

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785020

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Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785020

10000/120/427

SD/2/1/5

Duca D'Aosta Bn. for UTILE Brigade

Opened Apr 16, 1944 - Closed Sept 27, 1944

Translation 25
 From S.M.A.E. Ref. 7942/MOB
 To: M.M.H. Date Sept 27
 Subject: Volunteers of the Blue Ln. "Duca
 d'Acosta"

For your information we
 enclose a copy of our letter No. 7132
 dated 2474 sent and addressed
 to General MERRIGI GIORGIO,
 Commander of the "FOLGORE" combat
 group, which contains the orders
 issued concerning the employment
 of the volunteers of the Blue
 Ln. "Duca d'Acosta."

1. GI Fo. 24 fulfilled the
 conditions of C.O.C.'s
 letter of Fo. 20.
 Have informed Col. Didsley
 verbally. C. 4732



From SMIRE
 To: Mr. MCRIE, GARIO
 Subject: "Instructions of the Blue Division" "Dacca"
 Date: Sept 24, 1944
 Ref: 1732/1908
 24

I: The arrival at your division of four officers, former M.B.'s and are identified and highly military of the ~~Blue~~ Division.
 "Dacca" "Dacca", which are all volunteers for combat units, no imminent.

Division they will be sent to represent by the M.B. Reg. Pugh's and Luccaria by urgent Auto transport.

II: Land military will be decided among all the units of the Division as individual reinforcements and NOT as an independent unit.

III: I shall you personally responsible if it is that the

STATO MAGGIORE REGIO ESERCITO
UFFICIO ORDINAMENTO E MOBILITAZIONE
- Sezione Mobilitazione -

n. 1242 /Mob. di prot.

P.M. 151, 22 settembre 1944

OGGETTO:volontari del btg. azzurro "Duca d'Aosta".-

ALLA SOTTOCOMMISSIONE PER L'ESERCITO (M.M.I.A.) ROMA

Per conoscenza si trasmette copia del foglio 7132 in data 24 corrente di questo Stato Maggiore indirizzato al Generale MORIGI Giorgio comandante del gruppo di combattimento "Folgore", contenente le disposizioni impartite circa l'impiego dei volontari del btg. azzurro "Duca d'Aosta".-



NUM. A.	
FILE REF.	
Date Recd.	

NUM. A.	50/271/5
FILE REF.	
Date Recd.	28/9/44

STATO MAGGIORE REGIO ESERCITO
UFFICIO ORDINAMENTO E MOBILITAZIONE
- Sezione Mobilitazione -

n. 9/32 Mob. di prot.

P.M. 151, 24 sett. 1944

OGGETTO: Volontari del btg. azzurro "Duca d'Aosta".-

NUM. A.	59/2/15
FILE REF.	
Date Recd.	

AL GENERALE MORIGI GIORGIO

- Comandante Div. "Folgore" -

P.M. 146

I. - Sono di imminente arrivo a cotesta divisione 4 ufficiali, 4 sottufficiali e 184 militari, tutti volontari per reparti operanti, appartenenti al battaglione azzurro "Duca d'Aosta". Verranno avviati a cotesta divisione a cura del comando militare Puglia e Lucania, con urgente autotrasporto.

II. - Ordino che i predetti militari siano immessi nella divisione, suddividendoli fra tutti i reparti, come complementi individuali, e non in reparto a sè stante.

III. - Ritengo personalmente responsabile V.S. dell'esecuzione del presente ordine.-



CAPO DI STATO MAGGIORE
F.to P. Berardi



AL GENERALE MORIGI GIORGIO

- Comandante Div. "Polvore" -

P.M. 146

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II. - Ordino che i predetti militari siano immessi nella divisione, suddividendoli fra tutti i reparti, come complementi individuali, e non in reparto a sè stante.

III. - Ritengo personalmente responsabile V.S. dell'esecuzione del presente ordine.-



GENERALI ADDETTO
Alessandro Santi

A. Santi



CAPO DI STATO MAGGIORE
f.to P. Berardi

21

I saw Gen. PLACENTINI on 12 Aug.
& explained the whole sequence
of events & said I was not
prepared to reopen the question
Col. Elliott & Sgt. Leader WATSON
were present & entirely agreed
that it was up to Air Force Sub-
Committee to find their
own solution.

