

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785017

ACC

10000/109/940

OPERAT
JUNE -

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785017

10000/109/940

OPERATIONS, 80 ENGINEER, BASE WORKSHOPS, SAEC
JUNE - OCT. 1944

COS

10

See from page 2 that there are 2 or 3 Joining factories which make "Flambo" huts and Camp Structure. Do you think there is any possibility of getting some of this production made available for Emergency housing?

Well s/f Med. 14/10. also to make
 Yto (a) raise point of relevant Committee of AKRS
 (b) write to No III Jst. 17/15th

12

1241

DCOS Leominster Sect.

Please see above 2 minutes, and
 take action as instructed by COS
 in minutes 11.

16/10
 16/10
 Office of Chief of Staff

Some of this production made available in Emergency housing?

Well spotted. ^{14/10.} Get JEOS EOC. also to take
 (a) raise point of relevant Committee of ARS
 (b) write to No III Dist. 175/15th

12.

JEOS Communi Sect. 1241

Please see above 2 minutes, and
 take action as instructed by COS
 in minutes 11.

Exhibit 1742

16/10
 Office of Chief of Staff

13.

Office of JCS

Noted.
 Supplied 102 taken.

~~Exhibit 1742~~
 from the

5005
COS

9

Ref: GOR/H

General Officer Administration,
UDF ADM HQ (Main),
C. M. F.

11 Oct 44

13 OCT Recd

8

My dear Maurice,

Many thanks for your letter of the 11th October, intimating your concurrence in the communication to the Italian Government of the information regarding the operations of our 80 Engineer Base Workshops in Italy. I agree with you now that this should have been communicated through the A.C.C., and am sorry that I did not think of it before, and shall certainly bear this in mind for future similar action; unfortunately I have already told Mr. Hofmeyr, our Deputy Prime Minister, that I am communicating this through the Ambassador, and matters had better stand thus. I gladly accept your request to forward copies for your information.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Meas.

W/13A

Brig.-Gen. M. Lush,
Allied Control Commission,
ROME.

PA

12:10

8

HEADQUARTERS,
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION,
APO 394

Office of the Chief of Staff.
+++++

11th October 1944.

7

Thank you for your letter of 11th October and for letting me see the correspondence enclosed therein. I can see no objection to this information being communicated to the Italian Government and although I should have suggested that it should go through this Commission I do not think that any harm can be done by sending it through the Ambassador.

I should, however, be very grateful if I could have copies of the enclosures and Captain van der Merwe has kindly said that he will provide them.

I am sorry we shall not see you for three weeks but I hope you will have a good trip to the Union and I would ask you to convey my respects to your Field Marshal.

M. S. LUSH

Major-General F. Theron, CBE, DSO, MC,
UDF Mm HQ (Main),
C. M. P.

1259

see 9

Ref: GOM/4

General Officer Administration,
UDF ADM HQ (Main)
C M F.

11 Oct 44.

My dear Maurice,

Will you please look at the enclosed correspondence, which explains itself, and let me know whether you have any objection to this information being communicated to the Italian Government through the British Ambassador under the circumstances set out by me.

I am leaving tomorrow for Naples for a few days and thereafter I intend visiting the Division and General Alexander and proceed to Cairo on Monday and then to the Union to report progress to my Master and shall therefore be away about three weeks; hope to see you on my return.

Please return all enclosures - the bearer, Capt van der Merwe will wait therefor.

Yours sincerely,

David Keir.

Brig-Gen M Lush,
Allied Control Commission,
ROME.

see 8238

We are obtaining copies.

COPY

REF: GOA/11

General Officer Administration,
UDF ADM HQ (Main).
C M F.

5th October, 1944.
10th.

My dear Ambassador,

When the Honourable J.H. Hofmeyr was here, we had a talk with the Marquise Venosta and the conversation naturally covered a wide range of subjects, during which the Italian under Secretary for Foreign Affairs expressed gratitude not only for the treatment of Italian prisoners of war in South Africa, but also gratification that a number of Italians had been given the opportunity to do work and learn trades in South Africa.

