0089

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

ACC

10000/109/1004

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

10000/109/1004

NAPLES, SKYSCRAPER
MAY – JULY 1946

17.

Chief Commissioner.

~~Attached~~ Enclosed is submitted for your ~~approval~~ ~~signature~~ ~~information~~

20/7/46

M Carr Brigadier
~~E.P.C.A.~~
Act/Ex Comm.

JUL 20 1946

19.

Ex Comm.

1 18 for info. H.S. 22/7

20.

Chief Commissioner.

~~Attached~~ 18 is submitted for your ~~approval~~ ~~signature~~ information

21. 27/6 21 M Carr Bry Act/Ex Comm H.S. 23/7 MC 23/7

E.C. I think Col. Pennycuick should now stop writing about Townsend 24/7/46 CWS cc

5034

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

0091

Chief Commissioner.

1. You passed to me some days ago a letter from Mr.Townsend complaining about the unwarranted article by Colonel Pennycuick in NAPLES. I do not know whether you have answered the letter (Page 1) or whether you intend to do so. I discussed the matter with Colonel Pennycuick and have also his written answer.

2. The story is as follows. While NAPLES was still under AMG, Colonel Pennycuick naturally became interested in rebuilding in the city. At that time Mr. Townsend was an FEA employee and was on Colonel Pennycuick's staff as Public Utilities Officer. Mr. Townsend made public his idea of the Santa Lucia building while he was still Public Utilities Officer and during Colonel Pennycuick's absence on leave. I do not know whether he consulted Colonel Pennycuick's deputy. On his return Colonel Pennycuick wrote to this HQ condemning the idea and putting up his own proposals which were passed quite properly to the Italian Government by the Economic Section.

3. Mr. Townsend then left FEA and remained in NAPLES and presumably formed the American-Italian Development Enterprises Coy. of which he is now the President. He continued to prosecute the scheme which he had worked out in his official capacity. On 20th April Colonel Pennycuick gave his views to the 'Risorgimento', repeating roughly what he had said in his official letter sent to this HQ.

4. As such he laid himself open to attack and Mr. Townsend has taken full advantage of it in his most unpleasant letter which I suggest should remain unanswered. I have spoken to Colonel Pennycuick on the unwisdom of his action.

MSR
Brigadier,
Executive Commissioner.

16.July, 1946.

13.

E.C.

1. I am afraid that although "unpleasant" the letter must be answered. The Col. made a mistake & we have got to "dog out" - that's all.

EWS
CC

Chief Commissioner.

JUL 18 1946

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

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Brigadier,
Executive Commissioner.

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Ens
cc

Chief Commissioner.
Draft submitted

E.C.

See changes Ens cc

JUL 18 1946

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

0094

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

COPY

MINUTES

4

P.A.

There is P.C. about this building in Naples. Please produce.

H.S.L. 25/6

5

Ex Comm.

Ref. m. 4. Provincial correspondence is flagged at 67, 67A and 97. file 078/167/1/PKU

G. Hal. 29/6 A.M.K. 29/6

6

CSO

8.

Letter to issue to Col. P. and I will speak to him when he visits A. A. on 9/7/46.

H.S.L. 5/7

9

Col. P. will reply in writing. H.S. 12/7

H.S.L. 11/7

Ex Comm.

Ref min 9. please see folio 10.

AWK 15/7

5652

0095

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9442 HEADQUARTERS 5444 Ex Comm, P
NAPLES LIAISON GROUP
ALLIED COMMISSION
APO. 794.

17 July, 1946

Ref. : NLG/92/800

SUBJECT : Mr. H. H. Townsend.

TO : HQ. Regnoli Railhead P.B.S.

JUL 19 1946

1. We had on our staff up to December 1945 a Mr. H.H. Townsend who was sent to Italy as an F.E.A. employee. He acted for some months as Public Works and Utilities officer for AMG, Naples.

2. His section was abolished in December 1945, and he also ceased to have any connection with F.E.A. from the end of that month.

3. I have been surprised recently to find quite responsible Italian Engineers still referring to Mr.Townsend as the Allied Commission Public Works Officer. He is, in fact, often referred to as "Colonnello Townsend" from his former habit of wearing American Uniform.

4. I understand he remained in Naples on private business and trade, and may possibly be sponsoring useful projects. I feel, however, it should be made clear that Mr. Townsend has no connection whatever with the Allied Commission and no sort of authority to act in the name of the Allied Commission; in case you should be approached by him in any way.

C/2809

5031

J. A. C. PENNYCUICK
Colonel
Chief Liaison Officer
Naples Liaison Group
Allied Commission.

See n-19-20-21

Copy to:- A. C. HQ.
HQ. Naples Area - C.M.F.
The Prefect of Naples.

P/A
N.S. 23/7
(C50)

23/7/46

0096

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

16

Ref: 5414/16/BI.