L.B.

12 Aug.

that it was up to the source to
- Commission to find their
own solution.

L.B.

12 Aug.

1730

SUBJECT: Italian Air Force BNA DIAOSTA Bn

S E C R E T

Army Sub Commission, (MMA)
H. C. ACC.

HOME.

3 SD/2/1/5
Aug 44.

S. M. R. E.

1. It has been represented to me that C.I.L. is in urgent need of reinforcements and that it is desired by you to send men from the Air Force BNA DIAOSTA Bn to provide these.
2. As you know, permission for the existence of the above Bn as an organized unit has been refused, twice, despite persistent attempts to retain it as such. That decision holds good and will NOT be changed.
3. Only a limited number of reinforcements can be absorbed into C.I.L. without upsetting the balance, cohesion and efficiency of C.I.L.
4. Moreover, it is most desirable that vacancies in the C.I.L. establishment be kept, so that volunteer patriots who wish to fight may be drafted to C.I.L. without delay.
5. On the other hand, in view of the urgency of the demand for reinforcements and the shortage at the moment of patriots who wish to fight, I am prepared to allow up to two hundred men of the BNA DIAOSTA Bn to be sent to C.I.L., provided that:
 - (a) these men are sent as individual reinforcements, are distributed over units on arrival and are not used as formed units.
 - (b) these men are transferred from the Air Force to the Army, within Army ceiling, and wear Army uniforms.
 - (c) this arrangement is not used as some future date as a basis for demanding the constitution of an Air Force unit in C.I.L., thus contravening by circuitous means the orders that have been given in this respect.
 - (d) no upset is caused to the Air Force Sub Commissions' work.

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1729

Barrow

3. Only a limited number of reinforcements can be absorbed into C.I.L. without upsetting the balance, cohesion and efficiency of C.I.L.

4. Moreover, it is most desirable that vacancies in the C.I.L. establishment be kept, so that volunteer patriots who wish to fight may be drafted to C.I.L. without delay.

5. On the other hand, in view of the urgency of the demand for reinforcements and the shortage at the moment of patriots who wish to fight, I am prepared to allow up to two hundred men of the DETA DIASTA Bn to be sent to C.I.L., provided that:

- (a) these men are sent as individual reinforcements, are distributed over units on arrival and are not used as formed units.
- (b) these men are transferred from the Air Force to the Army, within Army ceiling, and wear Army uniforms.
- (c) this arrangement is not used as some future date as a basis for demanding the constitution of an Air Force unit in C.I.L., thus contravening by circuitous means the orders that have been given in this respect.
- (d) no upset is caused to the Air Force Sub Commissions' work.

two LB.
4. a.

1729

d. Browning

Major General,
Army Sub Comm, A.C.C.

copy to: Air Force Sub Commission.

50/2/5
DUCR D'AOSTA fl
EWS/ajp
(19)
RFB 31/7

A/CS 091.711

21 July 1944

Dear Marshal Messe:

With reference to our conference of July 19th on the subject of employment of the Arditi Air Force Battalion in the Italian Army for combat purposes which we reopened at the request of Premier Bonomi, I regret to have to inform you that the position remains unchanged from that set forth in General MacFarlane's letter to you, CC/G/325 of 23 May. Accordingly, I am not in a position to alter the decision set forth in that letter.

Yours very truly,

ELLERY W. STONE
Captain, USNR
Acting Chief Commissioner

los seen
COC
30/7
cd
His Excellency Marshal Messe
Chief of the Supreme General Staff
Comando Supremo.

1728

(C O P Y)

1 COPY

FMS/rj

(18)

Ref. CC/C/925.

23rd. May, 1944.

MEMORANDUM.

TO: Marshal of Italy, Giovanni Messe,
Chief of the General Staff,
Supreme Command.

SUBJECT: Arditi Aeronautical Battalion 'Duca d'Aosta'.

1. Reference your File No. 12980 of 11th. May.
2. As explained to you when I had the pleasure of meeting you the other day I regret that it is impossible to sanction the inclusion of the Arditi Air Force Battalion in the Italian Army for combat purposes.
3. I fully understand that the Battalion was not created by your orders and neither my Army Sub-Commission nor I myself were consulted before its formation. These facts undoubtedly led to the unauthorized formation of this unit which for the reasons which I explained to you cannot unfortunately be utilised as desired.