The conversation then spread to reconstruction in Italy and the Secretary of State then said to Mr Hofmeyr that some of the Italian workmen so trained and exercised in South Africa would probably be very useful in the process of rehabilitating Italian industry. I then remarked to His Excellency that one of our Engineer Companies in Italy was engaged over a wide area in restoring Italian factories and was producing war material and supplies for the Allied war effort in Italy, and that some 25 factories were now operating under the skilled direction of South African technical personnel and employing some 4,000 Italian workmen and the prospect was that this would be considerably stepped-up in the near future. The Marquise became very interested and then asked whether a list of these factories and an outline of their activities could be supplied to him and I undertook to endeavour to do so.

I have now obtained a report from the Officer Commanding this Company (Lt Col Campbell Pitt, Commanding 80 Engineer Base Workshops, South African Engineer Corps), which gives a very interesting resume of what has been achieved and I may mention further, for your information, that as soon as the industrial area in the Po Valley has been occupied, the intention is for this Company to go forward and do a similar job of work there and their existing activities will then be taken over by a similar SAEC Company of technicians being made available by my Government from the Middle East with the concurrence of General Paget.

If you deem it expedient, perhaps you would consider conveying this information to the Marquise, as I personally feel of course that it should properly be conveyed through diplomatic channels; I understand that Brigadier Andersson, Director of Works, has no objection to this information being conveyed; I also enclose copy of an interesting letter written by him to Campbell Pitt and his officers and men, which places on record the value of the work performed. However, before you communicate with the Italian Foreign Office, you may wish to satisfy yourself that the British Military Authorities, from a security point of view, have no objection to the communication of this information to the Italian Government.

During the talk I had with Sir Roy Feddon at Lush's dinner party on Tuesday, when you were present, I gathered that he was on a mission from Oliver

expressed gratitude not only for the treatment of Italian prisoners of war in South Africa, but also gratification that a number of Italians had been given the opportunity to do work and learn trades in South Africa.

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During the talk I had with Sir Roy Feddon at Lush's dinner party on Tuesday, when you were present, I gathered that he was on a mission from Oliver Lyttleton on the cognate subject of restoring Italian industry for the production of war supplies for the Allies, both in Europe and eventually in the Far East, and told him that an initial beginning had already been made by the work being done by Campbell Pitt and his technical supervisors, in which he exhibited great interest and told me he had heard of the work these people were doing and was going to investigate it. I mentioned to him that I was getting a report which I would send to him and I therefore enclose a further copy which you may wish to pass to Sir Roy as I understand he is operating under the aegis of your Embassy.

Field Marshal Smuts has directed me to return to the Union towards the end of the month to report progress on the activities of the South Africans in the Mediterranean and I shall leave here approximately the 15th inst. I shall call on you before my departure in case there are any observations which you wish to make and which you think are likely to be of interest to my Master, who,

as you

-2-

as you are no doubt aware, is in close contact with Mr Churchill in their common pursuit of the prosecution of the war.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) F H THERON

His Excellency Sir Noel Charles, Bart., KCMB MC
H B M Ambassador,
British Embassy,
ROME.

P.S. Maj Gen Sir Brian Robertson on behalf of AAI, and Brigadier Lush for ACC, have now informed me that there is no objection to the communication of this information to the Italian Government by you.

"F H T"

80 EBW SAEC UDF CMF

1st October 1944.

RESUME OF ACTIVITIES

Authority for the formation of 80 EBW SAEC for service in any theatre of war, was granted by AG UDF on 14th December 1943.

The Unit was formed in the Middle East, and was immediately sent CMF. It disembarked at Taranto on 16th March '44. Although the Unit vehicles did not arrive until 3rd April, a start was immediately made in taking up its duties.

The duties of the Coy are not those normally carried out by an EBW, but consist of the supervision and control on behalf of DW of a considerable number of factories producing a large variety of products. Most of the factories had been severely damaged by demolition and/or bombing.

Attached herewith is a list of the factories this Unit controls, showing the various items produced at the different factories. It will be seen from the list of the factories that the Unit's activities are spread over the whole of Southern Italy, and extend as far north as Terni.

Several factories which were put into the production stage, have already been handed over to either the owners or to the CE of the District concerned. These were

- (A) Maffei Nut & Bolt Factory at Barletta, which was handed over to the owners as it was found that CMI could now produce all the nuts and bolts that were required.
- (B) Colas Bitumen Works, Sabba Bitumen Works, and Neobit Bitumen Works. These bitumen works, situated in Bari, were brought into the production stage, and after the Coy had operated them for several months, were handed over to CE II District.