20. July 1946.

Dear Sir:

(1)

I have received your letter of 21st May.

It will be within your knowledge that Colonel Pennycuick as Commissioner for Allied Military Government in NAPLES wrote to this Headquarters in December 1945 making certain recommendations regarding the rebuilding of parts of NAPLES. In this letter he expressed his disapproval of the scheme submitted by you in your capacity as Public Utilities Officer, NAPLES AMG, and to which I understand you gave publicity. This HQ passed Colonel Pennycuick's letter to the Italian Government without making any recommendation and the Allied Commission has taken no position in the matter, one way or the other.

In April Colonel Pennycuick repeated his opinion in an interview given to an Italian newspaper. In saying that the Allied Commission had not encouraged the scheme he was correct. In stating that he did not personally approve the scheme he was referring to his official action taken when NAPLES was under Allied Military Government. Whether or not such an interview was politic may be debatable but I can assure you that the accusation of ulterior motive contained in paragraph four of your letter is untrue.

Yours faithfully,

/s/ Ellery W. Stone

ELLERY W. STONE
Rear Admiral, USNR
Chief Commissioner

5030

H.H. Townsend, Esq.,
President,
American Italian Development Enterprises,
23, Nazario Sauro,
NAPLES.

20

0097

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

5414 10

HEADQUARTERS
NAPLES LIAISON GROUP
ALLIED COMMISSION
APO. 794.

11 July, 1946

D/O 211

JUL 15 1946

Dear Brig. Lush. 8

Your D/O of 6th July on the Risorgimento article on my views on the Naples Skyscraper proposal. The Risorgimento published an accurate translation of the interview, and I attach for your information my English copy from which the translation was made. 8/A article

You will see a history of this in my C/1749 of 11th December 1945. I have an affection for Naples, and should hate to see its natural beauty spoilt, and it became necessary to clarify the position as A.M.G. had become connected with this absurd and somewhat discreditable scheme put up by Mr. Townsend, which had caused a good deal of indignation.

Mr. Townsend was an F.E.A. employee sent to us in Naples as our official Public Utilities officer, and apparently spent part of his time working out this project which I can only presume would have been for his personal enrichment. He launched the good news to the Naples Press when I was away on leave, and the whole thing was hatched without my knowing anything about it. If the Italians want a skyscraper they can build it, but at least don't let us have A.M.G. or the Allied Commission mixed up in it.

Yours Sincerely

A.E. Pennywitt

See M-11

Brig. M. S. LUSH, CB, CBE, MC.
Executive Commissioner,
HQ. A. C.

see M9-12.
4/6

0098

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

8

xxx 794

6. July 1946.

3

The Chief Commissioner's attention has been drawn to an article in the 'Risorgimento' dated 20th April in which you are reported to have given your views on the Santa Lucia building scheme in Naples and to have said that you told an Italian meeting that the Allied Commission did not encourage the scheme and that you personally disapproved it.

May I know what you did say and your reasons for giving the interview.

Colonel J.A.C. Pennycuick, DSO,
Allied Commission
Chief Liaison Officer,
NAPLES.

5028

see M.6

0099

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7

COPY

MOR ON MR. H.A. TOWNSEND

Mr. Townsend was a civilian P.E.A. employee sent to me in Naples to be Public Works and Utilities Officer. He is a middle aged elderly American civilian, no real engineering knowledge or background, but a "go getter" and full of energy. He did a good job of work but was very unorthodox in his methods.

After he left A.M.G. and P.E.A. at the end of 1946 he continued to wear American officer's uniform, without badges of rank, and live in the Excelsior Hotel Naples. Eventually P.E.A. had to clear up a certain bill and warned him (he was usually known as Colonel Townsend) that he would be arrested if seen again in U.S. uniform - since then I have seen him in plain clothing only.

The Santa Lucia project was apparently for his own enrichment and I have been at a loss to make clear my disapproval of such a project being put up by him in his position as A.M.G. Officer.

10.7.46.

J.A.A. Pennycuick
C.E.O.

5027

0100

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3

COPY

TRANSLATION

THE SKYSCRAPER OF THE SKYSCRAPER:
What Colonel Pennybacker Thinks

The readers will remember that towards the end of 1945 there was some talk about an American project for the construction of a building on the waterfront of S. Lucia. The "skyscraper", as it was generally called, should have been built between the Molosiglio and via Nazario Sauro, exactly in front of via Cesario Console.

Years and months have passed since then; the most absolute silence on the matter made people believe that the project had been given up. Instead, it has come up again in these days and it seems even that its realization is quite imminent.