MOEL MASON MACFARLANE,
Lieutenant-General,
Chief Commissioner.

LROT V LRAR NR5193 IMPORTANT
FROM NMIA
TO ROME AREA COMMAND FOR ACC ROME
231940 B

QQX GR46

SD1030. CONFIDENTIAL. FOR BOWEN.

BUSCARLET AND PIDSLEY FROM BROWNING
YOUR CITE ADV60 CITE 11 OF 25 JUNE.

~~PREV~~ PREVIOUS POLICY CONFIRMED.

ARBITE WERE NEVER ALERTED BY US AND ARE NOT
RPT NOT REQUIRED

T00252011

SENT NR5193 0020 B RJK B2

H NR 5193 0020B DV KKK

129
Army SC
R-232 (16)
File 5/30/5

31ST
(ACT) ARMY SC 1
(INT) Main HQ 1
FILE 1
FLOAT 2

WP 26/6.
M Centre requested
to pass info to
AFSC & make
made by them
APC
26/6.

Spoke S/S

WP

19° Col. Redd
(15) 1A

MEMO

ADVANCED HQ ACC
ADV 60

24- 1050 B

CONFIDENTIAL
PRIORITY

ADBY SUB COM

1686 CONFIDENTIAL PD FOR PROCEEDING FROM BISHARLET PD ITALIAN AIR MINISTRY HAS
RECEIVED A SIGNAL FROM INFANTRY DIV PIEDMONT COMMAND TRANSMITTING SIGNAL FROM HQ
STAFF TO THE EFFECT THAT AUDITI BATTALION WILL BE EMPLOYED IN THE FRONT LINE IN
THE NEAR FUTURE AND REQUESTING NECESSARY ACTION BE TAKEN IN READINESS FOR MOVE PD
THIS IS ENTIRELY CONTRARY TO POLICY AS AGREED IN YOUR ED STRIKE TWO STRIKE ONE STRIKE
FIVE OF FIFTH MAY AND IN YOUR CONVERSATIONS WITH GEN MACPARLANE PD WITHIN LAST
WEEK HAVE ARRANGED WITH ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION ROME THAT IN CONSEQUENCE OF
MISCONDUCT OF AUDITI IN BARI AREA THEY WOULD BE SPLIT UP AND PUT ON DUTY IN
REFUGEE CAMPS IN FORWARD AREA PD COL ELLIOTT AIR FORCES SUB COMMISSION ROME
TELEPHONE NUMBER FOUR TWO SEVEN EIGHT ONE HAS FULL DETAILS OF THIS PD REQUEST
YOUR REACTIONS AND IF YOU WILL CONFIRM PREVIOUS POLICY WILL CONTINUE TO SEND
AUDITI TO REFUGEE CAMPS PD PARISH TO MEMO FROM ACC ADV HQ FOR PIEDMONT BARI PD

1726

LOUIS T. MONTAGNE, JR.
Adjutant

SUBJECT, REA D'ARSA, JR.

File

SECRET

Army Sub Commission, A.C.C.
Main HQ (MILA)
LEQUITE (LECCO)
SD/2/1/5

24 June 1944.

His Excellency,
Marshal of Italy MESSE

Your Excellency,

1. Thank you for your letter, 13220/CP dated 22 June. I of course welcome your opinion. The history of this Battalion, as I know it, is as follows.
2. It was formed unilaterally by Air Commodore FORSTER and the Minister of the Air Force. No authority was given for this formation by H.Q. AAI, nor was the Chief Commissioner, A.C.C., informed.
3. When, at the end of April, M.M.I.A. was asked to provide several hundred balloonists for the Air Force, we discovered the existence of this Battalion. On enquiry we were told both by S.M.R.E. and S.M.F.A. that it had been authorised by you. Naturally we assumed this to be so, particularly in view of the fact that we thought it inconceivable that you, as Comande Supremo, should not have known what was going on. This matter was cleared up, as you say, in your letter, 12980/CP dated 11 May to General MACFARLANE.
4. I then put the whole matter (including the factors mentioned in para 5 below) to Gen MACFARLANE. He decided that the Battalion should NOT be used for incorporation in C.I.L. and that these airmen should be used for Air Force purposes. He informed Air Force Sub Commission, S.M.F.E. and you accordingly.

