 3 windows on the first floor of the Red Cross building looked on to this yard.
- d) Two Carabinieri on service the day before the accident declared that they had to warn the service personnel of the club and some negro soldiers who threw bottles, paper and cigarettes into the yard and even ignited on the window ledge a petrol cooker.
- e) The guard on service on the 18th at the time of the accident states that he saw at about 1600 hours, smoke and a small flame coming from a mine-box stored in the yard under one of the windows and without hesitating he called to people passing by, but after one minute the explosion took place.
- f) Mr. Borelli in answer to questions acknowledged forming the dump and confirmed the approximate number of mines; he also stated that some of the C.S. mines had detonators and that a few days before the accident one of the workmen picked up a "handful" of cigarette ends in the yard.

800 Kg

10

1

1

200

trotyl (blocks)

Booby trap mines

Grenade

Artillery projectile

Empty C.S. Mine Boxes

- c) As shown on the drawing, the villa Montauti where the material was stored, was separated from the American Red Cross building by a passage of approximately 2.5 metres wide. In this yard were stored C/S type mines, Tellermine, artillery projectiles and empty C.S. mine boxes. 3 windows on the first floor of the Red Cross building looked on to this yard.
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- f) Mr. Borelli in answer to questions acknowledged forming the dump and confirmed the approximate number of mines; he also stated that some of the C.S. mines had detonators and that a few days before the accident one of the workmen picked up a "handful" of cigarette ends in the yard.

The Commission ascertained that the primary explosion took place in the yard which caused sympathetic detonation of the explosives stored in the house. This is deduced from the fact that the buildings of the Red Cross and the three surrounding houses were destroyed. The trotyl stored on the terrace has not exploded because it came under the ruins.

The Commission stated that the explosion was preceded by a flame and by smoke (no black and no thick smoke) therefore self-combustion is excluded and believes that the explosion was caused by an external element (cigarette end or other inflammable means) which set on fire a box-mine which in turn set on fire some detonators in the trotyl blocks.

The Commission

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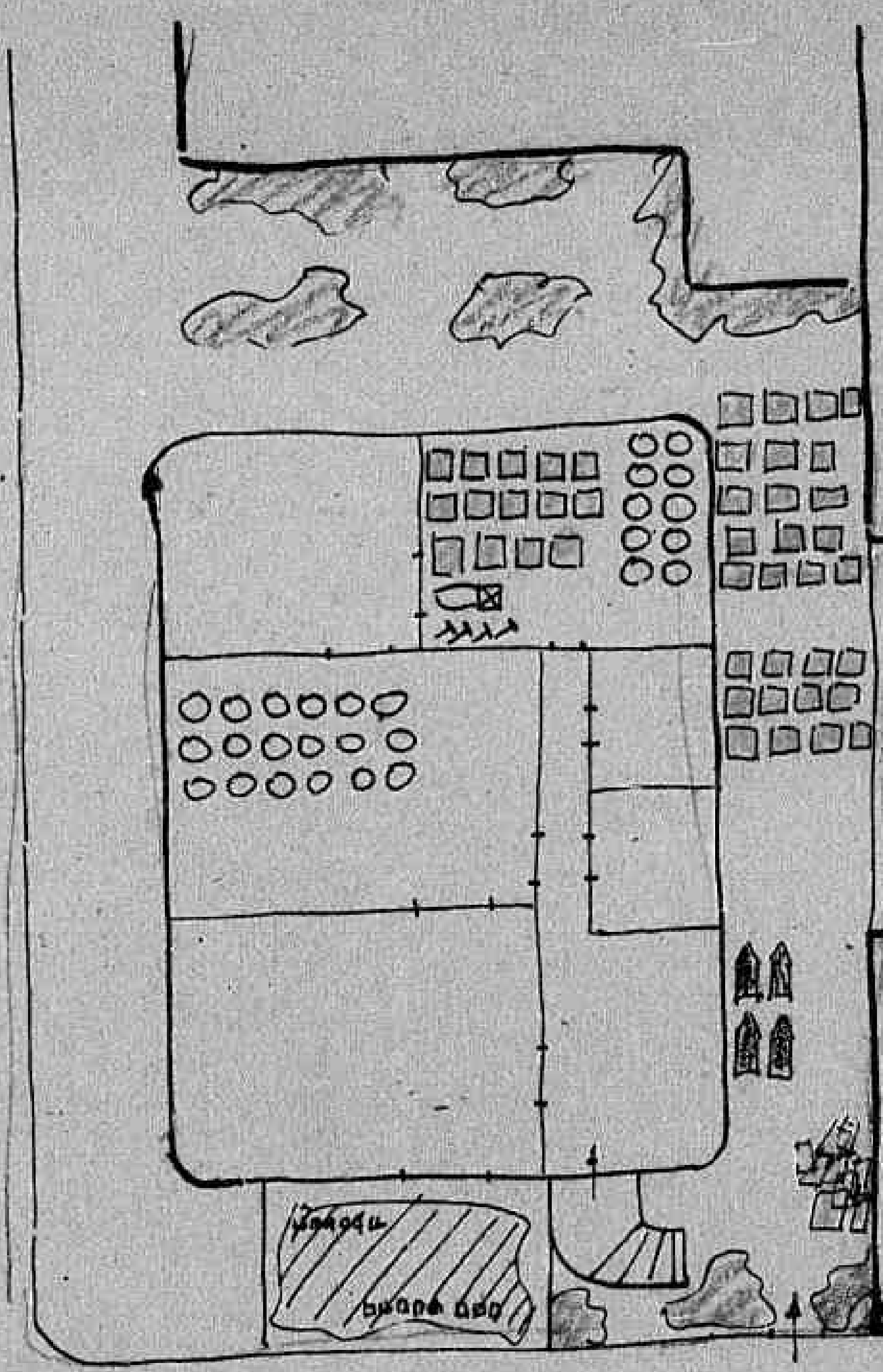
Major Pasque Bernardo