The day before yesterday we have published a note expressed by the Hospitality Committee of the Association for the restoration of war-damaged monuments; yesterday Col. A.A.A. Pennybacker expressed his thought as follows:

THE PRESIDENT. - I heard for the first time the news about a skyscraper to be built at Santa Lucia in December 1945 upon my return from a leave in England. I was highly surprised when this project already developed in all its details was submitted to me. Briefly, the project consisted of a 20 floors-building to be built on the waterfront at Santa Lucia. The foundations of this building were to reach about 30 meters under the sea level where they were supposing to find a sea rock. From the technical point of view, the idea seemed interesting as a central pillar or tower was planned, from which were to branch out the upper floors in a way preventing an enormous force and complicated steel structures.

This unique building was going to accomodate maritime offices, restaurants, hotels, a casino with gambling rooms etc. At the base of the tower was also to be organized a space to shelle hydroplanes to take off. The advantages were the following: employment of workers for the construction; an attraction for the tourists in Naples.

I studied carefully the project and reached the conclusion that, as far as the employment of workers was concerned, the overall structure of the construction would require an enormous work in a steel of special fabrication which ought to be imported from abroad. Certainly, there would have been jobs for some Italians, but the quantity of these could not be considerable as they would be occupied only in a limited space.

As to the second point - the attraction for tourists - only the future can decide about that, but if the aesthetic qualities of Naples will be spoiled by a building in contrast with the general outline of the place and with the tradition of its gulf, it may also happen that instead of attracting tourists it would induce them to avoid the city.

5028

see M 4-6.

0101

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THE DEPTH OF A.C. - Therefore, I gave clearly to understand that I did not approve the scheme and I told the Mayor as well as the Prefect in a conference that it was not in any way encouraged by the Allied Commission and that personally I fully disapproved it. I also repeated this to our Rome Headquarters. It seems however that the civilian authorities have given their approval in a very vague form of foreseeing a possibility of employment and therefore it may still happen that the plan is carried out. It seems anyway that it is being discussed again judging from the press notices which appeared in the last days.

I want first of all to repeat clearly that this is your town and it is you who have to live here. We are here only temporarily and the question must be solved by you only. I had the privilege to live in Naples a year and everybody knows that this is one of the most beautiful bays in the world. Therefore, allow me that as an engineer I call your attention to a few aspects of the project so that you may take them into consideration:

There is an English saying that while the doctors bury their mistakes, the engineers and architects put them in evidence so that they become a "first" for the coming generation. You have in Naples a partially destroyed waterfront placed in a splendid frame. This is a precious opportunity to rebuild a dignified and attractive city which will draw to its shores people who will exclaim with joy as soon as they see it for the first time.

In the past, Italian architects earned a great fame in the whole world. It will be sufficient to give the case of Emperor Shah Jahan who had the Taj Mahal built on the shore of the river Jumna 300 years ago. His building is considered the most beautiful in the world and was planned by an Italian architect, the artist Geronimo Verronco. If you achieved so much in the past, you can also now give a new example to the world in the reconstruction of Naples. Your civilian authorities wish that the population may express its opinion about this skyscraper project and you can certainly do so. But whatever this opinion will be, whether for or against the project, I want it to be clear to everybody that it has never been encouraged by this office. Personally I would be happy to see you all at work for the reconstruction of your city according to a new regulating plan, with your materials and your architects. There has been recently an exhibition which had an extensive success with regard to this regulating plan of yours and it would give me a great satisfaction if I could do something which could be of any assistance for the rebirth of Naples.

(from "Risorgimento" of Naples, 20 April 5023

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1

COPY

AMERICAN ITALIAN DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISES
International Center Santa Lucia
23, Maturio Sanzio - Phone 20947
NAPLES - ITALY

AIDE.5643.46 May 21st, 1946

SUBJECT: Unwarranted article of Col. J.A. Pennycuick, British.

TO : Admiral Ellery Stone,
Director Allied Commission, Rome.

1. An article written by Col. Pennycuick in the "Risorgimento" April 20th 1946 Naples, relative to "Santa Lucia" International Tourist Center Building, a proposed important American enterprise, states that this building was disapproved by himself and by the Allied Commission Headquarters in Rome.

2. If Col. Pennycuick stated the truth this would indicate that your office, or those under you, without your authority, had without investigation, injured an important Italian development and large American interests, who are endeavoring to fulfill some of the reconstruction promises made by American agencies.

3. I do not personally believe Col. Pennycuick has stated facts as he knows nothing of details. I am certain an investigation by your office would cause an endorsement of this building.

4. It is natural, however, for the Colonel being a British to wish to hinder Italian progress, as is generally known by Italians in Naples; also being denied an opportunity to participate either in the credit for the enterprise or the benefits therefrom made his easy prey for the Communists who started the opposition and who are now using the issue and his article as political material.

5. Will you kindly advise me in the matter before our campaign begins.

Yours truly:

H.H. Townsend
President,
American Italian
Development Enterprises

hht.gt

See 16

0103