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Q/2

DOMESTIC-ITALIAN

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2516

Oct. 1946

Subject: Welfare

11 British Liaison Unit

Tel. 18372 PALERMO

Q/2

16 Oct. 46.

To : Land Forces Sub Com. A.C.,
(M.M.I.A.)
ROME.

Ref. your A 224 of 1 Oct. 46.

Herewith report as called for in above letter.

Delay in submitting is regretted but this is unavoidable in view of lack of postal facilities.

W.D. Banks
W.D. BANKS,
Major,
D.A.A. & Q.M.G.

WDB/SI
C.M.P.

2516

WELFARE - 11 TERRITORIAL COMMAND.

- 1) Welfare Hostels No hostels nor rest camps exist in Sicily, nor are there any
- 2) Voluntary Welfare Workers There is a C.A.F. attached to 11 Terr. Com. H.Q. This should be on a voluntary basis but at the moment has one only. The Committee ladies are not willing but he has promised to bring the Committee. The Committee works in the same office as the C.W.O.
- (a) C.A.F.
- (b) C.A.M. There is in addition in each large town a C.A.M. (Com.Assist) roughly to a form of C.V.W. organisation. It organises bazaars from which are used to buy comforts for the troops which are carried out itself in the form of cigarettes, soap, writing materials etc. Messina, Enna and Catania but not well in Palermo. It does some entertainment work.
- (c) Clubs and Canteens Clubs and canteens are provided by a "Casa del Soldato" in each town. The former are run by welfare officers, one to each canteen, C.W.O. Funds must come from the Min. of War. Games, food, intellectual activities. The latter rarely amount to much which is strong on the welfare side.
- (d) Co-op between Good between C.W.O. and C.A.F.
C.W.O. and Poor between C.W.O. and C.A.M.
voluntary organisations
- (e) General In general it does not appear that any organised welfare as such exists. This would appear to be due to the following reasons:-
- (i) Lack of funds
 - (ii) Lack of enthusiasm
 - (iii) Lack of voluntary workers and organised voluntary organisations
- No difficulties arising from political bias are reported.

2515

WELFARE - 11 TERRITORIAL COMMAND.

For rest camps exist in Sicily, nor are there any organised transit facilities.

C.A.F. attached to 11 Terr. Com. H.Q. This should have a staff of 3 ladies working on a full-time basis but at the moment has one only. The Command Welfare Officer states the C.A.F. is not willing but he has promised to bring the Committee up to W.E. as soon as possible. The C.A.F. works in the same office as the C.W.O.

In addition in each large town a C.A.M. (Com.Assistenza Militare) which corresponds to the form of C.V.W. organisation. It organises bazaars, parties, etc., the profits are used to buy comforts for the troops which are distributed by the Committee in the form of cigarettes, soap, writing materials etc. It functions well in Trapani, Palermo and Catania but not well in Palermo. It does not undertake club, canteen, or other work.

Canteens are provided by a "Casa del Soldato" in each town and by Regt. arrangements. These are run by welfare officers, one to each canteen, under the supervision of the C.A.F. The food must come from the Min. of War. Games, food, and drink, are provided but no other activities. The latter rarely amount to much except in the case of 11 C.A.R. which is strong on the welfare side.

C.W.O. and C.A.F.

C.W.O. and C.A.M.

It does not appear that any organised welfare as known by the British Army exists. This appears to be due to the following reasons:-

- 1. Lack of funds
- 2. Lack of enthusiasm
- 3. Lack of voluntary workers and organised voluntary support.
- 4. Prejudices arising from political bias are reported.