Lt. Casicci Trentino.

ALLEGAT
RELAZIO

12

Via S. Annunzio



Via S. Ciroliucci

ALLEGATO ALLA
RELAZIONE TECNICA

166



Chio
Red Cross -

Ponte al
1° Piano

- Mine T.M.i
- " C.S.
- ◁ Trucchi artigiani
- ooooo Tubo in Bocchetti speso
- ◻◻◻◻ Caselle unite
- TTT Trappole

Via S. Cosolucci

(14)

STATEMENT
by
Fenucci Mario

The undersigned declares as follows:

As squad leader of the IV squad Servizio Bonifica Campi Minati from 4th to 16th June 45 I was clearing the sea-shore of Viareggio from C.S. Mines. The mines lifted by my squad remained on the spot because the Sindaco of Viareggio prohibited their destruction; the next morning the mines disappeared, they have been taken away by the contractor; it came to my knowledge that the chief of the firm sold the explosive to the Chairman of the Unione Industriali di Carrara; when the contractor was warned to leave the mines he replied that he got orders from the Sindaco to salvage the mines and he prohibited us from blowing them up. I never knew that there was a dump of mines nor where this dump was located.

Pisa 19/7/45

Fenucci Mario

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STATEMENT
by
Squad leader Pardi Giuseppe

The undersigned declares as follows:

I was working on mine clearance since the first days of May 45 on the seashore of Viareggio with a squad composed of: Pardi Cirano, Bacchini Lido, Vizzardelli Manlio.

I never stored explosives.

As witnesses I can call all the workmen of Viareggio who worked on the seashore on mineclearance. They declared that they stored all the explosives because so ordered by the chief of the firm. I must add that I never knew where the mines have been stored.

The mines lifted and neutralized by us and left on the seashore, were, during our rest period taken away daily by Mr. Borelli. Mr. Borelli was told that he had no right to take away the explosive but he answered that the Sindaco gave him order to salvage it and therefore refused to give order for destruction.

The 16th June, our last workday in Viareggio the Chairman of the Unione Industriali di Carrara came to visit Mr. Borelli in the Hotel in order to purchase the explosive stored by Borelli himself.

Pisa 19/7/45

Squad leader
Pardi Giuseppe

Copy letter

(1A)

Subject: Depot of trotyl at Viareggio

To : Zone Command Toscana - Firenze

The 9th July the Commune of Viareggio signaled that in a villa of this Commune there is a dump of 2-3 tons of trotyl cartridges and 200 C/S. and Tellermines. This material has been lifted by a squad organised by the Commune of Viareggio. After a visit to the dump the removal and destruction of mines have been provided for but owing to lack of convenient depots the huge quantity of trotyl could not be removed and transported.