1725

1. Thank you for your letter, 13820/CP dated 22 June. I of course welcome your opinion. The history of this Battalion, as I know it, is as follows.
2. It was formed unilaterally by Air Commodore FORSTER and the Minister of the Air Force. No authority was given for this formation by H.Q. AAF, nor was the Chief Commissioner, A.C.C. informed.
3. When, at the end of April, M.M.I.A. was asked to provide several hundred balloonists for the Air Force, we discovered the existence of this Battalion. On enquiry we were told both by S.M.R.E. and S.M.P.A. that it had been authorised by you. Naturally we assumed this to be so, particularly in view of the fact that we thought it inconceivable that you, as Comande Supremo, should not have known what was going on. This matter was cleared up, as you say, in your letter, 12980/CP dated 11 May to General MACFARLANE.
4. I then put the whole matter (including the factors mentioned in para 5 below) to Gen MACFARLANE. He decided that the Battalion should NOT be used for incorporation in C.I.L. and that these airmen should be used for Air Force purposes. We informed Air Force Sub Commission, S.M.R.E. and you accordingly. This was early in May.
5. (a) I may say that, from investigations made we found that, though the personnel was of a good type and keen -
 - (1) they had no battle experience.
 - (11) no ammunition or equipment such as mortars etc, had been released for field firing practice etc.
- (b) Moreover, we were told by S.M.R.E. that the GRADO marine battalion was equally as good as the PMA D'ACSTA; and, judging by the fine performances of the RAFFLE Bn in the Line, we were sure that a similar Bn (GRADO) would do equally well.

Sheet 2.

5. (Contd.)

(c) You will agree, my dear Marshal, that in modern war an Enthusiast, no matter how keen and physically fit, is no use without considerable training. On the face of things, therefore, the GRADO Bn, with its back-ground and training, was likely, even certain, to be at least as suitable for immediate entry into battle as the DUCA D'ACOSTA. The aspirations of the Italian Air Force (who, I understand are doing a very good job in the Air) to take part in the ground battle for the liberation of Italy could not, therefore, be held to outweigh the suitability of the GRADO for battle.

(d) I might also mention that, in addition to the GRADO, there is a reinforcement unit for the BATTLE.

6. (a) In any event, the decision had been given by General MACPARLANE, and the DUCA D'ACOSTA personnel was retained at the disposal of the Air Force Sub Commission to fulfill its needs.

(b) All MEVA actions have been based on the above decision, arrived at after weighing all the factors involved.

7. (a) H.Q. AAI have ordered forward the GRADO to replace the MEBO Bn removed from C.I.L., for a special task.

(b) Under the circumstances as shown above, I cannot agree to apply to H.Q. AAI to change their order at the last moment.

8. Finally, I would add that I sent my 2nd-in-command and C.S.O.1 to inspect the GRADO today. His report to me is attached at Appendix 'A'. You will agree, I think, that we are making no mistake in sending this unit to the C.I.L.

I have delayed sending you this letter so as to include the report.

9. I am sending H.Q. AAI and Air Force Sub Commission a copy of this letter so that there shall be no misunderstanding.

1724

reinforcement unit for the RAFFLE.

6. (a) In any event, the decision had been given by General MACPARIANE, and the DICA D'ACOSTA personnel was retained at the disposal of the Air Force Sub Commission to fulfill its needs.

(b) All MIA actions have been based on the above decision, arrived at after weighing all the factors involved.

7. (a) H.Q. AAI have ordered forward the GRADO to replace the MEMBO Bn removed from C.I.L. for a special task.

(b) Under the circumstances as shown above, I cannot agree to apply to H.Q. AAI to change their order at the last moment.

8. Finally, I would add that I sent my 2nd-in-command and C.S.O.1 to inspect the GRADO today. His report to me is attached at Appendix "A". You will agree, I think, that we are making no mistake in sending this unit to the C.I.L. 1724
I have delayed sending you this letter so as to include the report.

9. I am sending H.Q. AAI and Air Force Sub Commission a copy of this letter so that there shall be no misunderstanding as to the sequence of events or the reasons for our actions in MIA.

I Remain, My Dear Marshal,

Yours sincerely
Langley Brown

two LB. Copy to: H.Q. AAI
Director, Army Sub Comm, A.C.C.
(together with a copy of Marshal MESSE's
13820/OF dated 22 June 1944.)

