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PATRIOT CONTROL BY 34 INF. DIV

July - Aug. 1944

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HEADQUARTERS
ALB FIFTH ARMY
APO 464 U.S. ARMY

Patriots Branch
7763

31st August 1944.

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SUBJECT: Patriots.

TO : H.Q., A.C.C., Patriots Branch.

I am directed by the S.C.A.O. Fifth Army to send you the attached copies of a report on the handling of Patriots by the C.A.O. 34th Division. It is thought that it may be of interest at least for historical reasons as it was originally submitted on 13th July.

/hdp

Scott Myrnes Capt.

D.R.B. MYNORS,
Captain, Scots Guards,
G-2 & 3.,
A.M.G. Fifth Army.

SEEN.	INITIALS.	DATE.
Col. Mc. [Signature]	COH	
Maj. MAG [Signature]	P.H.	
Maj. DRAGE	[Signature]	
Capt. SALVADORI	MS	5/9
Col. FAVA		
C. C.		

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Please ackn & speak to me
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HEADQUARTERS
25th 1944
A.C.

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HEADQUARTERS 34TH INFANTRY DIVISION
Allied Military Government
AMG Section

13 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Partisan Control by 34th Infantry Division

TO : CG, 34th Inf. Div.

1. The Problem. Ever since the entry of the 34th Division into Rome it became apparent that the Partisans were a problem to be dealt with if security and law and order were to be maintained in divisional areas. Very little was known of them at the time. They were an over-zealous group, carrying various sorts of arms and without proper handling might be a menace to our security, communications or supply as well as a source of terror to civilians. It became necessary therefore to deal with them as such.

2. To Meet the Problem. On or about 30 June 1944 the Commanding General, 34th Infantry Division, attached Agent George Merriman of the 34th Division CIC as liaison with AMG Section 34th Division, both to work directly with the Partisans through G-2 and G-1 and to deal with them as an individual divisional problem. The method and plan of procedure was laid down at a conference between G-2 and G-1. It was considered that this arrangement would help maintain security within divisional boundaries, which was naturally a CIC function, and would assist in maintaining law and order among the civil population, which was a natural AMG function. The similarity of coverage between AMG and CIC made this an ideal arrangement.

3. History and Organization of Partisans. From Civitavecchia to Rosignano Marittimo we have gathered much information concerning the history of the organization of the Partisans--Partigiani--and of the Committee of National Liberation--Comitato Liberazione Nazionale. Through tactful and patient handling of the Partisans we have won their confidence and the confidence of their leaders. Now our plans are so constructed that as our division moves forward into new provinces Partisan leaders will be avail-

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Fascist Republican enemies opposed to a liberated free Italy, secretly organized young men between the ages of 17 and 38 as an armed force. All political parties in Italy were united into an armed organization called the Partisans. Many of their arms were obtained from Italian sources or from captured German stores. As the organization grew in strength and numbers and as the danger of remaining in their respective towns increased, they were forced into the mountains for refuge. At the same time the Committee for National Liberation was formed. This was considered purely a political organization and there was no reason for this group, composed of older men, to become outlaws. However, the Committee for National Liberation--CLN--maintained constant contact with the Partisans through underground means. There is evidence that Sisters of religious orders, among others, were used as liaison between the two factions. The Partisans include among their numbers professional men, workers, peasants, ex-officers and soldiers, Carabinieri and Priests. In Vada we found the Priest a vigorous leader with a crucifix in his belt and the Partisan insignia on the collar and sleeves of his robe. Their insignia is a kerchief of red or sometimes red, white and green. Many also wear arm bands of red, white and green. In Livorno Province the Garibaldi Brigade wears such an arm band stamped with its name. More recently the CLN has worn half-inch wide ribbon arm bands of red, white and green. Many wear the red star under the arm band. We have been informed that while all political parties of Italy are united as Partisans, yet the tendency is toward Communism. Their leaders are brave; many are highly educated, while others are merely followers who are pleased to be in the limelight and to carry a weapon. At an interview with Livio--all Partisans have aliases--the leader of the Partisans in the Province of Livorno, he stated that the Partisans in the cause of unity have set aside their political differences until Italy is liberated. He said that they sought complete freedom for the people of Italy, that they wanted a republic, and realizing they were unprepared to handle it at this time, desired a plebiscite in the future to determine the form of government for Italy.

4. Components. The Partisans are organized in each prov-

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4. Components. The Partisans are organized in each province commencing with the Province of Rome. As one leader told us there was no organization south of Rome inasmuch as the Allies landed at Salerno two days after the Armistice before an organization could get under way. Hence, there was more opportunity

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in the north to organize. Each province has its brigades. Each brigade is divided into groups to cover laid out zones within the province. Their smallest component is a squad of 11 men. They further divide the Partisans into those groups suited for mountain fighting, those who fight in towns or cities as our troops advance and contact is made with forward elements; and there is also an internal police group that maintains law and order pending the arrival of the Allied Military Government authorities. In the Province of Livorno, Major H. Carl Kait of the AMG-Section and Agent George Merriman of CIC, 34th Infantry Division, both of whom have worked out this problem with the Partisans, have established an intelligence system whereby all information necessary to maintain security and law and order can be channelled into one office of information. Thus, every smaller unit sends information upward which will reach these representatives of the 34th Division. It can be seen therefore that the Partisan organization is in the closest contact with Major Kait of the AMG Section, Agent Merriman of the CIC, and the General Staff of the Division. The following paragraphs will illustrate our work with the Partisans and, contemporaneously, with the CLN.

