

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

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REPORTS, FACTORIES
JULY 1944

ALV. ROADMARKERS
ALLIED OFFENSE, COMBAT
INTEGRITY & COMBAT SUB-ORDINATION
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5 July 1944

SUBJECT: Break Machine Gun Factory - Rome

TO : ~~Major, 1st AF, 1st~~
~~Major, 1st AF, 1st~~
Deputy Executive Commissioner (Col. Fiske)

1. The attached report on the Break Machine Gun Factory, Rome, is passed to you for information.

For The Acting Chief Commissioner;

1 Incl:
Report as above.

John Stouck
W. P. EVANS
Colonel,
Director, Industry and
Commerce Sub-Ordination.

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REPORT ON BREDA MACHINE GUN FACTORY - ROMESUBMITTED BY: Capt. T. G. ELLIOTTDATE:- 3 July 1944GENERAL

This factory was visited in conjunction with Sig. Ing. Gelmi (General Manager) and Prof. Ing. S. Treves in response to their request, it being alleged that the plant, being requisitioned by R.E.M.E. for removal to Naples and other factories, was affecting their possibilities of re-starting work.

This plant is extensive and modern, covering some 200,000 sq. metres and having 75,000 sq. metres of covered shop space divided up into 20 main shops. Two of the shops have been damaged by bombs but the remainder of the factory is intact.

The plant was constructed solely for the production of machine guns, and the following calibres were made:

6.5 mm., 7.7 mm., 8.0 mm., 12.7 mm., and 20 mm.

The output was rated at 4500 guns of all types per month and some 5000 hands were employed.

The factory was completed in 1938/9 and had adjacent to the works a modern housing estate for the workers. It has no direct rail connection, the nearest siding being some 5 kilometres distant.

All buildings are of steel and reinforced concrete construction but have few overhead cranes and are suitable primarily as light machine and assembly shops.

The whole of the plant and buildings have been reserved for R.E.M.E. (C.O. Lt. Col. FIELD, 59 Area HQ) who are at present selecting machines for removal to R.E.M.E. shops in the Naples and Rome areas. Up to date, some 105 machines have been selected by them and the Sgt. in charge thought that a further 100 would be required. This requisitioning is being carried out in a careful and proper manner. 545

PLANT
DETAILS

Much of the plant is special purpose, designed and constructed for the production of machine guns. There are however many milling machines, slotters, grinding machines, capstans and cold saws which would be useful in general engineering work. These machines are the ones that R.E.M.E. are interested in and many are earmarked for removal. This will of course destroy the balance of the plant and render it impossible to return to the manufacture of machine guns. In all there are some 1700 machines stored within the factory. The Germans had previously removed 1000 machines (the best) for transportation to Germany.

Also within the factory are many valuable jigs, gauges, cutting tools, grinding wheels etc. - there are considerable

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stocks of raw materials in the form of bar stocks of various sections and sizes. The two electric sub-stations have escaped serious damage, but all except two of the transformers have been removed, the firm state that these are hidden away in the hills, but they are unaware of their condition. They claim it is possible with present equipment to lay on 450 kW of power.

Also within the plant there is a useful forge, consisting of two drop hammers and several friction presses and power hammers. It might be possible to utilise this equipment for the production of agricultural implements which are in short supply.

In addition to the forge and machine shops there is a modern heat-treatment, parkerising and gun browning plant together with a small chromium plating unit. All this equipment is laid out to handle a large number of small parts on a mass production basis. Many of the shops are assembly shops and provided only with benches and jigs for doing this work. Also within the works are all the necessary appliances for testing the guns. There is, in addition, a covered firing range 250 metres in length. There is a good gas producer plant and an electric steam raising unit and several shot blast chambers complete with a good air compressor.

The works canteens and storerooms have been taken over by ADOS and S & T.

CONCLUSIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) It is difficult to see what this plant can do other than the mass production of machine guns and associated parts.

(2) The buildings are suitable only for machine and light assembly work. As they stand they are unsuitable for heavy vehicle repair.

(3) A few machines are suitable for the mass production of small cotter pins, rivets, etc.

(4) The forge could be converted to the production of agricultural tools and implements.

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(5) The supply of electrical energy would be the deciding factor.

(6) It is not considered that R.A.M.E. are being unreasonable in requisitioning items of plant; such items as they have earmarked are urgently required by them in their Naples workshops where they have to undertake a heavy program of vehicle repair. It should however be pointed out that this requisitioning is destroying the balance of the plant and will render it impossible to return to the production of machine guns until this plant is returned. This should be remembered in view of the recent request from the Chief Commissioner on the possibility of small arms manufacture in liberated Italy. So far this is

the only plant seen capable of carrying out such work.

(7) It is thought that R.E.M.E. also have this plant in mind as a machine shop when it is decided to move their main shops at Naples forward.

TGE/rj

J. E. [Signature]

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