

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

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10000/110/115

REMOVAL OF MATERIAL FROM
ITALION MOTOR PARK
OCT. 44 - JAN. 45

90.5/EST

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

EXT: JCI

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 39
ESTABLISHMENT SECTION

90/103/EST

12 January 1945

SUBJECT: Removal of Material from Italian Motor Park

TO : Displaced Persons and Repatriation Sub-Commission

1. Reference is made to your DPR/5/R of 24 November 1944, and to our 91/EST of 6 November 1944, subjects as above.

2. Attention is invited to attached copy of letter from Land Forces Sub-Commission (ISMA), AQ/5 of 10 January 1945, which is forwarded for your file, and for any comment considered appropriate.

NORMAN E. FISKE,
Colonel
Deputy Chief of Staff

Copy to: Land Forces S/C (ISMA)

5857

Subject: Removal of Material from Italian Army Motor Park

Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (MMIA)
Rome
AQ/5
10 January 1945

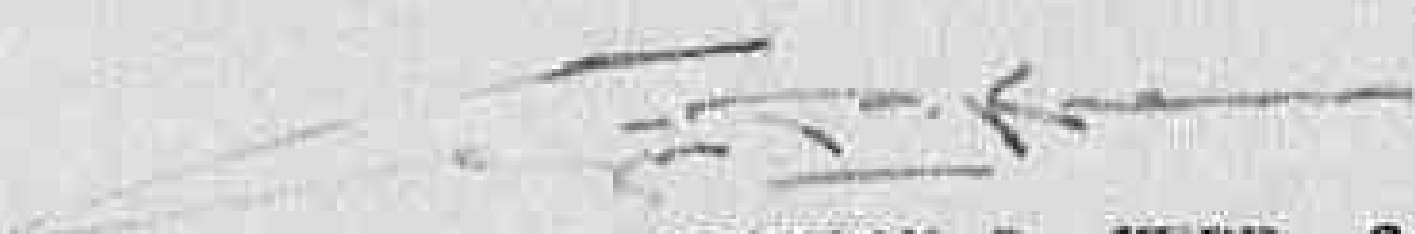
To : Deputy Chief of Staff,
Establishment Section,
Allied Commission.

Ref your 92/54/EST of 25 November 1944
replying to our AQ/5 of 1 November 1944

1. Upon reading the statement furnished by Major Phelps regarding this matter in which Major Phelps states that only 5 rims were removed from the Italian motor park and that no receipt was given, the Italian War Ministry was requested to explain just why they had advised this Headquarters that Major Phelps had removed 17 rims and produced a written demand, or receipt, for the 17 rims. It is also noted that the statement of Major Phelps differs in a number of other aspects with the report made by the Italian War Ministry on which our original communication was based.
2. The Italian War Ministry has answered our communication and furnished us with a copy of the written demand of Major Phelps for the 17 rims in question. This written demand of Major Phelps was used as a receipt for the 17 rims. It appears, however, that 5 rims were selected at one time by Major Phelps and his civilian mechanic, and that on the next day the civilian mechanic returned and secured the balance of the rims for which Major Phelps had given his receipt. This is entirely contrary to the statement made by Major Phelps that only 5 rims were taken by him or with his knowledge by any employee. Also the 12 rims were returned to the park after the matter had been reported by the War Ministry.
3. It therefore appears that Major Phelps made little or no investigation of the entire matter prior to the time he wrote his report and had left his receipt with the park for 17 rims. Major Phelps has simply relied on denying the truth of the report made by the Italians, whereas the Italians have the documents to prove that Major Phelps made a demand for and received 17 rims, and also changed the Allied notice which was posted on this depot. It is difficult to believe that an Allied officer would give a receipt for 17 rims and only take 5 and not change the receipt.

5856

4. This letter is written in order to get the record straight. Every effort is being made to insure that reports from the Italians are accurate, and it is rather embarrassing when their report is questioned on the basis of the statement of an Allied officer which statement of the Allied officer is later shown by the Italians to be incorrect, obviously so only to justify his illegal action.