As the Commune of Viareggio is urging the removal of such material, which is very dangerous, and as our Comand cannot remove this material to a safe place, it is felt that higher Comand should be signalled to take the necessary steps to remove this big quantity of trotyl and to put it in powder magazine.

Sub Zone Commander Pisa
Maj. Bernardo Pasqua.

(11)
Pisa 20/7/1945

La mattina del 14/7/45 il Comandante del 13° Nucleo Ten. Palam-
zo Michele mi pregò di recarmi a Viareggio per ispezionare una villa
in cui erano state depositate mine ed altri ordigni esplosivi e per
domandare al Sindaco che fine aveva fatta l'esplosivo recuperato
dalle nostre squadre. Il colloquio col Sindaco si svolse alla pre-
senza del Sig. Borelli, impresario della bonifica dell'arenile di
Viareggio appaltato dal Comune, e mi confermarono che tutti gli or-
digni esplosivi erano stati accumulati nella villa dall'Impresa Bo-
relli per la ragione che si trovava in una posizione contrale per il
punto in cui svolgevano i lavori ed inoltre che dell'esplosivo tolto
dalle nostre squadre, che in Viareggio cominciarono i lavori di boni-
fica, non sapevano niente. Il Sig. Borelli usciti dal colloquio mi ri-
ferì che un pò di tritolo i nostri minatori l'avevano dato al capo
cannoniere del Balipodio per usi di demolizione di alcune piazzole.

Tornato al Comando riferii che la quantità di esplosivo era di
circa 30 ql. (di cui circa la metà sciolto in cubetti da 200 gr. ed
incartati con carta nera e l'altro ancora racchiuso nell'involucro
delle C.S. o nell'involucro delle Teller o in granate ed ordigni esplo-
sivi a trappola) e che il Sindaco purchè si togliesse il grave perico-
lo metteva a disposizione un camion.

Il 16 c.m. mi recai sul posto con 7 operai di questo Comando
S.B.C.M. e fu caricato un'auto con l'esplosivo sciolto che lo portai
a Pisa reputando fosse da recuperarsi allo Stato, come avevo capito
dall'interessamento che il capo Nucleo metteva per il tritolo. Al Co-
mando di Pisa il Cap. Spataro Tommaso, presente all'arrivo, mentre già
si erano scaricati alcuni secchi visto il grosso quantitativo e consi-
derato su miei indicazioni che il totale dell'esplosivo sciolto impor-
tava il carico di altri 2 camion mi ordinò di far riportare allo stesso
deposito l'esplosivo prelevato, nel mentre avrebbe provveduto con sol-
lecitudine il Comando Genio di Firenze perchè provvedesse ad indicare
una polveriera ove trasportare la considerevole massa di tritolo. Il
Comando inoltre disponeva che il sottoscritto si recasse con i mina-
tori nei giorni successivi al deposito in mensione, per la completa
rimozione e relativa distruzione degli ordigni da cui non poteva to-

...e dell'esplosivo tolto
fica, non sapevano niente. Il Sig. Borelli usciti dal colloquio mi riferì che un pò di tritolo i nostri minatori l'avevano dato al capo cannoniere del Balipedio per usi di demolizione di alcune piazzole.

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Il 16 c.m. mi recai sul posto con 7 operai di questo Comando S.B.C.M. e fu caricato un'auto con l'esplosivo sciolto che lo portai a Pisa reputando fosse da recuperarsi allo Stato, come avevo capito dall'interessamento che il capo Nucleo metteva per il tritolo. Al Comando di Pisa il Cap. Spataro Tommaso, presente all'arrivo, mentre già si erano scaricati alcuni secchi visto il grosso quantitativo e considerato su miei indicazioni che il totale dell'esplosivo sciolto importava il carico di altri 2 camion mi ordinò di far riportare allo stesso deposito l'esplosivo prelevato, nel mentre avrebbe avvertito con sollecitudine il Comando Genio di Firenze perchè provvedesse ad indicare una polveriera ove trasportare la considerevole massa di tritolo. Il Comando inoltre disponeva che il sottoscritto si recasse con i minatori nei giorni successivi al deposito in mensione, per la completa rimozione e relativa distruzione degli ordigni da cui non poteva togliersi l'esplosivo e delle mine ancora attive, in luogo che dovevo scegliere. Durante la strada di ritorno volevo fare in maniera diversa ma temetti di andare contro gli ordini. Martedì 17 Luglio tornai di nuovo con le due squadre e cominciai a distruggere un numero di 170 Teller in riva al mare della detta città giardini. Prima di vedere il lavoro del giorno parlai col Sindaco che fece essere presente anche l'imprenditore Borelli e rimanemmo d'accordo che con gli operai brevettati dal S.B.C.M. si sarebbe distrutto tutto l'esplosivo entro sabato 21 c.m. sul posto sopraindicato, scelto per i requisiti di essere poco distante, di poterlo raggiungere col camion su strada asfaltata senza tante scosse e sufficientemente distante dagli abitanti.

