

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

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AQ/86/13 Liaison Report GSO 1

Opened July 26, 1945. Closed Apr 8, 1945

Subject : Senior Liaison Officer's Report.

Land Forces Sub-Commission, A.C.

H.C. M.H.I.A.

SID/04.

8 Sep 45.

To : HQ MMIA (4 copies)

1. This report covers the period 10 - 31 August 1945 and includes points arising from visits to the following :-

52 BLU and LEGNANO Combat Group.

MMIA 10 TURIN.

No. I Territorial HQ, TURIN.

Comd. 7 AGRA, TURIN.

No. IV Territorial HQ, BOLZANO.

50 BLU and FRIULI Combat Group.

56 BLU and MANTOVA Combat Group.

No. II Territorial HQ, GENOVA.

51 BLU and CREMONA Combat Group.

N.B.

- (a) Separate report has been submitted regarding visit to POIGONE Combat Group and 53 BLU from 19-22 Aug.
- (b) Notes regarding visits to Nos. 1 and 2 Districts, 217 Area BOLOGNA and No. III Territorial HQ MILAN already taken by Lt. Col. INGLEDEN.

2. 52 BLU and LEGNANO Combat Group.

CSO 1 of BLU states that morale of Gruppo has deteriorated owing to the delay in discharging older classes. Some ex-deserters who came back as volunteers and were pardoned have since obtained their discharge over the heads of men who remained with the Gruppo all along and didn't desert.

The loss of combat pay caused a further drop in morale. Furthermore, the nature of the present Internal Security duties is unpopular with the men.

It is exceedingly difficult to get the Gruppo to do any training; there is much delay in getting started, and many excuses.

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It is exceedingly difficult to get the Gruppo to do any training; there is much delay in getting started, and many excuses.

Comd. 59 Area (Milan) had held a parade there recently, and the discipline and turn-out of the LEGHANO representatives was shocking. Morale is much lower now than it was during the fighting.

Many officers are being retained after their release dates owing to lack of replacements. Other rank technicians and specialists are particularly difficult to get hold of. Civilian replacements in place of soldiers are paid much better although carrying out the same work. This all causes discontent.

GSO 1 does not recommend the removal of any vehicles or weapons from the Gruppo, as this would cause a further lowering of morale. The 25-pdrs and 17-pdrs have already been collected in a central park to ensure better supervision.

(2)

Medical. Two good medical officers are being replaced because they were originally Fascist. This in spite of the shortage of Medical Officers. The two, Lieuts. NERI and RUMCO, are both entirely satisfactory and feel they are leaving under a cloud. Their replacements have not yet arrived and Gen. UTILI is holding on to the officers for the time being. He states that the Comitato di Emergenza (NENNI) will force them to be dismissed. He also states that Lieut. RUMCO was not a Squadrista at all; the Fascists appointed him to a certain vacancy and ante-dated his certificate of membership of the Fascist Party, thus qualifying him as a Squadrista.

The retention of a British M.O. with the B.L.H. is not considered necessary; a visiting officer would be sufficient.

The establishment of a convalescent depot or rest centre for the Gruppo would be a good thing because otherwise men straight out of hospital are sent to their homes in an unfit state and very often have to hitch-hike without adequate rations for the journey. Gen. UTILI is in favour of having a Gruppo rest centre, but the men would probably prefer to go home on sick leave.

It is understood that Welfare MMIA is endeavouring to obtain accommodation for a rest centre on one of the lakes.

Reply is requested to a letter sent to Med MMIA on 18 July regarding Lt. Col. ROSS, senior Med Oftr IEGHANO Gp.

Gen. UTILI stressed importance of declaring Govt's demobilisation scheme at once. If the men know how they stand they will feel happier about it, if not, they will desert. In his opinion it is better for the Groups to be under strength officially than unofficially, i.e. get rid of older classes at expense of being under strength.

There is a state of unrest and indecision in the Gruppo partly due to the composition of the present Govt. Gen. UTILI feels that in the event of civil disturbance the men might not open fire or otherwise quell Communist demonstrations as there might be a come-back on the Army. From a logical point of view the Army owes some allegiance to Communists, as they are represented in the Govt. The general feeling seems to be that everyone in the Govt is pulling in a different

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Arms have undoubtedly been hidden in the district, but the Communists are not the only persons to blame in this respect.