5. Our Work with the Partisans and CLN. From the divisional standpoint, our purpose is to make secure the divisional boundaries and to establish and maintain law and order among the civilian population.

a. Contacts with Leaders. As soon as a commune is taken by our infantry--and in many cases separate fractions of communes--we hold a meeting with all remaining officials as well as with professional men and other leading citizens of the commune. Included in this meeting are the leaders of the Partisans and the CLN to whom we express the Commanding General's appreciation for their assistance and the hope that they will continue to assist us. We explain our respective missions, solicit their cooperation, and take the necessary data requisite to the proper functioning of both AMG and CIC. We explain that the Commanding General and the Allied Military Government are responsible for the government of their people at this time and that the Partisans are to lay down their arms, assemble them at the Caserma or other available strong place, in order that peace and calm may be restored once again to their people. It is recognized, however, that in

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a practical view of the problem and have permitted the Partisans, for tactical and military reasons, to retain their arms until our CP moves beyond their town. On July 9th we inspected the entire rear boundary of the Livorno Province accompanied by the leader of the Partisans and have found the Partisans in the rear areas disarmed and without insignia, leading fairly normal lives, yet retaining their organization which can be called into existence at a moment's notice. However, most of their arms have been taken up and they do not have access to them. We have found, though, that in communes closer to our forward CP the Partisans in many instances retain their arms in spite of the proclamation and the notices to the contrary. This should be no cause for alarm, since many of those Partisans are called upon for tactical missions with our combat troops or to make security arrests. Moreover, the armed Partisans move forward as tactical troops advance leaving merely a small skeleton policing group which lays down its arms when the Carabinieri are established.

b. Aid given us by Partisans. This can be divided into two phases: (1) Civilian; (2) Military. Under the civilian phase, the Partisans, with the cooperation of the CLN, maintain an internal police force. They make security arrests and report known Fascists and suspects dangerous to the security of the Division. They send squads behind our infantry or with our infantry into embattled towns to prepare the way for us. In many instances they infiltrate into the towns under cover of darkness before the infantry arrives, assist the infantry in their tactical mission, and thereafter maintain internal order. The Partisans and the CLN maintain offices in the communes and in each town, for it is a rare occasion when the regular officials are present. In short, the only government we meet as we enter newly fallen communes is the government created by the Partisans and the CLN. The Committee of Liberation selects the mayor and supplies us with the essential data. The Partisans assist with the evacuation of civilians from embattled towns; they disinfest the civilians; they bury the dead; they distribute food stores and aid in the resettlement of refugees. They assist in taking care of their own wounded and infirm by establishing and maintaining emergency infirmaries. They check on all refugees within a town for security purposes; they maintain lists of refugees so that they may be properly housed, fed, and given medical attention. While most of their work is not a highly finished type which is natural to contemplate in a well organized group, they successfully perform the services we ask

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e. The tactical information they bring to us is often tardy. This may be due to lack of transportation facilities or communication. The lack of transportation can be said to hinder the entire organization as it now exists.

f. Most leaders of the Partisans and CLN are not accustomed to municipal administration, and though they are eager to help us and their people, they grope in confusion.

g. The fact that Germans hold civilians as hostages is deterrent to the functioning of the Partisans. For example, in Montescudaio the Germans massacred 65 civilians. We saw the dead and four cameras from G-1 section recorded the scene of the dead. The Paramount newscasterman, John Dored, photographed the dead, and war correspondents on the scene have a record of the same. Today we learned that the Germans are holding 2,000 hostages in Livorno and have threatened to kill 30 civilians for every German killed by the Partisans. Their leaders say that more activity behind the enemy lines is not conducted independently because of their fear of reprisal killings. For that reason they are waiting until our forces advance to coordinate their own efforts with ours.

7. Remarks.

a. As police the Partisans are needed only during the confusing period of the early days of occupancy. The Carabinieri can replace them to maintain law and order. Some Partisans however have told us that they have little respect for the Carabinieri and they have expressed their desire to have the Carabinieri reorganized at a future date, giving as their reason the influx of Fascist thought into the corps of Royal Carabinieri.

b. The Partisans cannot aid us in large numbers for tactical operations for the reason that they are an undisciplined organization for the most part; and for their personal benefit they generally expect a great deal more than we are authorized or able to grant; viz., shoes, clothes, cigarettes and transportation.

c. Their inexperience in municipal administration and lack of delegation of power and duties retard their progress.