Appendix "A" to MIA SD/2/1/5
of 24 June 1944

Report by Colonel C.P. KERR, 2nd-in-command M.M.I.A.
on the GRADO Bn., inspected 24 June .

13

This is the best Italian Bn I have ever seen. I say this after having had first hand contact with C.I.I. in battle.

The C.O. is excellent - a leader and father to his men. The Officers are of a very good stamp and the men fine physical specimens, fighting fit, and battle trained.

There is a magnificent spirit in the Bn. All ranks show the utmost keenness, smartness and discipline. Great ingenuity and initiative has been displayed in fitting out the Bn, both as regards special clothing and special equipment. (e.g. the towing apparatus for the battery). Obviously they had helped themselves without waiting for everything to fall into their lap.

The personnel, equipment and Camp were beautifully clean and well cared for.

They have carried out intensive battle training. I asked for a small tactical exercise to be laid on. This was done swiftly, efficiently and without fuss, and impressed me greatly. This Bn knows its job and I am convinced will achieve any task placed upon it, if this is humanly possible.

Notes for telephone call to AA: supporting
recommencement of Grados km

(JUCA DIAZ)

Gen. only 3 months old - no big (real).

Arranged by MESSE militarily.

Gen. Macfarlane said NO.

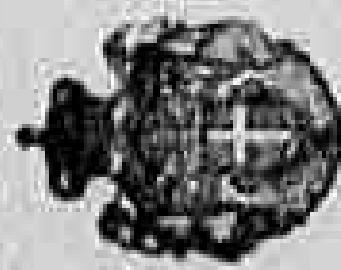
Grado km. told to

FE r.g. by Garandi etc.

Already reduced.

No change

We can see it in the map



COMANDO SUPREMO

IL CAPO DI S. M. GENERALE

P.M. 135, 22 Giugno 1944

N. 11820/66 di prot.

O G G E T T O: Battaglione Duca d'Aosta.

Caro Generale BROWNING,

da alcuni commenti fatti da ufficiali appartenenti alla Sottocommissione Alleata per l'Esercito ho avuto l'impressione che esistono ancora dei malintesi nel riguardo della costituzione del Battaglione "Duca d'Aosta".

Al Generale OLLIVA è stato infatti accennato - durante una sua visita a Lequile - che il battaglione anzidetto non poteva essere assegnato al Corpo Italiano di Liberazione (in sostituzione di un battaglione della "Nembo" destinato ad altro impiego) perché il battaglione stesso era stato da me costituito senza autorizzazione della Sottocommissione.

A Caserta, presso l'A.A.I. un ufficiale della stessa Sottocommissione ha confermato, sempre a proposito del Battaglione "Duca d'Aosta" che esso era stato costituito per ordine del Maresciallo MESSER senza che la Sottocommissione ne fosse a conoscenza.

Come ho già riferito al Generale MAC FARLANE con foglio 12980 Op. dell'11 maggio, il Battaglione "Duca d'Aosta" è stato costitui-

Caro Generale BROWNING,

da alcuni commenti fatti da ufficiali appartenenti alla Sottocommissione Alleata per l'Esercito ho avuto l'impressione che esistono ancora dei malintesi nei riguardi della costituzione del Battaglione "Duca d'Aosta".

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Come ho già riferito al Generale MAC FARLANE con foglio 12980 Op. dell'11 maggio, il Battaglione "Duca d'Aosta" è stato costituito non per mio ordine ma in seguito ad accordi presi tra il Commodoro FORSTER, già Capo della Sottocommissione Aeronautica Alleata di Controllo, ed il Generale SANDALLI, Capo di Stato Maggiore e Ministro della Regia Aeronautica.

Lo stesso Commodoro FORSTER, dopo aver concesso l'autorizzazio

./.

ne alla costituzione del Battaglione, si è recato più volte, ed in ultimo anche col Generale BUSCARLET, che lo ha sostituito, a visitare tale unità per constatarne il grado di approntamento, ed ha assicurato il suo pieno interessamento presso le Autorità Alleate per il successivo impiego in linea.