3. TURIN.

(a) Conference with Brigadier GRAHAM (Comd 7 AGRA), General PRALOMMO (Comd Terr HQ No. I), Capt. O'DONNELL & Major BIRD.

Brig. GRAHAM is concerned regarding the amount of weapons and ammunition in dumps guarded by civilians and also hidden arms in the district. He proposed carrying out searches and asked MMIA ruling as to how far he could make use of Italian troops under Gen. PRALOMMO'S command. It was explained that AFHQ ruling prevents Italian

(3)

commanders from searching but that there was no objection to their being employed to convey already classified material from dumps to safer places and subsequently guarding it.

Brig. GRAHAM is obtaining 20 Italian Army lorries from A.M.G. for the purpose; these lorries will afterwards pass to No. I Terr HQ.

(b) Political.

F.S.S. and A.M.G. reports tend to show that there is a well-organised Communist party throughout Piedmont. Some of its leaders are:-

MOSCATELLI, the Sindaco of NOVARA, who is an ex-partisan leader and is now very communist and considered dangerous, ROVERA, the Sindaco of TURIN, Socialist, alleged to have said that his party is ready for the time when the Allies depart, and

PASSONE, Prefect of the Province, a leading Communist.

Proof is lacking as to the extent of power or the intentions of these men and the "Reds" in general, but it is generally believed that they are in possession of large quantities of hidden arms and vehicles. It is argued that the partisans fought a three-day battle with the Germans and even used artillery; the proportion of weapons handed in does not correspond to the amount in use at that time.

Areas such as BIELLA, CUNEO and the GANAYESE mountains were surrender areas for several German divisions and a vast amount of material must have been collected there.

The general opinion is that there will be a rising as soon as the Allies leave.

NOVARA and VARESE are known communist centres.

The Questura in TURIN is largely composed of ex-partisans since the epuration of the old members. The new lot are thoroughly mistrusted by the general public.

There has been no trouble in the AOSTA region except minor brigandage, and no signs of French encroachment, though many French officers visit TURIN.

Brig. GRAHAM will use all available force in the event of disturbance.

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General PRALOMBO is satisfied with the number of troops at his disposal provided the Cremona and Mantova Groups come up to scratch.

There are about 8000 Carabinieri available, but they are of course armed with carbines against possible automatic weapons.

There is sufficient Barrack soon in TURIN to house many more troops than at present.

4. MILAN.

Notes regarding visit to 2 District were taken to HQ by Lt.Col. INGLEDEN.

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5. No. IV Terr HQ, BOLZANO.

General NEGRONI considers that the POLCORE and PRIULI Combat Groups are too spread out over the area and would like to see them more concentrated so that they could be moved easily in the event of trouble. This is at present impossible owing to the nature of their duties.

The Guard Bns are protecting food depots and supervising civilian guards. These latter are carefully selected and are trustworthy. The Guard Coy have received a proportion of their vehicles.

General NEGRONI considers that three Guard Bns plus an Engineer Bn for Guard and Garrison duties should be enough. He would like to have more OC.RR as they are popular even with the German-speaking population and are more suitable for keeping public order than troops.

6. 50 B.I.L.U. and PRIULI Combat Group.

(a) The proposed Pay Cut from 59 lire to 14, and Ration Allowance Cut from 20 lire to 5, which is due to take place from 1 Oct, is going to cause serious trouble.

This matter was discussed at the War Ministry meeting held in ROME recently.

It is reckoned that men will desert freely when they hear of the proposed reduction in their pay; there will also be no inducement for recruits to join up and the only way of maintaining the Army will be by Call-ups or Conscription.

General SCATTINI feels that this cut will not prove an economy, but a great harm.

(b) The demobilisation question is causing a lot of unrest.

Can a definite policy be broadcast so that the men know how they stand.

(c) Discipline in the Gruppo has fallen off and the OC.RR are weak. Traffic discipline very bad.

(d) The Gruppo is about 600 below strength.

See also from VERONA area

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- (e) Gen. SCATTINI wants to move his Services from VERONA area to TRENTO, but soon in latter place is still occupied by POLAKS.

- (f) Gen. SCATTINI asked regarding the policy of awards of Italian decorations to British personnel, as he was desirous of making recommendations. The circumstances were explained to him.