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c. Their inexperience in municipal administration and lack of delegation of power and duties retard their progress. They give the impression of being an excited, groping mass of

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From the military standpoint they have been of recognized assistance to our division. The Partisans are selected by us to contact their groups in territory occupied by the Germans and incidentally to gather positive intelligence for our division. They advise the forward Partisans to expect the coming of the Allied Military Government in the future and they explain our mission so that they are prepared when we arrive. The Partisans have gone forward with our tactical units as scouts and guides and many as interpreters. They maintain guerrilla units in the mountains on missions apart from our own divisional tactical mission. They maintain units for fighting in towns against the Germans. In Piombino, for example, it was estimated by their leaders that as a result of a pitched battle between the Partisans and the German forces over 150 Germans were killed. As previously stated, they maintain units for the internal policing of towns newly taken by our troops and those already occupied. Their squads go forward into areas within our divisional boundary, combining the territory for hidden Germans and wanted Fascists. We have found the Partisans of Guardistallo, in Vada and in Resignano Solvay in search of Germans and Fascists. They explained they were a part of a roving squad. The Partisans are also used by our tactical units as anti-sniper squads and mopping-up squads. In Civitavecchia, for example, the Partisans were put into our infantry squads to mop up remaining German elements. The Partisans, besides scouting the countryside constantly, bring to us enemy prisoners of war and return escaped Allied prisoners of war.

6. Limitations on Aid to be Expected. These can be outlined as follows:

- a. They are not highly organized so far as delegation of power is concerned. Their leaders do most of the work.
- b. They are usually poorly clothed.
- c. For tactical missions they are inadequately armed and generally short in ammunition.
- d. Their food supply is inadequate to maintain their

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- b. They are usually poorly clothed.
- c. For tactical missions they are inadequately armed and generally short in ammunition.
- d. Their food supply is inadequate to maintain their organization. For example, in Venturina their leader explained to us on July 9th that his organization disbanded not so much for lack of arms but because they had no food source.

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newly liberated men, keen in their perception of what they want but tangled in disorder. As one young lawyer at Riparbello put it: "After so many years of Fascism I am at a loss to know which political philosophy to follow. I am disoriented."

d. It must be expected that in some instances no governmental officials remain in the communes. The Partisans are usually found floundering in an office with the CLN or Carabinieri. Since their leaders have created no orderly machinery of municipal government for solving immediate or future problems, they wear themselves out dashing about on menial tasks, when in fact they should be developing a governmental organization.

e. Partisans object to being disarmed. They give as one of their reasons the fact that Fascists who have been arrested and removed to the rear have been permitted to return to their homes. They fear reprisals and cannot understand who releases these prisoners nor the reason why. These are not minor Fascist officials from our observation but those who have been classified by Allied Control Commission instructions as Fascists to arrest and intern.

f. Ever since the Commanding General of the 34th Infantry Division undertook to treat the Partisan problem as a distinct and unique problem affecting the welfare of his troops there has been no incident within divisional boundaries to discredit the Partisans. They have been of invaluable help to our tactical units and have given splendid cooperation to the AMG and CIC of the 34th Infantry Division. We have dealt with them tactfully and honestly. We have made good every promise to them and they have learned to respect our word. We work closely with their leaders, know them intimately; and give them every possible assistance of the General Staff, all of whom are vitally affected. We have been able to take an armed Partisan organization into our confidence and make it a useful instrument for our division.

8. Conclusions.

a. It is our opinion that in divisional areas where the Partisans are actually working with our tactical units and with AMG they should be fed.

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- b. No mass supply of arms should be given the Parti-

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sans. It has been our experience that only those armed should be used as guides or scouts and in small groups. It is a different matter of course when tactical commanders utilize the services of the Partisans for combat duty.

c. Partisans returning through our lines with German prisoners of war should not be interned, unless they are a threat to our security for reasons other than their coming through our lines. It is a simple matter to identify a person as a bona fide Partisan by asking the local leaders who have communication with other brigades. Promiscuous internment of returning Partisans will cause them to cease bringing in prisoners of war or information.

d. The 34th Infantry Division has made available through the cooperation of G-4 transportation and supplies, including heavy trucks for transporting refugees, gasoline and rations as well as weapons carriers and jeeps for rapid mobility to carry Partisans throughout a commune, to assist in burying civilian dead, clearing debris, and rounding up Fascists and suspects. Through the supplies furnished through G-4 communes have been able to keep bakeries and mills running with gasoline motors. Through the efforts of G-1 with whom AMG works and the cooperation of the General Staff the rapid mobilization of the civilian population for peacetime living is achieved. It is recommended therefore that such procedures be standardized throughout all divisions.

e. In order for the Corps and Army CIC and AMG officers as well as regional AMG officers to comprehend the delicacy of most of the Partisan situations and fully to understand every problem which will confront them as they take over the area, the closest kind of liaison should be established between the division officers and the higher echelons and regional AMG Senior Civil Affairs Officers. It is recommended that daily contact be made by higher echelons and regional officers with divisional officers through personal visits. In this way a complete understanding and a standard operating procedure can be developed and a transition period will be brought to a minimum. By the closest cooperation and contact among all echelons to study progressively the Partisan problem from day to day, this armed organization can be made an asset to our armed forces.

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"REPRODUCED:

Hq AMG Fifth Army, 20 Aug 44"

s/ Harry Carl Kait
t/ HARRY CARL KAIT
Major, JAGD
Civil Affairs Officer

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