CLAYTON P. KERR, Colonel
for Major General
Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (HMIA)

CPK/lak

1 Incl: Receipt for 17 Rims

5855

O C O P Y

N O T I C E

The following parts are required for the use
of A.C.C. for maintaining and operating the
Italian Vehicles assigned to it.

5	.....discs	(Wheels)	per Fiat 1100
5	....."	"	per Lancia Augusta
2	....."	"	per Lancia Aprilia
5	....."	"	per Fiat 1500

Signed by Charles Phelps
Major of A.C.C.

5854

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015Subject: Removal of Material from Italian Army Motor Park

Land Forces
 Sub Commission, AG (MMA)
 Rome
 AG/5
10 January 1945

To : Deputy Chief of Staff,
 Establishment Section,
 Allied Commission.

Ref your 92/54/EST of 25 November 1944,
 replying to our AG/5 of 1 November 1944.

1. Upon reading the statement furnished by Major Phelps regarding this matter in which Major Phelps states that only 5 rims were removed from the Italian motor park and that no receipt was given, the Italian War Ministry was requested to explain just why they had advised this Headquarters that Major Phelps had removed 17 rims and produced a written demand, or receipt, for the 17 rims. It is also noted that the statement of Major Phelps differs in a number of other aspects with the report made by the Italian War Ministry on which our original communication was based.
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4. This letter is written in order to get the record straight. Every effort is being made to insure that reports from the Italians ⁵⁰⁵accurate, and it is rather embarrassing when their report is questioned on the basis of the statement of an Allied officer which statement of the Allied officer is later shown by the Italians to be incorrect, obviously so only to justify his illegal action.

GPK/lak
 1 Incl: Receipt for 17 rims

CLAYTON P. KERR, Colonel
 Land Forces
 Sub Commission, AG (MMA)

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Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

COPY

NOTICE

The following parts are required for the use of A.C.C.
for maintaining and operating the Italian Vehicles
assigned to it.

5	.....discs	(wheels)	per Fiat 1100
5	.....	"	per Lancia Augusta
2	.....	"	per Lancia Aprilia
5	.....	"	per Fiat 1500

Signed by Charles Phelps
Major of A.C.C.

5852

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

Tel: 307

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
ESTABLISHMENT SECTION

File

92/54/EST

25 November 1944

Subject: Removal of Material from Italian Motor Park

To : Land Forces S/C - (MEXIA)

1. Reference your HQ/5 of 1 November.
2. Attention is invited to attached correspondence.

WESLEY E. FISKE, 5851
Colonel
Deputy Chief of Staff

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0 3 6 7

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

FP/rf

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
DISPLACED PERSONS AND REPATRIATION SUB-COMMISSION

DPR/5/Q

Tel. 589001 Ext 434

21 November 1944

SUBJECT: Removal of Material from Italian Motor Park

TO : Establishment Section

1. Ref your 91/EST dated 6 November 1944. Attached please find report from Major Phelps for your information.

2. It will be noted that equipment has been returned.

For the Director:

K.C. BROWN
Major
O. i/c ADM

5850

copy to C.A. Section

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

Col. Fiske:

I've questioned this driver, Roscil

0232

Removal of Material from Italian Motor Park

Accommodation Centre, DI BAGHL.
REF. SI/CC/PERS.

Officer Commanding,
No. 1 sub Section,
D.P. & R.S.C.
Allied Commission.

1. The following report is submitted in connection with the attached correspondence.

a). On 10 October 1944, I did go to the Italian Motor Park at Mesagne. I was accompanied by Pfc. W.U. Tremontin, an Italian speaking American Soldier, and Rossi Francesco, an Italian employed as Chief Mechanic at our garage. The purpose of the visit was to attempt to obtain rims for certain requisitioned vehicles in our possession.

b). Upon arrival at the Motor Park, we were refused admission and shown the bilingual notice referred to. I enquired for the CO and was informed that he was not present. We were directed to the I.Q. Building some distance away in the village of Mesagne.