7. 56 B.L.U. and MANTOVA Combat Group.

The general standard of morale and discipline in this Group is quite good, and I should count them as being one of the best of the Combat Groups at the present moment.

In order to maintain discipline and keep training going, the B.L.U. must have authority to give orders on the subject.

(5)

The Gruppo are about 1000 under strength, but reinforcements are arriving satisfactorily.

MANTOVA Gp did not get copy of original correspondence regarding No. 1421 Officers Shop, with the unfortunate result that they did not get the opportunity to purchase goods while they lasted. Application was made to 231 Div who are endeavouring to obtain more, but the allotment is small and in any case ceases at end of September.

May a special allotment be made for the MANTOVA Group?

A release of 2000 caps was recently made to the Gruppo. On arrival, these proved to be German type and obviously unsuitable for issue to a Gruppo. 5000 Italian type caps are required in order that the men may be dressed alike as regards headgear.

The retention of the M.O. with the B.L.U. and the complete D.A.D.O.S. staff are recommended by the B.L.U.

General BOLOGNA pointed out that the Gruppo were far too widely dispersed and had too many Guard duties. There were consequently insufficient men for the maintenance of public order (should this prove necessary) and for other requirements. 76 Regt were originally available, but 60 Sub-Area required their presence in GENOVA. 114 Regt is under command INGHIANO Gp in COMO area and there is some resentment owing to the fact that LEGHANO training programmes frequently show a large part of their own men on "summer leave" while MANTOVA are left to carry out Guard duties.

Attached Order of Battle of MANTOVA Gp shows how widely the Gruppo are dispersed; there are representatives as far East as FORLI and as far South as AREZZO, and for practical purposes the Gruppo has turned into a series of independent small units.

It is believed that AFHQ authority is required before the Carriars can be moved from AREZZO; it is also strongly recommended that 114 Regt be withdrawn from COMO.

No. 2 District are aware of the situation in general regarding Combat Gps dispersion, but it is difficult to do anything until the Internal Security Bdes are formed.

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Ministry of War policy regarding demobilisation is eagerly awaited. It is considered that discharging one class per month is not enough. The order for demobilising the 1915 Class arrived very late. It is hoped that new reinforcements are arriving regularly the demobilisation scheme will be expedited up.

Spare parts for vehicles are not arriving. Access to RVP's or scrap dumps might relieve the situation.

Cleaning and repairing of winter clothing is in hand.

(6)

8. No. II Territorial HQ, GENOVA.(a) Accommodation:

There is an acute shortage on account of repatriation of ex-prisoners of war.

(b) Vehicles.

Terr. HQ has great need of more vehicles; the Guard Coy has about 7 efficient vels instead of 60. This comd is handicapped by the fact that there is no railway and it is a long stretch from SPERIA to the French frontier.

Other comds are more fortunate as their territory is not so elongated and in most cases they have railways. The importance of this HQ in pre-war days was not so great as at present; there is now just as much reason for No. II Terr. HQ to have vehicles as for any of the other Terr. HQ's. Under present conditions the visiting of outlying districts is practically impossible.

(c) Captured Enemy Material.

A.M.G. 5 Army authorised local Prefects to collect CEM. This order was due to expire on 31 August, when 60 Area will issue fresh orders on the subject. The local Prefect at GENOVA is stated to have disposed of a large quantity of CEM by sale.

9. 51 B.L.U. and CREMONA Combat Group.

(a) The reduction of the Ordnance Staff in the B.L.U. is causing some concern. Control of the C.M.F. and Dump will be impossible under the new S.D. and no supervision of indents will be possible.

(b) The Gruppo is at present employed on frontier guards and collection of illegal arms. Gruppo HQ will shortly move to TURIN. The Gruppo, like other Gruppi, is widely scattered. 8116

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- (c) Morale has slackened off to a certain extent, but the discipline as a whole is satisfactory, and the general bearing and turn-out of the men compares very favourably with that of other Gruppi.
- (d) Strength is satisfactory and reinforcements are coming in from various sources. These rifts all have to be trained (basic training only is possible) on arrival.
A request for 40 more officers has already been put up to the Ministry of War. These officers should be sent to the Gruppo direct.
- (e) Gen. PRINIERI cannot always fill senior officer's vacancies at CESANO courses, as Comd. 7 A.C.P.A. insists on a high proportion of senior officers being always available.
- (f) The proposed reduction in the soldier's pay is regarded as a great mistake and will cause a lot of trouble.
- (g) The Gruppo is dependent on Terr.HQ for Discipline, Promotion, Records, etc, instead of being dependent on S.M.R.E. as previously. Previous arrangement was considered better.