Venerdì 18 c.m. mi recai ugualmente per continuare il lavoro con le due squadre, ma trovai tre giovani che mi impedivano di accedere alla villa e che riferivano essere tali gli ordini ricevuti dal Capi-

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tano Steele il quale si incaricava in persona di rimuovere e gettare tutto in mare. Mi recai al Lido di Camaiore dal detto Capitano e mi accertai che tutto corrispondeva a verità. Prima di ritornare a Pisa mi recai al Comune per salutare e far consapevole il Sindaco, ma non potei perchè partito per Lucca; mentre sono per ripartire mi incontro con l'Impresario Borelli a cui, come esponente interessato del Sindaco, lo faccio noto. Quest'ultimo mal ravvide le disposizioni dell'ufficiale inglese facendomi notare che le mine gettate in mare con facilità venivano prese nelle reti dei pescatori e perchè il lavoro non veniva eseguito con operai esperti; così espresse tali ragioni a mezzo telefono al Cap.Steele tramite un'interprete del Governatore e si giunse all'accordo che con un automezzo fornito dalla C.L.A. gli operai brevettati avrebbero provveduto nella giornata a trasportare gli ordigni al Balipedio. Questo avveniva nel mattino tra le 8 e le 8,30. Si sperava effettuare il completo trasporto il giorno stesso, ma l'auto fu messa a disposizione dalla C.L.A. alle 11,40. Ugualmente si iniziò il trasporto delle mine C.S. esposte sotto le finestre della ex casa del fascio. Alle 12,15 si parte col carico di 210 C.S. equivalenti a Kg. 1.050 a passo d'uomo con un camion Alfa Romeo e si compie il lungo giro per giungere al Balipedio. Si perde ancora tempo perchè bisogna attendere che un'operaio vada a chiamare a casa il capo cannoniere, quindi si scaricano dove esse indica e si fanno le 13,45. L'autista dell'Alfa Romeo aveva la macchina poco efficiente, perchè di ritorno da un lungo viaggio in Garfagnana, ed essendo ormai troppo tardi per un secondo viaggio, cessando alle 15 il contratto dei nostri operai ed essendo egualmente insufficiente a sgombrare tutto. Non vedendo imminente pericolo se la vigilanza dei CC.RR. non permetteva ad alcuno di molestare l'esplosivo e le granate, decisi unitamente all'impresario del Comune Borelli, di continuare l'indomani il lavoro di sgombrare.

Ho diretto i lavori con tutte le precauzioni come dimostra il fatto che in tre giorni di lavoro non è accaduto il minimo incidente agli uomini che dirigevano e sia agli operai che agli autisti si sentivano sicuri tanto che nessuno l'ho dovuto mai costringere. Mi sono prodigato con tutto lo spirito per rimediare lo sbaglio di avere accumulato tanti ordigni esplosivi e tante tritolo nel centro della cittadina, ma il pericolo non era così grave se nessuno tranne di noi avesse