As the Army moved further north, DW has requested that this Coy makes preparations to hand over its factories in the South and be prepared to move further north so as to meet demands made by the Army in the field.

From the attached list it will also be seen that the Coy is able to meet practically any type of demand that may be made.

It would be difficult to single out any particular job but special mention may be made of the manufacture of the Flambo Bridge, which is now in full production. A separate report about the Flambo Bridge was submitted to SO(E) on 30th June '44. Copy of this report is attached herewith.

The value of this Coy is indicated in a minute written by DW dated 9th Aug '44, which states that "this Unit now supplies 60% of the Engineer Stores in Italy and will shortly have to supply up to 75% of the total monthly tonnage

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The Unit was recently visited by the Engineer in Chief, War Office, and I am enclosing a copy of a minute written by DW.

SGD L T C PITT

Lieut Col
COM-MANDING OFFICER, 80 EBW SAEC

4
Ref: AT/CON/154
80 EBW SAEC UDF CMF
30th June 1944.

SECRET

SO(E) SAEC UDF
HQ AAI CMF

1. Your minute UDF/115/45 dated 17th March 44 refers.
2. The largest and most important single order given to this Unit is now in course of production.
3. In view of the possibility of short supply of Bailey Bridges for this campaign, it was decided that a bridge be designed and fabricated to replace Bailey Bridges in back areas, and so release those bridges for forward areas.
4. DW sent Major Lander, RE DADW (Designs) to No 1 Workshop 80 EBW, Castellammare, to design a suitable bridge in collaboration with officers of this Unit. He had produced a tentative design, which were superseded by the present design.
5. The present design follows Bailey as closely as the following factors allow:
 - (a) It was considered unwise to attempt to manufacture the high tensile steel from which the Bailey is fabricated. Time would not allow experiments in such steel production to be made, nor having produced it, would time allow welding of such steel to be experimented with. Had it been found necessary to use special electrodes, they would not have been available.
 - (b) It was important, again from the time factor, to fabricate from sections No 2 Workshop 80 EBW could produce without the need for them to design and make special rolls.
6. The replacement bridge known as the Flambo Bridge or sometimes as the Italian Bailey, differs from the Bailey in the following respects:-
 - (a) Because it is made from a lower tensile steel it is heavier by approx 30%.
 - (b) Because the need for rapid erection is not so important, special rapid fastenings are not provided. This does not mean that the erection time is slow, it is estimated that it will only take twice as long to erect a Flambo Bridge as a Bailey Bridge.
 - (c) Because it is heavier in itself, (a 60 ft span Class 40 bridge weighs approx 23 tons), its useful load capacity decreases more rapidly as the span increases than the Bailey, but for most gaps, its useful load capacity will not differ.
7. It is similar in use to the Bailey in adaptability to span, multiplication of girders and building of piers. It is launched in a similar manner over Bailey launching equipment.
8. Preparation work i.e. installation of welding equipment, cold chisels, saws, drills etc and the fabrication of jigs, gauges, etc for mass production commenced on 1st May 44. By the 29th June, two 60 ft Class 40 bridges had been completed, and successfully passed its load test.

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8. Preparation work i.e. installation of welding equipment, cold metal saws, drills etc and the fabrication of jigs, gauges, etc for mass production commenced on 1st May 44. By the 29th June, two 60 ft Class 40 bridges had been completed, and one had successfully passed its load test.

9. The order is for one hundred 60 ft span Class 40 bridges. It is now anticipated that in July, 15 to 20 will be completed, and in August, a further 30 to 35. By October, one hundred should be completed.

10. In order to further increase the rate of production, preparations are being made to produce at Terni.

11. At present the steel is made at No 2 Workshop, 80 EEW Giovinaszo. The specification is 28 to 32 tons per square inch ultimate, having an elongation of not less than 20% over 8".

12. I know of no other case, where an Engineer Coy has undertaken the manufacture of bridges through all its stages, from the production of raw material required, to the finished article.