c). We proceeded to the I.Q. building where I was introduced to an Italian Major whose name I do not recall. He was apparently the second in command. I told him the purpose of my visit. He was very cordial, but stated that he required higher authority before he could issue. Our conversation was carried on through an interpreter, and the statements herein are the substance of the translation. We chatted for several minutes, and during the course of the conversation he stated that he would like to help us out, but as a matter of fact he was doubtful if the rims we required were available at the Park. At this point he attempted to call the Park on the telephone, but it was out of order. He asked me if I would make a list of my requirements. I did this, writing down the items as shown on the basic communication. The Major then wrote out in Italian a translation. The Major then called a person identified as the Marechal, gave him the list of requirements, and requested him to conduct us to the Park.

d). The Marechal rode in my car to the Park where we were admitted and taken to a section of the grounds, where a number of rims were stacked. My mechanic, Rossi, began to examine the various rims to determine whether or not they fitted our requirements. At this point, a full Colonel in the Italian Army appeared. I do not recall his name, but he was presented as the Commanding Officer. His first statement was that it was impossible to release any spare parts. After conversing with him for a short while, he voluntarily conducted us around the Park, pointing out other stacks of rims and various other items. No rims suitable for our use were found on this tour, and we returned to the original stack.

e). Mechanic Rossi made a further examination of these rims. ^{58/4} Note that he selected five which he thought might

vehicles in our possession.

b). Upon arrival at the Motor Park, we were refused admission and shown the bilingual notice referred to. I enquired for the CO and was informed that he was not present. We were directed to the H.Q. Building some distance away in the village of Mesagne.

c). We proceeded to the H.Q. building where I was introduced to an Italian Major whose name I do not recall. He was apparently the second in command. I told him the purpose of my visit. He was very cordial, but stated that he required higher authority before he could issue. Our conversation was carried on through an interpreter, and the statements herein are the substance of the translation. We chatted for several minutes, and during the course of the conversation he stated that he would like to help us out, but as a matter of fact he was doubtful if the rims we required were available at the Park. At this point he attempted to call the Park on the telephone, but it was out of order. He asked me if I would make a list of my requirements. I did this, writing down the items as shown on the basic communication. The Major then wrote out in Italian a translation. The Major then called a person identified as the Marechal, gave him the list of requirements, and requested him to conduct us to the Park.

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e). Mechanic Rossi made a further examination of these rims. ^{58/4} ~~None~~ were found to be exactly right, but Rossi selected five which he thought might be modified to fit our needs. The Colonel gave his permission for their removal. No receipt was signed. The rims were put in my car and brought to Lecce.

f). The following day, 11 October 1944, it was found that the rims were not capable of adaptation to any of our vehicles. Rossi was immediately instructed to return them. This instruction was carried out the same day, and attached hereto is an affidavit from Rossi to that effect. As no receipt was signed the previous day when the rims were collected, no receipt was given when they were returned. No other rims were taken by me or, to my knowledge, by any employee.

2. It is considered that paragraphs 2(a) and 2 (b) of letter H.Q. AC dated 6 Nov. 1944 have both been complied with by the report contained in the para 1 above.

(C.H. HELPS) Major CAC.
Commandant.

31

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785015

AFFIDAVIT

17 November 1944

On the 11th day of October 1944 I was instructed by HFC WALTER U. TRAMONTIN (A) 32208809 to return five (5) tire rims to the salvage dump of the Italian Royal Army at Mesagne.

I certify that I did exactly what I was told and returned these rims. As nothing had been signed for these rims I did not receive any receipt for turning them in.

Rossi Francesco, Lecce.

5848

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Estab. Sec 4103
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Subject: Removal of Material from Italian Army Motor Park

Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (MMIA)
Rome
AQ/5
16 November 1944

To : Hq, AC

Copy to AFHQ, G-4 Section for Col Libby

1. No reply has been received to our letter AQ/5 of 1 November, subject as above.
2. Request reply. *8-9-10*

[Signature]
CLAYTON P. KERR, Colonel
for Major General
Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (MMIA)

CPK/lak

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5847

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Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

Tel: 478957 5

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
ESTABLISHMENT SECTION

92/EST

16 November 1944

Subject: Removal of Material from Italian Army Motor Park.

To : Land Forces Sub-Commission, AG (MHA)

1. Attention is invited to attached copy of letter, this office, of 6 November, under cover of which the correspondence inclosed with your AG/5 of 1 November was transmitted. 12
2. To date no reply has been received by this office.
3. A reminder will go forward to GA Section shortly.