tati avrebbero provveduto nalla giornata e trasportare gli ordigni al Balipedio. Questo avveniva nel mattino tra le 8 e le 8,30. Si sperava effettuare il completo trasporto il giorno stesso, ma l'auto fu messa a disposizione dalla C.L.A. alle 11,40. Ugualmente si iniziò il trasporto delle mine C.S. esposte sotto le finestre della ex casa del fascio. Alle 12,15 si parte col carico di 210 C.S. equivalenti a Kg. 1.050 a passo d'uomo con un camion Alfa Romeo e si compie il lungo giro per giungere al Balipedio. Si perde ancora tempo perchè bisogna attendere che un'operaio vada a chiamare a casa il capo cannoniere, quindi si scaricano dove esse indicò e si fanno le 13,45. L'autista dell'Alfa Romeo aveva la macchina poco efficiente, perchè di ritorno da un lungo viaggio in Garfagnana, ed essendo ormai troppo tardi per un secondo viaggio, cessando alle 15 il contratto dei nostri operai ed essendo egualmente insufficiente a sgombrare tutto. Non vedendo imminente pericolo se la vigilanza dei CC.RR. non permetteva ad alcuno di molestare l'esplosivo e le granate, decisi unitamente all'impresario del Comune Borelli, di continuare l'indomani il lavoro di sgombrare.

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Gli operai di questo Comando erano:

Mariotti Dero	Controzzi Fioravante	Novi Renzo
Gianfaldoni Tito	Badalassi Angelo	
Grassini Alberto	Sbrana Nello	

Per eseguire il lavoro più cautamente ed in meno tempo mi feci dare cinque operai esperti dell'Impresa Borelli per eseguire ⁹⁹ ~~80~~ ^{Kice=} mente i carichi e gli scarichi dei camion.

S. C. Fioravanti Parenti

COMANDO SOTTOZONA PISA

Relazione tecnica sulle cause dell'esplosione del deposito di esplosivo e mine avvenute il 18 corr. in Viareggio.-

Mi tro richiesta telegrafica del Prefetto di Lucca, il 21 corr. il Comando Sottosquadra BOM di Pisa ha costituito la Commissione tecnica per accertare le cause che hanno determinato l'esplosione del deposito di tritolo e mine in Viareggio (in Via Giusè Carducci angolo Via G. d'Annunzio) esplosione avvenuta il 18 corr. alle ore 16. Detta commissione è composta dal magg. Pasqua Bernardo, Comandante la Sottosquadra BOM di Pisa, e dal Ten. Cassici Trentino, Comandante il 13° Nucleo in Pisa,-

La Commissione ha eseguito un sopralluogo in Viareggio, e dagli interrogatori fatti al dirigente della Impresa civile Sig. Borelli, impresa appaltata dal Comune per eseguire i lavori bonifica dell'arenile; al personale di vigilanza istituito dal Comune e dal CC.M.M., è emerso quanto segue:

a) la Ditta Borelli ed una iniziativa imprenditoriale a costituire il deposito successivamente nei primi giorni del mese di giugno:

b) alla data del 18 c.m., data del sinistro, l'esplosivo e mine depositate erano distribuiti, come da schizzo allegato, nelle seguenti quantità approssimative:

mine italiane del tipo C.S. in legno	n. 350
" "	" 160
tritolo sciolto in blocchetti	" 800 Kg.
mine con congegni e trappole	" 10
granata perforante	" 1
proiettile d'artiglieria	" 1
cassette vuote di mine tipo C.S.	" 200

c) dallo schizzo allegato si rileva come la villa Montauti, nella quale era costituito il deposito, era separata dall'edificio del Club della Croce Rossa Americana da un cortile largo circa m. 2,50, in cui trovavansi alligate mine del tipo C.S., Teller, proiettile d'artiglieria e cassette vuote di mine C.B. Su detto cortile si aprivano n. 3 finestre del primo piano dell'edificio occupato dalla Croce Rossa Ameri-

80. di Pisa, e del Ten. Casicci Irentino, Comandante il 13° Nucleo in Pisa, -

La Commissione ha eseguito un sopralluogo in Viareggio, e dagli interrogatori fatti al dirigente della Impresa civile Sig. Borelli, impresa appaltata dal Comune per eseguire i lavori bonifica dell'arenile; al personale di vigilanza istituito dal Comune e dai CC. RR., è emerso quanto segue:

a) la Ditta Borelli di sua iniziativa incominciò a costituire il deposito susseguente nei primi giorni del mese di giugno:

b) alla data del 18 c.m., data del sinistro, l'esplosivo e mine depositate erano distribuiti, come da schizzo allegato, nelle seguenti quantità approssimative:

mine italiane del tipo C.S. in legno n. 350

" " " Teller " 160

tritolo sciolto in blocchetti " 800 Kg.