SGD L T C PITT Lt Col

OC 80 EEW SAEC UDF

COPY

3
Brigadier D L Anderson,
Director of Works,
HQ AAI CMF
27th July 44.

Dear Campbell Pitt,

The Engineer-in-Chief, War Office, has now completed his tour of works in Italy, and I want to tell you how impressed he was with all the splendid work your Unit has done. He was indeed most agreeably surprised at the tremendous amount of Engineer Stores that are being extracted from ITALY in assistance to the war effort.

I should like to take this opportunity of adding my praise and giving thanks to you and your Unit for your magnificent work.

When you arrived in Italy, we were obtaining about one quarter of our needs in engineer stores in this country, now we get three quarters. The shipping we save amounts to about thirty thousand tons per month, and what is almost more important, the man hours saved by exploiting local industry has now risen to about three million per month.

Man power and shipping, as you know, are probably the most vital factors affecting the issue of the war so that your Unit's work is undoubtedly a contribution to be proud of.

Would you please pass on to your officers and men the congratulations of us all on your most excellent work.

Yours sincerely,

SGD D L ANDERSON

1234

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Yours sincerely,

SGD D L ANDERSON

1234

2 2 FACTORIES CONTROLLED BY 80 EEW SAEC UDF

FACTORY	PRODUCTS	TYPE	RATE OF PRODUCTION	II DISTRICT	
					MILITARY PERSONNEL
Scalera, Bari	Joinery	D L	300 Flambo Huts per month (320 M3/month)		2
Pansini Molfetta	do	do	500 do do and Camp structures (100 M3/month)		2
Molfetta	Bricks	do	200,000 bricks per month		2
Lucera	do	do	300,000 bricks per month		3
Taranto	Cement		Contract 1600 tons per month		2
Barletta	do	do	2000 do		3
Modugno	do	do	6000 do		2
Sapic	Asbestos pipes	do	200 tons per month		2
Giovinazzo	Steel	DL	1500 tons steel & 1500 steel sections per month	TOTAL	68

III DISTRICT					
Cila	Joinery	D L	Camp structures (380 M3/month)		2
Rueping	do	D L	350 Flambo Huts per month (380 M3/month)		2
Limoncelli	do	D L	High class joinery (200 M3/month)		2
Benevento	Bricks	D L	720,000 bricks per month		2
Radaelli	Nails		Contract 120 tons nails & 3000 gross screws per month		2
Stalano	Steel Fabrication	D L	400 Flambo Shedding Trusses & Accessories per month		2
Globus	Belting	D L	100 sq M per month		2
C M I	Nuts & Bolts	D L	260,000 per month		73
	Steel Fabrication		700 tons per month fabricated		
	Steel Sheet Rolled		500 tons per month		
Salerno	Bricks		Contract 250,000 per month. Already handed over to CRE	TOTAL	87

ROME AREA			
Magliano	Pistons & Rings	Contract Being developed	
Fiorentini	Cranes	do 1 Crane per month	2
		do 250,000 per month	1

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Barletta	do	do	2000	do	3
Modugno	do	do	6000	do	2
Sapic	Asbestos pipes	do	200 tons per month		2
Giovinazzo	Steel	DL	1500 tons steel & 1500 steel sections per month	68	
			<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>86</u>	

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C M I	Nuts & Bolts Steel Fabrication Steel Sheet Rolled	D L	260,000 per month 700 tons per month fabricated 500 tons per month	73
Salerno	Bricks		Contract 250,000 per month. Already handed over to CRE	2
			<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>87</u>

ROME AREA

Magliano	Pistons & Rings		Contract Being developed	
Florentini	Cranes	do	1 Crane per month	2
Italcementi	Cement bags	do	250,000 per month	1
A S C A	do	do	1,000,000 per month	1
Feram	72" Cooking Ranges	do	70 per month	1

Page 2

MILITARY
PERSONNEL

FACTORY	PRODUCTS	TYPE	RATE OF PRODUCTION	TERNI AREA	MILITARY PERSONNEL
Terni Steelworks	Steel	Contract	3,000 tons per month		-- 10
	Steel Plate		1,200 tons per month		
	Section Mill		2,000 tons per month.		
	Foundry		200 tons per month		
Bosco	Structural and machine shops		Being developed		3
	Structural Steelwork		Being developed		

The total number of civilian employees directly employed by 80 EBW is 3,815. The total wage bill is 11,799,976 Lire per month. These figures do NOT include labour employed in those factories which are working on contract.

1232

1128