3) S.A.P.A.M.
Organisation

Is functioning in Palermo to a certain extent but hardly a
It is run by a Captain from Terr. H.Q. The main difficulties

- (i) No loan from Min. of War, who say buy on credit.
- (ii) Shopkeepers will either not sell on credit or will
augmented prices which defeats the whole object of
- (iii) No loan or credit can be obtained from manufacturer

It appears that on its present basis the scheme is of little
Government would make it a practical and valuable acquisition

4) Hospital
Welfare

From visits to hospitals in this command the following information

- (i) Welfare stores and funds are supplied by the C.W.O.
are brought in by such organisations as C.A.M. and
- (ii) No resident welfare officer is provided.
- (iii) No films as projectors are too expensive and portable
- (iv) Variety shows on the average about one every 10 days
- (v) No libraries but pamphlets and books are distributed
- (vi) No recreation rooms or canteens.
- (vii) No hand-crafts organised through one hospital had

It is clear that the welfare side of hospital life is almost

5) Entertainment

Variety shows given voluntarily by civilians are organised
film shows to the extent that a soldier can see a variety
Also local theatres are normally half price to troops.
Voluntary organisations do not attempt to secure any entertainment
Entertainment by civilian artistes is organised solely by
troops by Regt. welfare officers.

ing in Palermo to a certain extent but hardly at all in the rest of the island.
by a Captain from Terr. H.Q. The main difficulties are as follows:-

loan from Min. of War, who say buy on credit.
workshops will either not sell on credit or will only sell on credit at
augmented prices which defeats the whole object of the scheme.
loan or credit can be obtained from manufacturers or bank.
that on its present basis the scheme is of little value. A loan from the
would make it a practical and valuable acquisition.

to hospitals in this command the following information has been noted:-
are stores and funds are supplied by the C.W.O. from his central fund. Comforts
brought in by such organisations as C.A.M. and Convent of the Immaculation.
resident welfare officer is provided.
films as projectors are too expensive and portables are not in circulation.
ety shows on the average about one every 10 days, given free by civilians.
libraries but pamphlets and books are distributed from time to time.
recreation rooms or canteens.
and-crafts organised through one hospital had made a small effect in this direction.
that the welfare side of hospital life is almost entirely overlooked.

given voluntarily by civilians are organised and rooted by C.W.O. Also free
to the extent that a soldier can see a variety show and a film free each week.
theatres are normally half price to troops.
organisations do not attempt to secure any entertainment for the troops.
t by civilian artistes is organised solely by C.W.O. and by the troops for the
gt. welfare officers.

6) Welfare officers
Staff and Transport

The C.W.O. has 2 W.O's and 2 Clerks with him at H.Q. Each Bde and Regt. has its Welfare officer. The C.W.O. is allowed to use a car as necessary and is L.5000 worth of petrol per month but this is not strict. The position appears satisfactory.

7) General Opinion.

In my opinion the standard of Welfare in Sicily is low. Following reasons:-

- (a) Italian officers are not taught from the start after their men. Their idea is that welfare is something done by and not their concern.
- (b) Lack of funds. A central organisation such as not only in providing necessary amenities but also individual canteens.
- (c) Lack of public interest in the welfare of the troops. Efforts of what voluntary associations there are.

I suggest that if the loan of some experienced British welfare officers might be achieved.

WDB/SI
C.M.P.

O. has 2 W.O's and 2 Clerks with him at H.Q. He considers this sufficient. and Regt. has its Welfare officer.

O. is allowed to use a car as necessary and is permitted to consume up to 100 litres of petrol per month but this is not strictly adhered to. Situation appears satisfactory.

In my opinion the standard of Welfare in Sicily is low. I believe this to be due to the following reasons:-


Italian officers are not taught from the start that their first duty is to look after their men.

Their idea is that welfare is something done by a single officer somewhere else and not their concern.

Lack of funds. A central organisation such as NAAFI would do a world of good, not only in providing necessary amenities but also in providing funds for individual canteens.

Lack of public interest in the welfare of the troops as shown by the lethargic efforts of what voluntary associations there are.

It is hoped that if the loan of some experienced British Welfare Officers could be arranged, results might be achieved.


W.D. BANKS,
Major R.A.
D.A.A. & Q.M.G.