mine con congegni a trappola " 10

granate perforante " 1

proiettile d'artiglieria " 1

cassette vuote di mine tipo C.S. " 200

c) dallo schizzo allegato si rileva come la villa Montauti, nella quale era costituito il deposito, era separata dall'edificio del Club della Croce Rossa Americana da un cortile largo circa m. 2,50, in cui trovavansi allagate mine del tipo C.S., Teller, proiettile d'artiglieria e cassette vuote di mine C.S. Su detto cortile si aprivano n. 3 finestre del primo piano dell'edificio occupato dalla Croce Rossa Americana.

b) Interrogati due Carabinieri Acali che hanno prestato servizio nei giorni precedenti al sinistro, hanno asserito che sono stati costretti a richiamare vivamente il personale di servizio ed alcuni militari di colore del Club, che dalle finestre prospicienti al cortile, ove trovavansi gli ordigni esplosivi, gettavano bottiglie, carta, mozziconi di sigarette e persino accendevano sul davanzale di una delle finestre dei fornelli a benzina, facendo presente il pericolo imminente.

e) Il vigile comunale di servizio il giorno in corso, nell'ora dell'incidente, afferma di aver visto, verso le ore 16 di detto giorno, del fumo ed una fiammella sprigionarsi da una cassetta di mina in legno depositata nel cortile sottostante alle finestre e, senza innescarlo,

dava l'allarme ai passanti, dove circa un minuto avveniva l'esplosione.

f) Dall'interrogatorio del Sig. Borelli, oltre ad avere avuto conferma della costituzione del deposito e del quantitativo presumibile di mine, ha affermato che alcune mine del tipo C.S. contenevano ancora qualche detonatore e qualche giorno prima del sinistro un suo operaio aveva raccolto nel cortile tra le mine una "manata" di mozziconi di sigarette.-

La Commissione ha constatato infine sul luogo dell'incidente che il tritolo esplosivo, rappresenta solo quello depositato nel cortile che a sua volta ha provocato per influenza l'esplosione di quello depositato in cucina (vedi schizzo). Ciò si deduce dal fatto che da entrambi questi lati si è avuta la distruzione dei locali occupati dalla Croce Rossa e quella di tre fabbricati vicini. Non è esploso il tritolo depositato sul terrazzo perché si è rilevato giacente sotto le macerie.

Da quanto ~~esposto~~ sopra esposto la Commissione, appurato che l'esplosione è stata preceduta da fiamma e fumo non nero e neppure denso, esclude trattarsi di autocombustione (tantopiù che trattasi di esplosivo molto stabile) e ritiene che la causa sia esterna (mozziconi di sigarette o altro mezzo incendiario) che ha provocato l'accensione di una cassetta di mina in legno, comunicando il fuoco probabilmente a detonatori contenuti in qualche blocchetto di tritolo e quindi la conseguente esplosione.

La Commissione

Magg. Pasqua Bernardo

Ten. Casicci Trentino

Li Casen hentin

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La Commissione

Magg. Pasqua Bernardo

Ten. Casicci Trentino

Li Casen Trento

990

Il sottoscritto dichiara quanto segue:

Capo squadra della IV squadra Servizio Bonifica Campi Minati, sono stato chiamato a bonificare la spiaggia di Viareggio dal 4 giugno al 16 giugno 1945, la quale era minata con mine C.S., tutte le mine tolte dalla mia squadra sono state lasciate sulla spiaggia, perchè il Sindaco di Viareggio aveva proibito di farle esplodere; alla mattina seguente le mine erano sparite, prelevate dal capo dell'impresa incaricata dello scasso; in seguito mi risulta che detto capo vendeva l'esplosivo al Presidente dell'Unione Industriali di Carrara; affidato il capo ~~XXXXXX~~ dell'impresa a lasciare le mine, ci rispose che aveva ordine dal Sindaco di recuperare le mine, il quale rifiutò di darci l'autorizzazione di farle esplodere, non ho mai saputo che ci fosse un deposito di dette mine ne dove fosse.