Il mio intervento si è pertanto limitato a seguire l'attività del Battaglione ed a rappresentarne l'opportunità dell'impiego non appena efficiente. Analoghi chiarimenti sono stati forniti il 16 maggio u.s. dal Generale IMPARTE durante una sua visita a Lequille.

Devo pertanto ritenere che in proposito non dovrebbero più sussistere malintesi e Le sarò quindi molto grato se vorrà rendermene edotti tutti gli Ufficiali della Sottocommissione.

Ciò premesso confermo il mio giudizio che, per il grado di addestramento raggiunto e per lo spirito combattivo che lo anima, il battaglione "Duca d'Aosta" è perfettamente in grado di partecipare alle operazioni con il C.I.L. e di emulare il valoroso comportamento dei battaglioni dell'Esercito e della Marina che già vi sono rappresentati.

Per quanto riguarda invece il battaglione "Grado" - costituito anch'esso per iniziativa della Regia Marina con il preciso scopo di preparare i complementi necessari per mantenere a numero il battaglione "Bafile" - ritengo che esso non sia idoneo per un impiego operativo ma debba mantenere le funzioni per le quali è stato creato, cioè di fornire i complementi al battaglione della Regia Marina che già fa parte del C.I.L.--

Tale mia opinione ho chiaramente espresso ritenendolo

appena efficiente. Analoghi chiarimenti sono stati forniti il 16 maggio u.s. dal Generale INFANTE durante una sua visita a Lequille.

Devo pertanto ritenere che in proposito non dovrebbero più susistere malintesi e le sarò quindi molto grato se vorrà renderne edotti tutti gli Ufficiali della Sottocommissione.

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Tale mia opinione ho chieramente espressa ritenendolo doveroso nella mia qualità di capo responsabile delle forze armate italiane e per mantenere l'impegno che mi sono assunto di fornire alle armate alleate reparti che, come gli attuali, siano pienamente all'altezza del loro compito.

Naturalmente mi rimetto alle decisioni che il Comando Alleato riterrà più opportune nell'interesse del buon esito delle operazioni.

Colgo l'occasione per inviarle i saluti più cordiali.

IL MARESCIALLO D'ITALIA
CAPO DI STATO MAGGIORE GENERALE
(Giovanni Messe)

G. Messe

AL SIGNOR GENERALE BROWNING
CAPO DELLA SOTTOCOMMISSIONE PER L'ESERCITO
DELLA COMMISSIONE ALLEATA DI CONTROLLO

(Lecce)

DEQUILLE

1719

1719

.....
AL SIGNOR GENERALE BROWNING
CAPO DELLA SOTTOCOMMISSIONE PER L'ESERCITO
DELLA COMMISSIONE ALLEATA DI CONTROLLO

(Lecce)

LEQUITE

STATO MAGGIORE GENERALE
(Giovanni Messe)

G. Messe

FROM:-- AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION,
BARI.

TO:-- HEADQUARTERS ARMY SUB-COMMISSION, A.C.C.
MAIN H.Q. (M.M.I.A.).
LEQUILE (LECCE).

DATE:-- 16th May 1944.

REF:-- AFSC/7/AIR.

TOP SECRET.

"DUCA D'AOSTA" BN OF ARDITI - (AIR FORCE).

With reference to your letter SD/2/1/5 of the 5th May 1944. The question of the future of this battalion has been discussed with General Mason-Macfarlane at some length.

2. It has been agreed that there can be no question whatever of the battalion being included in combat troops under Allied Command. Unfortunately, however, there is a very difficult political aspect to the question of the ultimate disposal of this Unit, which can only be definitely solved when certain impending changes in the Italian operational set-up have taken place.
3. I am therefore not in a position at the moment to state whether or not your proposal to use the battalion to relieve Army Units now performing A.A. duties for the Air Force can be accepted. Your suggestion will, however, be borne in mind when the time to make the decision arrives.

C.O.C. via 2/c,
for information

1318
W. A. B. Bowen-Buscarlet

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

14
15

With reference to your letter of 21/1/50 of the 3rd Army
The question of the future of this battalion has been discussed with
General Mason-Macfarlane at some length.

2. It has been agreed that there can be no question whatever of
the battalion being included in combat troops under Allied Command.
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operational set-up have taken place.

3. I am therefore not in a position at the moment to state
whether or not your proposal to use the battalion to relieve Army Units
now performing A.A. duties for the Air Force can be accepted. Your
suggestion will, however, be borne in mind when the time to make the
decision arrives.