(7)

(h) The general attitude of the Press towards the Army is regarded with great concern. The "Unita" published a full report regarding an incident which happened at FORLII in which men of 205 Division took part.

A reply to this and other derogatory articles have been sent to the various newspapers concerned, but are never published.

It is generally felt that the Government should take a strong line with the Press in order to ensure that unfair or erroneous statements are contradicted as early as possible. Disciplinary action should be taken against the offenders in 205 Div and the result of such action widely published.

As things are at present, the Army is only getting adverse criticism in the Press. It is consequently very badly regarded generally, and several senior officers have asked to be relieved.

This state of affairs, if allowed to continue, may seriously affect the future Italian Army as well as any interim Army.

At a recent parade held in TURIN (21 Aug) Gen. CADORNA was present and made a speech. The general opinion seems to be that he missed a golden opportunity to put in a good word for the Army.

Mr. Zucchi

Lt. Col., S.S. 8115

Subject: G.S.O. 1 (Liaison) Report.

RESTRICTED.

Land Forces Sub-Commission,
Allied Commission,

H.Q. M.M.I.A.

SLO/G/4.

7 Aug 45.

To: H.Q. M.M.I.A.
(4 copies)

MP A ← Q
Any action on my
line under or paper
Page 5 & 6 please
W.P.
8 Aug

Herewith second part of a report of a tour carried out between 18 July and 4 August 1945.

7. 209 Division, CZECHIA.

Visited on 21 July.

There are approximately 1300 of the 1914 Class still to be demobilised, but the reinforcements allotted as substitutes exceed this figure by about 500.

The Division is expected to move to PADOVA as soon as 228 Division vacates the accommodation there.

Capt. BOUNNE is in close touch with the Division and therefore no major difficulties.

8. No. 6 Territorial HQ, BOLOGNA.

Visited 22 July.

The HQ is well established and working satisfactorily with sufficient staff. There is however a shortage of administrative officers in the Military Districts and in some depots. This is partly due to the fact that many administrative officers "swore in" during the German occupation, and for political reasons they are now not allowed to function.

This HQ finds the lack of sufficient operational troops a cause for alarm in view of local communist power. The latter are very well organised and well armed. The individuals who have retained their arms instead of handing

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This HQ finds the lack of sufficient operational troops a cause for alarm in view of local communist power. The latter are very well organised and well armed. The individuals who have retained their arms instead of handing them in are known; their weapons could be taken from them by force if a general round-up were possible; such a thing is of course out of the question.

There are about 300 CC.NN available for maintenance of law and order, also No. 6 Guard Coy, recently formed, which is stated to be reliable and anti-communist, but which possesses no transport. This Coy is commanded by Capt. CHIARI, a Cavalry officer, who is apparently very efficient and loyal.

Attempts are being made to obtain transport from GEM sources at VICENZA.

The allotting of 523 Guard Bn to No. 6 Terr. HQ will ease Guard duties and enable the Guard Coy to be kept for active duty in event of trouble.

(2)

Enlistment of patriots was very disappointing. Of the 500 allowed by SMRE 17551/Mob., only 56 have been enrolled. It is thought that the reason is that the patriots do not wish to lose their identity. They might join the Army in bands, but are not keen to do so as individuals.

The Chief of Staff (Col. Paolo PETRONI) made the following points :-

Reformation of the Army must be hastened, in order to provide a sufficiently strong and loyal force to cope with emergencies. Without any prompting, he quoted the figure of 140,000 as being the proposed strength of the future army.

The CC.RR are frightened to act in any way (e.g. against illicit weapon-holders or the Black Market) as they feel they are unsupported.

There is a general doubt as to whether TOGLIATTI and NERENI are acting in good faith.

Gen. CERICA is very tactful and diplomatic with the local factions and has eased many troubles. He is on friendly, but not intimate, terms with the Partisan HQ and recently gave them the use of a military dance hall.