F.to Fenucci Mario

Pisa 19/7/1945

f.i.c.
IL COMANDANTE
la Sezione B.C.M. P.M.
(Maggi. B. Pizzini)
Hayden



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risulta che detto capo vendeva l'esplosivo al Presidente dell'Unione Industriali di Carrara; affidato il capo ~~amministratore~~ dell'impresa a lasciare le mine, ci rispose che aveva ordine dal Sindaco di recuperare le mine, il quale rifiutò di darci l'autorizzazione di farle esplodere, non ho mai saputo che ci fosse un deposito di dette mine ne dove fosse. -

F.to Tenucci Vario

Pisa I9/7/I945

f.c.c.
IL COMANDANTE
la Sezione B.C.M. Pied
(Minghi, B. Pasqua)
Hayden

25

Il sottoscritto dichiara quanto segue:

dai primi di maggio 1945, con la squadra composta dai seguenti rastrellatori: Pardi Cirano, Bachini Lido, Vizzardelli Manlio, ho eseguito i lavori di bonifica spiaggia di Viareggio.-

In quanto all'esplosivo recuperato non ne ho mai immagazzinato per niente.-

A testimonianza di quanto sopra posso citare tutti gli operai di Viareggio addetti allo scasso della spiaggia. Da quanto mi dicevano, loro stessi immagazzinavano l'esplosivo recuperato, dietro ordine del capo dell'Impresa. Aggiungo che non sapevo nemmeno dove si trovasse il magazzino di mine.

Giornalmente le mine recuperate disattivate che lasciavamo sulla spiaggia, nelle ore del nostro riposo, venivano asportate dal capo dell'Impresa Sig. Borelli.- Avvertito il Sig. Borelli che non era autorizzato a prendere l'esplosivo, ci rispose che aveva ordine dal Sindaco di recuperarlo e pertanto ci rifiutò l'ordine di farlo esplodere.-

Il 16 giugno ultimo giorno di lavoro da parte nostra a Viareggio, venne a trovare in albergo, il Sig. Borelli, il direttore dell'Unione Industriali di Carrara per acquistare l'esplosivo immagazzinato dal Borelli stesso.-

Pisa 19/7/1945

Il Capo Squadra
Pardi Giuseppe

IL COMANDANTE
la Sezione B.C.M. Pisa

(M. P. Pasqua)



Manlio Vizzardelli

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Pisa 19/7/1945

h.c.c.

IL COMANDANTE
la Sezione B.C.M. Pisa

(Michele B. Pasqua)

Michele B. Pasqua

Il Capo Squadra
Pardi Giuseppe



980

N. 2117 di prot.

Pisa 18/7/1945

OGGETTO:
Deposito tritolo
Viareggio.-

AL COMANDO ZONA B.C.M. TOSCANA

F I R C N Z E

Si porta a conoscenza di codesto Comando che il Comune di Viareggio ha segnalato il 9 u.s. che presso una villa di quella città era custodito in deposito un quantitativo di tritolo in cartucce di circa ql.25 - 30, oltre a circa 200 mine C.S. e Tellermine, materiale questo recuperato da squadre specializzate istituite dal predetto Comune. Effettuato un sopralluogo, si è provveduto al ritiro e brillamento delle mine; non si è potuto però procedere al recupero e trasporto del tritolo, sia per mancanza di locali adatti ove sistemarlo, sia per la ingente quantità di esso.-

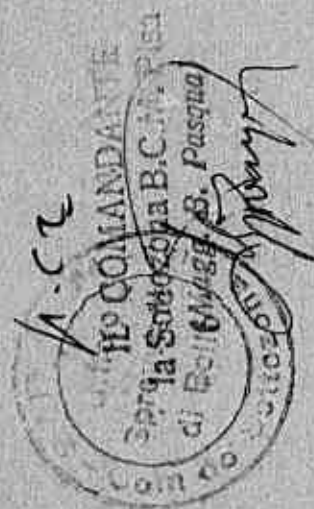
Poichè il Comune di Viareggio fa premure per il ritiro di tale materiale, che costituisce un serio pericolo per la pubblica incolumità, e non avendo questo Comando possibilità alcuna di provvedere al ritiro ed alla adeguata sistemazione di esso, si ritiene necessario rendere nota la cosa ai Superiori Comandi perchè sia provveduto al ritiro del forte quantitativo di tritolo ed alla sua sistemazione in apposita polveriera.-

Il Com.te la Sottozona BCM Pisa
P/to (Magg. Pasqua Bernardo)

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Il Com.te la Sottozona BCM Pisa
F/to (Magg. Pasqua Bernardo)



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