1318
C.O.C. via i/c,
for information
W. A. B. Bowen-Buscalet.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCALET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

14/5

12/1/50
17/3

spe 21/1

SUBJECT: "Dues D'Acosta" Bn of Arditi - (Air Force)

Army Sub Commission A.C.C.
Main H.Q. (MILA)
LEQUIL (LECE)
SD/2/1/5

Air Force Sub Commission,
Allied Control Commission

May 44

1. The above named battalion has been organized on orders of Marshal Messe from Air Force personnel. This action was taken by Marshal Messe without prior approval by Allied authorities.
2. The Comando Supremo has suggested that this battalion be included in the Italian Combat Troops under Allied Command, and requests have been received for the issue of certain Army equipment to it to make it ready for combat. These requests have been sent to you as a matter pertaining to your command.
3. It has been decided that this battalion will not be accepted for inclusion in the Combat Troops under Allied Command, and these troops are therefore available to you for assignment to duty.
4. It is suggested that this formed body could be used to relieve the Army units now performing AA defense for the Air Force, and I would be pleased to confer with your representative regarding this matter, inasmuch as you have agreed that such work should be done by Air Force personnel in order to relieve Army units for the AA program.

ABC

Copy to: Chief of Staff

May Gen. 1717
Army Sub Commission ACC.

the list of certain Army equipment to make it ready for combat. These requests have been sent to you as a matter pertaining to your command.

3. It has been decided that this battalion will not be accepted for inclusion in the Combat Troops under Allied Command, and these troops are therefore available to you for assignment to duty.

4. It is suggested that this formed body could be used to relieve the Army units now performing AA defense for the Air Force, and I would be pleased to confer with your representative regarding this matter, inasmuch as you have agreed that such work should be done by Air Force personnel in order to relieve Army units for the AA program.

ABC

Copy to:- Chief of Staff GCHQ

Approved
Maj Gen. 1717
Army Sub Commission ACC.

*Answer at
Folia 10.*

Arditi R.A.F. Bn

In d'Acosta
5/11/5

29 April 1944.

8

General Browning :

The Air Force battalion of Arditi which has been organized on orders of Marshal Messe is claimed to be ready for movement to the combat zone.

This battalion consists of the following :

37 Officers
67 NCO's
884 men

It has, or should have according to its WE

350 rifles
303 automatic rifles (Breda 9mm)
18 Light MG
12 Heavy MG
9 45mm Mortars
6 81mm Mortars
6 20mm MG Dual Purpose
6 Flame Throwers.

The Air Force has asked SMRE to issue to it the greater part of the equipment needed. Also the ammunition to enable it to go into combat. It has no motor vehicles, and asks for these.

Questioning the Italian Air Force Officer who brought the request that we get SMRE to issue the equipment, ammunition and vehicles, I am lead to believe that there has been no battle training, and that none of the people in the battalion have had any battle experience.

Before an inspection of the battalion is conducted, it appears that it might be wise to get a decision from AAI regarding its desirability. The question of ammunition is most important. Is there enough ammunition available to put this battalion in combat? 1716

The Italians can furnish some of the arms, and a limited amount of supplies, but cannot furnish any transport.

This is a dream, and, unless AAI desires to have this battalion in combat, and will allot to it some of the ammunition available, as well as motor transport, there is no use making any inspection of it. If it is not desired for use, we can then kill the matter, and put these people to work on AA defense, etc.

C. Kerr

Suggest you discuss an AAI on visit there.
2 1/2 infirmaries. That is above the not required
for combat. J.E.F. 5

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785020

SUBJECT:- Bn DUEA d'AGOSTA O

Air Force Sub Commission A.C.C.

Copy to:- S.M. Regia Aeronautica

Army Sub Commission A.C.C. *File*
Main H.Q. (MHLA)
LEQUILLÉ (LEDGE)
SD/2/1/5
2 May 44

SIRA 974/L.6 of 25 April is passed to you as a matter pertaining to your command.

AEC

Handwritten signature
Maj Gen,
Army Sub Comm A.C.C.

1715

This slip will NOT be removed

TO:

~~Q Q~~
G 3

No equipment is to be authorized for this Battalion. No boats or any thing else. The club have 1000 people.