In Col. PETRONI's opinion, M.M.I.A. has done a great deal for the Italian Army, but must do more. The establishment of a well-selected force which can be trusted to cope with emergencies is essential and urgent.

Other points discussed.

1914 Class is on its way to demobilisation, but there has been delay due to lack of reinforcements. 8113

Ex-cooperators are behaving well. Early discharge of these men is recommended in view of what they have been through.

Col. RAMPA, of the Motorisation Directorate, is in touch with 1 District regarding location of Italian Military vehicles.

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9. No. 1 District, PADOVA.

From 22-30 July was at PADOVA, my departure being delayed owing to vehicle trouble.

(a) Discussed question of war establishment of BLU's with G(3D). Action had already been taken on MMIA signal SD 2846 of 16 July, and BLU's opinions asked for.

(b) Disbandment of MAIELLA appears to have gone satisfactorily. A good many of the personnel went to the MANTOVA Group. The Ufficio Stralcio of the Banda, now at CASTEL SAN PIETRO, will move to TORRICELLA PEDIANA (CHIETI).

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(c) Discussed question of captured enemy material with Major CAMPBELL-ORDE, CEM Officer. No.5 Terr.HQ at UDINE had published a poster in the provinces of UDINE, TREVISO, etc.; with 8th Army approval, in which it was laid down that all material of Italian Army origin was to be handed in to Terr.HQ.

This poster was not allowed to be exhibited in the 1 District area, as it was in contravention of AFHQ letter AG 386.3/163 LOC-O of 22 June 45.

Gen.ZAULI, 2nd in Comd of No.5 Terr.HQ, was in PADOVA and paid daily visits to MMIA LO to find out whether any ruling could be given.

The matter is one for AFHQ to decide, and the simplest solution would be for them to allow Italian Terr.HQ's, through their recovery units, to collect material and report exact details through Districts, Areas, etc.

It is also essential that announcements are made in the Press and through the medium of posters, pointing out the correct procedure and making it clear that the Liberation Committees are NOT authorised to receive material of any sort.

Major CAMPBELL-ORDE is attempting to get a ruling.

(d) Forwarded copy of 1 District Operation Instruction No.32 of 23 July 45 and Blue Print to MMIA.

This deals with future lay-out and adjustment of boundaries in N.E.ITALY.

(e) In view of changes referred to in para (d) above, it is suggested that MMIA publish a print showing the areas controlled by Territorial HQ's and the areas administered by Admin Divs.

This would clear up a good many doubts as to which Div is responsible for which units.

(f) Policy towards CC.MA requires clearer definition.

To what extent should they be helped as regards clothing, instruction, etc.; not only now but in the future?

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To what extent should they be helped as regards clothing, instruction, etc.; not only now but in the future?

10. 228 Division, PADOVA.

(a) Co-operators. Most of these have been absorbed, but there is a shortage of specialists. 50 are being taken from a Pioneer Coy at MESTRE in order to speed up the discharge of 800 of the 1914 Class.

Sub-Areas find some difficulty in administering their co-operators, and have been told to send them to the Transit Camp and replace them with British personnel.

(b) Reinforcements are arriving well from 240 Division.

(c) 92 Hosp is being disbanded. 1422 Offrs Shop will probably remain PADOVA and not accompany 228 Div to 13 Corps Area.

(4)

11. No. 5 Territorial HQ, UDIKE.

Spoke with Gen. AMBELLINI on 31 July.

- (a) Recovery of material. (See foregoing para. 9(c)).
 8th Army agreed to the publication of the poster which 1 District vetoed. There is a lot of ammunition still lying about and Gen. AMBELLINI is afraid of its getting into the wrong hands. He stated that Yugo-Slavs had removed ammunition from dumps guarded by Allied personnel.

All the Amun depots and dumps in the UDIKE area and dependent military districts (a total of 59 munition depots) are guarded by Allied troops. The amun is mixed, and is in many cases deteriorating into a dangerous state. Most Allied guards will not allow Italian artificers to enter depots and sort the amun by types.

In one case, Allied soldiers are carrying out target shooting inside a munition depot.

On other occasions, wooden material has been removed by Allied troops from a munition depot, leaving the amun exposed to the elements.