1st Lt., AGD,
For
Colonel, DCOS.
Establishment Section

Incl: Copy of 92/19/EST

5846

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

Subject: Removal of Materiel from Italian Army Motor Park.

Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (MMIA)
Rome
AQ/5
15 November 1944

To : Hq, AC

Copy to AFHQ, G-4 Section for Col Libby

1. No reply has been received to our letter AQ/5 of 1 November, subject as above.
2. Request reply.

CPK/lak

CLAYTON P. KERR, Colonel
for Major General
Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (MMIA)

5845

0 3 7 5

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 994
ESTABLISHMENT SECTION

92/1st

6 November 1944

3

Subject: Removal of Material from Italian Army Motor Park

To : Displaced persons and Repatriation Sub-Commission
(through V.P., Civil Affairs Section)

1. Attention is invited to copies of attached correspondence.
2. The equipment mentioned in basic communications will be returned to the Italian Army Motor Park without delay, and this office informed by indorsement hereon.

a. By what authority the withdrawal of this property was made from the Italian Army Park.

b. On what date and by whom this equipment is returned.

HERMAN H. FISHER
Colonel
Deputy Chief of Staff

5844

EST SEC.

2111

Subject: Removal of Materiel from Italian Army Motor Park.

Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (MMIA)
Rome
AQ/5

November 1944

To : Hq. ACC

Copy to: AFHQ, G-4 Section for Lt. Col Libby.

1. Inviting attention to copy of translation of letter from the Minister for War which has reference to the removal by Major Charles Phelps of the Displaced Persons Sub Commission, of 17 wheels from the Italian Army motor park at Mesagne.
2. In accordance with the instructions published by AFHQ, all Italian Army property was reserved for use of the Italian Army except in those cases where use of the property is given to Allied agencies. A poster has been placed on all Italian Army depots advising Allied personnel that entry into such depots for removal of materiel therefrom without authorization is not permitted. Authorizations are issued by MMIA on AFHQ authority.
3. No authority had been issued for the removal of this materiel by Major Phelps, and the Italian officer who finally acceded to Major Phelps arbitrary demands has been punished by eight-days arrest.
4. It is requested that the 17 wheels removed by Major Phelps be returned by him to the Italian Army park at Mesagne and that all officers be informed that Italian Army property is reserved for the use of the Italian Army unless otherwise directed by AFHQ.
5. Please advise when the 17 wheels have been returned in order that the Italian Army stock states may be corrected.

CPK/lak

- 1 Incl:
Translation of Ministry of War
letter to MMIA dated 26 Oct 44.

CLAYTON P. KERR, Colonel
for Major General
Land Forces
Sub Commission, AC (MMIA)



Coph of Translation

MINISTER FOR WAR

Ref. 21015/22

26 October 1944

TO: MMIA

SUBJECT: Drawing of Automobile materiel at Vehicle Park
at Mesagne.

The director of the vehicle park at Mesagne has informed us that on the 10 October an American Army officer, identifying himself as Major Charles Phelps of A.C.C. at the vehicle park, requested the immediate issue of 17 wheels of various sizes, to be placed on Italian-made vehicles operating for Allied units.

Since the officer had no authorization whatsoever for the withdrawal, the park personnel stated that the request could not be honored except upon presentation of a written document from MMIA, conforming with past directives, regarding materiel in Italian warehouses and depots.

As the officer, who was shown, furthermore, the bilingual pamphlet concerning entry of Allied personnel into Italian Army depots, kept on insisting on the issue of the materiel, drawing up an issuing order himself, the park director finally filled the request for reasons of convenience.

While this Ministry has taken disciplinary steps against the park director (eight-days' arrest), according to regulations agreed upon with MMIA for the discipline of Italian depots, we believe it to be our duty to inform you of the regrettable affair so that the above regulations are also observed by the Allied officers.

The materiel issued consisted of the following:

- 5 wheels for Fiat 1100
- 5 wheels for Fiat 1500
- 5 wheels for Lancia "Augusta"
- 2 wheels for Lancia "Aprilia"

THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE
(G. B. Oxilia)

/s/ G. Oxilia

0 3 7 8