I am not going to suspect the Battalion until AAT indicates that it is wanted.

Advise SMRE that the request is not to be granted at this time.

N. A. D. Q. A.
2 May

② $\frac{2}{5}$

1714

QS273
73

19 April 1944

0/2/1/6
5

SUBJECT: "DUCA D'ACOSTA" Bn. of Arditi."

TO : Deputy Chief Commissioner.

Reference attached letter from Supreme Command, File No. 12370 dated 12th April on the above subject.

1. This letter has been seen by the Director, Army Sub-Commission and Brig. DUCHESNE, who will arrange an inspection of the ARDITI Bn.

2. These Units as I expect you know, are somewhat equivalent to U.S. Rangers or British Commandos in type and training.

3. Before recommending accepting, there are of course various administrative matters such as ammunition requirements, also to be considered.

4. In my next visit to Comando Supremo, I propose telling Gen. INFANTE that if the Units is accepted, there must be no question as to the complete freedom of the Allied HQ. to employ them where and how they wish. In fact, they cannot go to the Corpo Italiano di Liberazione as the ceiling for this formation has already been laid down and there is no room for them. May the letter please be returned with any remarks you may have.

Lt. Col.

(Sgd) (G. W. QUINSMITH)
Army Sub-Commission
Advanced Headquarters

Copy to:

Director, Army Sub-Comm. -✓
Main HQ. LEROTE (LECCE).

1 Incl as above

GL KERR (K)

62(7) 11/9/44
4.

1713

REAR HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
.....

59/4
3
Q6/mms

Q3E96

23 April 1944

SUBJECT: "DUCA D'AOSTA" Battalion of Arditi.

TO : His Excellency Marshal of Italy Messe,
Chief of the Supreme General Staff.

Your Excellency:

Reference your letter No. 12370 dated 12th April
on the above subject.

Your suggestion that the "DUCA D'AOSTA" Battalion
of Arditi should be embodied in the combatant forces
of the Italian Army has been passed to the Director,
Army Sub-Commission at LECCE. It is believed that an
inspection of the unit will shortly take place.

There are, as you know, certain administrative
matters to be organised before a unit can be placed
in the battle area. I am directed to say that it is
not possible at the present to state whether, should
the unit be sent forward, it will be employed in any
particular part of the line. This, as you realise,
must depend upon operational necessity as decided by
the Commando, Allied Armies in Italy.

For the Chief Commissioner:

Lt. Col.

(Sgd) (G. W. QUINSMITH)
Army Sub-Commission
Advanced Headquarters

Copy to:
Army Sub-Comm. Main HQ.
(MMA) LEQUILE (LECCE).

1712

ACTION SLIP

This slip will NOT be removed

Sample
SD/2/1/5
2

To: GOC

I have shown this to Col KERR and he told me to find out where they are and intercept them.

At the same time to warn SMRE that they will probably NOT be allowed in the CIC but will be under one of the Corps in Eighth Army

Col RUINSMITH knows what action we are taking & will keep MESSE informed

GI

OK
LB

16 APR

1711

TRANSLATION No 202. Mr ROMANO

12 April 44

SUPREME COMMAND

OFFICE OF OPERATION

File No 12370

To the A.C.C.

Subject: "DUCA D'ACSTA" Battalion of Arditi.

As is probably known to the ACC the Royal Air Force, wishing to contribute its share, alongside of the Royal Army, in the battle against the Germans, has organised upon my authorisation an Arditi Battalion composed exclusively of voluntary personnel.

This detachment has a total force of about 1,000 men and a structure similar to the "Bafile" Battalion of the Royal Navy.

Its Combat training is complete; the equipping of a replacement group is nearing completion.

I predict that the Battalion will be ready to enter the first lines within the first part of May.

I therefore beg this Allied Commission to authorise the inclusion of the Arditi Battalion "Duca D'Aosta" in the Italian Corps of Liberation.

THE MARSHAL OF ITALY
CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF

(Giovanni MESSE)

Copy taken from Original at present held by Lt Col QUINSMITH

Date 16 Apr 44 CC/mm

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THE MARSHAL OF ITALY
CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF
(Giovanni MESSE)

Copy taken from Original at present held by Lt Col QUINSMITH

Date 16 Apr 44 CC/mm

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785020

1710