The Direzione d'Artiglieria have skilled personnel. The General would like to have the depots handed over to the Italians, who will be responsible for their safety and well-being. In many cases shells can be disassembled and the chemical used for agriculture.

(b) Partisan activity.

8111

The local A.N.P.I. are reported to be well armed and clothed, possess a large number of hidden vehicles, and are well provided with funds. All this is reputed to have been supplied by Marshal TITO.

They could mobilise quickly. They are in league with the C.I.N. are well organized and communist to a man.

Recently they took possession of some accommodation which had been earmarked for the Army. No action can be taken to expel them. They have no regard for the Government of ROME.

C.I.N. are in possession of some Italian Army vehicles.

The 8th Army has about 8000 troops and 600

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C.L.N. are in possession of some Italian Army vehicles.

The Territorial HQ has about 8000 troops and 600 CC.BR in its whole area. There is an urgent necessity for more troops, more transport, and more authority.

Very few volunteers for the Army have come forward, as the partisans are well supplied with money and have no need to work.

In Gen. ARMELLINI's opinion there will be a rising organised by TITO as soon as the Allies leave ITALY.

(c) Liaison Officer.

228 Div (HERBERT) may go to MESTRE. Gen. ARMELLINI would like THURPP to be based on UDINE if possible, as part of No. 5 Terr. HQ is in 13 Corps area and part in 1 District, and close touch with an L.O. is essential

(5)

12. 50 B.L.U. and FRIULI Combat Group., LERICO.

Visited on 31 July-1 August.

(a) Unwanted British equipment.

A list has already been sent to District. Retention of one Bty 25-pdrs and one Tp 17-pdrs for training purposes considered desirable.

(b) Dispersal of Gruppo.

The Gruppo is widely dispersed in small groups, which makes administration difficult. There are many dumps to guard and much work in connection with refugees.

Withdrawal of any transport would completely handicap the Gruppo from carrying out these duties.

Little training is being done, and the Gruppo can hardly be said to be carrying out its correct role of Internal Security.

(c) Strength. The Gruppo is 1280 below strength.(d) Selection of Officers.

The best type of Officer is not being sent to the Group. Gen. SCATTINI considers there is a tendency to send the better officers to Territorial HQ's.

(e) Relations with Allied troops.

There have been several unfortunate incidents between members of the Combat Group and U.S. troops. Each is taken up by the B.L.U. commander with 5th Army as it occurs.

(f) Military Tribunal.

After urgent requests for a Tribunal while the Gruppo was in the line, one has recently arrived, too late. It is now preferable to send men before the Territorial Tribunal, as no facilities exist in Combat Groups 8910 prisons, etc.

(g) Demobilization, Reinforcements, Morale.

Gen. SCATTINI said that this was a vital period for the Allies and the Italian Government must

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- (g) Demobilisation, Reinforcements, Morale.
Gen. SCATTINI said that this was a vital period for the Combat Groups. The Allies and the Italian Government must come to an early decision on many points.
The 1915-16-17 classes should be demobilised quickly; then the 1918-19-20 classes and any more over the total ultimate strength agreed upon.
If this is not done soon there is the danger of men deserting with their clothing, etc.
It is essential that the demobilisation policy is announced by the Government without delay, so that the soldiers will at least know how they stand.
Gen. SCATTINI cannot guarantee that 100 per cent of the Gruppo would do their duty in the event of internal disorders in this country.

(h) Cancellation of Charges.

It is considered that the commander of a Combat Group should be granted the authority to cancel outstanding charges against a soldier in cases where the man has done well and distinguished himself and the charge has been outstanding a long time.

In this Combat Group, for instance, there are several untitled cases dating back to the time when the Group were at SAN GIORGIO eight months ago; some of the accused have since died, others did well in the line, and it is felt that the charges against them should be dropped.

(i) Soldiers and Volunteers.

The Volunteers were given a special status, and after three months were discharged and given a "Premio di solidarietà nazionale" amounting to 5000 lire.

The soldier, after several years service, gets no premio and has to wait indefinitely for his discharge.

The partisan volunteer is boosted in all the newspapers particularly in the North.

With the exception of "La PATRIA" and some of the HOME newspapers, no publicity is given to the Combat Groups. Criticism is in fact often levelled at the Generals.

Preferential treatment on return to civil life is given to the partisan volunteers.

