

2068

ACC

10000 | 120 | 5010

INT/206/7

2039

10000|120|5010

INT/206/7

MONTHLY REPORTS - 7 BLU

Dec. 1945

206
209

7th BRITISH LIAISON UNITS

FLORENCE

MMIA-'G'

FILE: G/INT/136

DATE: 2/12

RECEIVED 20 DEC 45
423

1776
21/12

1

G hit

Florence, 18th Dec. 1945

Subject : Monthly Intelligence Report as demanded by G 7
of 16 Nov. 1945

1779 21/12

To : M.M.I.A ROME
From : 7 B.L.U. Florence

Ⓢ 21/12
WP
21/12

Herewith monthly Int. Report as required
by your G 7 of 16 Nov. 1945

Delay is again regretted but unavoidable.

1779
21/12

Downing
Capt.

R. DOWNING
Capt.
7 B.L.U.
Florence

Copies held by A-9.

1779

7th BRITISH LIAISON UNITS

FLORENCEConfidential

Florence, 17th Dec. 1945

Subject : Monthly Intelligence Report as demanded by G 7
of 16 Nov. 1945

To : M.M.I.A. ROME

Morale of the various branches of the Army.

The general state of the morale of Italian Troops here, as perhaps throughout the country, is directly affected by the difficulties of securing good billets, and of an unfortunate habit, especially amongst the officers, of comparing their food and salaries, clothing and welfare facilities with those of Allied Troops.

The tendency is rather one of self-pity, and of a comparison never in their own favour: rather a result of past events than a direct indication or reflection of current conditions.

There is an active defeatist propaganda which encourages this frame of mind and attempts to increase present difficulties to the detriment of the Army generally.

Col. Gioia of 7. Terr. HQ. endorses this latter remark. **208**
There is a general desire amongst Italian officers to provide the best for their troops, but the poor conditions of many barracks hinders their intention.

The relationship with Allied Troops is good and there is a sincere desire to please and maintain good relationship on behalf of the Italians.

The punctilities of saluting are usually observed in and around Unit Head Quarters.

The Carabinieri are particularly prompt in these respects.

Economic Situation, especially amongst local civilians

The number of unemployed is on the increase.

- 2 -

The cost of living is exceptionally high. Hardship is felt particularly by "White-collars" class. Strikes have been made by C.I.P. to demand an increase in wages.

The various industries in the zone are slow to resume their activities (even those less damaged by the war), this a result of a lack of raw materials and fuel. Any agitations or strikes naturally hinder a return to normality. Primary food supplies and other essential necessities are lacking. The black market can supply anything at a price. Medical supplies are also inadequate. UNRRA functions in this Province but not apparently on a great scale. Consumers are short of money due to the high cost of living and this factor is exaggerated by the smallness of the individual wage. All earnings have to go towards the simple necessities of existence.

Communications throughout the Province are improving. There is shortage of living accommodation in Leghorn, Pisa and Pistoia due to bombing. Many buildings have been derequisitioned by the Allies, but there are no appreciable signs of rebuilding. Although conditions of the civilian populations in the above-named towns are poor, the peasant class is not so directly affected; and this Region is fortunate in possessing a stable back bone of these people.

207

Public Order

There is a certain amount of dropping of pamphlets in public theatres etc., usually of a defeatist and scurrilous nature. The general effect is negligible. The shop-keepers and craftsmen of Florence are not interested in extremes of any political party. Requests for a general shop-keepers strike are ignored. There is an earnest hope to return to normal conditions. Work carries on with the Arno Bridges and the setting up of new tram lines.

There have been no marked increases in civilian crime and no planned attacks on either civilian or Army buildings or property. The Carabinieri in Florence are smart and efficient. They are making determined efforts to improve their own standards. Have even gone to the extent of manufacturing their own uniforms. There is a dire shortage of transport and therefore a lack of control and intercommunications with village posts. The latter are unfortunate in being the worst equipped and in the more exposed

./.

- 3 -

positions.

A well organized force of Carabinieri will go for to settling down the whole Province. Civilian police in Florence are smart and apparently able to fulfill their own particular tasks. Street patrols provided by the Terr. HQ. are well dressed and regarded amicably by civilian population. The arrival of Folgore Division in this area is welcomed by the Terr. HQ who hope that the appearance of combat troops will have a salutary effect on local Service Units.

206

2074