The soldier gets none.

Note : In compiling this report I have recorded the opinions of the various officers I spoke with.

They are not necessarily my own views.

81/9

Subject: GSD 1 (Liaison) Report.

RESTRICTED.

Land Forces Sub-Comm., A.C.
H.Q., M.M.I.A.
Ref. SIO/G/4.

26 July 45.

H.Q. M.M.I.A. (4 copies)

Herewith first part of report of a tour carried out between 16 July and Aug 45.

1. R.T.C.I.O.F., CESAMO.

Visited on 18 July.

Explained reason for sudden clear-out of reinforcements to Col. MACKAY, and handed over MIA letter A 014 of 17 July.

ETO estimate they will be able to provide the required number of men, although owing to insufficient permanent staff, many of the Rfts have necessarily to be employed on maintenance of vehicles and tracked vehicles.

As an example, the official establishment for Maint of tracked vehs in the centre is 3 Oftrs and 6 Sergeants, which is totally inadequate.

Spent morning going round CESAMO. Saw lay-out of 1 and 2 Regiments. The buildings require much repair. New Synnasium will be very good when fixed up; some equipment already received.

Ration and Clothing stores excellently kept. Men's quarters poor as there are no windows, or rather no glass in the gaps, which have in most cases been partially bricked in.

Electric lighting in barrack rooms insufficient.

There are at present no proper dining halls. Demonstration rooms are excellent and there are some other rooms.

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There are at present no proper dining halls. Demonstration rooms are excellent and there are many clever wall drawings of an instructive nature, done by a good draughtsman. The demonstration room in the Carrier Wing is also good.

Visited BRACCIANO in afternoon; saw Engineer training Ground and Bagr and Signal barracks and lecture rooms. The equipment is very adequate; no difficulty with DMT over this.

Then went on to MANZIANA and saw the S.I.V.A. (Scuola Istruttori Varii Armi). This runs courses in Weapon Trng, Tactics, Administration and Hygiene. A TWT on the ground was in progress. The school is well run, there are plenty of sand- and cloth-models, and also air photos on plaster of Paris mounting, from ONTO, BENEVENTO.

Numbers attending the courses are disappointing. The Signals school, which has a capacity of 500, had only 180

(2)

students, and the Engineer School, capacity 500, had only 18 students. There is apparently no demand from the Gruppi for these two courses.

Similarly, Gruppi do not avail themselves of vacancies allotted in the Tactical Wing, and never send their full quota. This is not very encouraging for the R.T.O.I.O.F., and it is thought perhaps that the Gruppi are afraid of losing their best officers as instructors.

RTOICOF are anxious to point out their difficulties and also show representatives of the Gruppi how they can help.

It is felt that a visit from the Colonels of Regts in the Gruppi would clarify a good many points. I understand that Gen. BOLOGNA in a recent visit was much impressed.

OSO 1's of BLU's should also see this place, and Col. MACKAY would welcome a visit from them after the ROME conference on 7 August.

Transport. The removal of the G.T Coy will leave insufficient transport for students at the Tactical Wing.

General. An Italian Officers Shop recommended.

Discussed various points with Gen. VESCHI and Gen. MATTEOLI and Chief of Staff in the evening.

2. 802 Re-Org Depot, ORVIETO.

8107

Visited on 19 July.

There were on that date 1284 all ranks present, of which 703 form the permanent staff.

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8107

2. 802 Re-ORG Depot, ORVIELO.

Visited on 19 July.

There were on that date 1234 all ranks present, of which 703 form the permanent staff.

The first draft of ex-cooperators from LEGHORN (US-ITI) arrived on 17 July and amounted to 5 Ofcrs and 165 OR's. 150 more were due 19 July.

Most of the first batch were due for leave and morale was very low. Draft conducting officer stated that between 1 July and the date they left for ORVIELO, 40% of his party deserted. Since arrival, a further 21 men had attempted to board trains at the station.

Capt. CRAIG informed me that it was proposed to send all the 1919 class and younger on leave as soon as possible, before they report to CESANO, and keep the older classes until they are sorted out. He intended visiting MILA on 21 July to discuss this arrangement.

(3)

Meanwhile it was arranged that the men should be told that they would all get a fortnight's leave sooner or later, as soon as arrangements could be made. Col. GATTA, the Italian Commandant, thought this would stop desertion.

Immediate commitments for the week 30 July - 5 August are 200 men for ANCONA and 300 for BOLOGNA; if these cannot be found from personnel already at the Depot, CRAIG will make up numbers by sending co-operators whose homes are in these provinces.

A new ELG Coy (strength 300 and 82 OR's) is being formed from ex-US-ITI's (EMIA letter A 110/5 of 16 July refers).

Col. GATTA seems to be sensible and efficient and is well-liked, though I am told that his predecessor was more popular with the Depot Staff.

3. No. 7 Territorial HQ, FLORENCE.

Visited on 20 July. Interviewed Chief of Staff, as Gen. de SIMONE was away.

The HQ is established and working satisfactorily.

The Staff is adequate.

This HQ is not enlisting volunteers, as SMRE signal 17551/Mob did not authorise this HQ to enlist men. 8106

Lists of volunteers however are kept at Military District HQ.

The only enlistments carried out have been 6000 ex-partisans between February and April.

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A new ELB Coy (strength 3 Offrs and 82 OR's) is being formed from ex-US-ITI's (MIA letter A 110/5 of 16 July refers).

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No. 7 Guard Coy has arrived but has no transport yet. Chief of Staff would like another Guard Coy.

The HQ is suffering from lack of accommodation, but ROBERT has this in hand.

(4)

4. 230 Division, FLORENCE.

Visited on 20 July. Discussed points with Gen. VIVALDA and T. Col. BIANCHI (Chief of Staff).

This Div is experiencing NO difficulty with ex-cooperators. The following numbers have been absorbed into units shown :

Unit	Offrs	OR's
410 Regt Pionieri		170
412 Regt Pionieri	1	55
400 Regt Pionieri	7	557
1005 Autoreparto	2	125
Total	10	906

US-ITI Reinforcements for the Div are coming half from LEGHORN and half from 5 Army. This is easing demobilisation. 412 Regt is already up to strength and should be able to send all its 1914 Class home. There is a certain transport difficulty from LEGHORN.

Two points concerning equalisation of pay, etc were raised :-

- (a) The War Ministry (Telegram 12210/S/I of 28 June) established a demarcation line NORTH of which the messing allowance is 20 lire and SOUTH of which it is 5 lire. The line runs as follows :-
- 8145
- PORTO CORSINI - RAVENNA - FORLI - BOCCA S. CASCIANO -
 DIOMANO - PONTASSIEVE - FIRENZE - SESTO - PRATO -
 PISTOIA - MONTECATINI - PESCIA - LUCCA - MASSAROSA -
 VIAREGGIO.

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VIAREGGIO.

This is causing much dis-satisfaction.

(b) The old question of better pay in the Combat Groups was also brought up. Briefly, the difference is :-

Combat Group	Pay	Messing
BR-ITI (NORTH)	45	20
BR-ITI (SOUTH)	32	20
ITI-ITI (NORTH)	32	5
ITI-ITI (SOUTH)	12	20
ITI-ITI (SOUTH)	12	5

The only other point raised by Gen. VIVALDA was that an Italian Officers Shop is needed.

(5)

5. Other points discussed with Capt. V. THRUFP.

- (a) Partisan activity in FLORENCE is NIL. There are no active bands.
- (b) Disbandment of unwanted BR-ITI units is being looked into at 1 District.
- (c) No reduction is considered desirable in 230 Admin Div HQ.
- (d) Substitution of certain army personnel by civilians is not always satisfactory, as civilians are less disciplined.
- (e) All Italian units in FLORENCE drew rations from the Italian D.I.D. Those outside FLORENCE draw from British D.I.D's.
- (f) Following units (previously reported) can be disbanded as they are serving no useful purpose :-

576 Hosp	CAPPAGIOLO
866 Hosp	do.
964 Hosp	SIGNA
Ambulanza Radiologica	CAPPAGIOLO
- (g) Paid a visit to the 230 Div Clothing Store and found all in order. Capt. THRUFP is in close touch with the Div and there are no major difficulties.

8154

6. Continuation of this report will follow in due course.

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sd/ P.M.M. EGERTON, Lt. Col.
G.S.O. 1 (Liaison) M.M.I.A.

Padua, 26 July 45.

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