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ARREST OF MAJ. GIULIO MAGLIETTA

July 1944

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MONTE AMIATA PATRIOT GROUP

Command of the Southeastern Sector

Siena 15th July 1944

SUBJECT: Report on the arrest of Major Giulio Maglietta

Polliari in Florence by the German S.S.

TO: The Command of the "Amiata" Patriots Group, Siena

As soon as Major Mannucci Benincasa and I heard about Major (Cavalry) Eugenio Zanuttini's arrest on 14th March last, we decided to find out the reason for this and two or three days later we went to Siena, where we very cautiously contacted Major Zanuttini's sister-in-law, Mrs Stross, who was fully aware of her brother-in-law's and our activity.

The conversation took place in the house of a mutual friend Contessa Clara Piccolomini Bandini bei Galloni, where Mrs Stross gave us details concerning Major Zanuttini's arrest and the reasons which presumably led up to it.

After our meeting we accompanied Mrs. Stross as far as the door of the apartment and stopping on the inner staircase we took leave of her. She mentioned at the same time that she was being carefully watched and shadowed. When we were saying good-bye, a person crossed the entrance-hall below us and subjected us to a long stare, giving us the impression that he wanted to observe us carefully. I was able to memorise the man's features, especially a decided cast in his left eye, and this enabled me to identify him later on as a maresciallo of the S.S. stationed in Florence.

We gave Mrs. Stross and Mrs Gallone instructions as to how to act in case our movements had been questioned in our connection.

Approximately a week later, on Monday 27th March, Major Mannucci and I once again went to Siena to gather ^{information} about our organisation and with the intention of leaving for Flor-

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We gave Mrs. Stross and Mrs Gallone instructions as to how to act in case our movements had been questioned in our connection.

Approximately a week later, on Monday 27th March, Major Mannucci and I once again went to Siena to gather ^{information} ~~plans~~ about our organisation and with the intention of leaving for Florence later on. During the day we booked seats on the only bus running a passenger service between Siena and Florence and in the afternoon we reserved a double room at the Cannon d'Oro Hotel for the night. 2387

We lunched at the Mangia Restaurant together with friends. There we had the impression that two men, sitting at a table in the same room, were watching us.

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Towards 11:30 we decided to dine at ~~the~~ Cannon d'Oro, so as to be able to go straight to bed without having to go out once more.

We sat down at a table for four in the far room of the hotel's dining-room. The table was free.

There were only a few people in the room when we came in: a certain Mr. Mascagni of Siena, well-known to me, was sitting alone at a table opposite us, and a gentleman and an elderly lady who had taken a table at our left. The remaining tables were all free.

A little later other people came in and amongst them were two persons who appeared to have been watching us at the Man-via Restaurant.

We were half-way through our meal when a blonde young woman looked into the dining-room. She gave the impression of looking for a place at a table. After some moments she turned away but appeared again a few minutes later. Instead of stopping at the door, she walked slowly towards the end of the room in the direction of the table at which the two above-mentioned individuals were seated, but they did not appear to make any signs to her. The girl turned round and walked back. As she was passing the gentleman known to me, she received a polite and significant invitation from him to sit down at his table, but she showed no sign of either refusing or accepting. She left the room again but came back practically immediately after having taken off her coat. This time she unhesitatingly walked towards our table and asked whether she could sit down. We politely consented and she sat down opposite me. *y*

She had hardly sat down when she took out a cigarette from her bag and asked me for a light. I gave her a lighted match without saying a word.

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She had hardly sat down when she took out a cigarette from her bag and asked me for a light. I gave her a lighted match without saying a word.

After ordering her meal she immediately started talking to us. She was good-looking, frank and self-assured.; she appeared intelligent and cultured and couldn't have been much over twenty. After only a few words I immediately noticed that she had a very pronounced Julian accent. I told her so and she confirmed that she was a native of Trieste, without expressing the least surprise that she I should have noticed the fact so quickly.

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She told us that she had arrived from Rome in the afternoon in some acquaintances' car, and that she had found a room in a private house which had been recommended to her by the same friends with whom she had travelled. She also said that she was a student of chemistry, that she had studied in Vienna and that she was now going to Trieste to join her family. She asked for information regarding the journey to Florence and I told her that the railway only service at the disposal of the public, now that the railway was no longer running, was the bus, but that it was very difficult to book a seat owing to the great number of people travelling. I added that I was well informed on this point, as we were leaving for Florence the following day and had already reserved our seats. She was visibly upset by these difficulties and urgently begged us to obtain a seat for her on the bus. We answered that we would willingly do our best, but pointed out that we had no particular "pull" with the people. However, we agreed that we would endeavour to obtain a seat for her when we went to the Travel Bureau at 8.30 the following morning to collect our tickets.

During the conversation the owner of the restaurant addressed Major Mannucci and called him Major, upon which the girl appeared to be surprised, as she asked: "Oh, are you a Major?"

She asked us whether there were numerous organised bands of rebels in our district, to which we replied that there were rumours to this effect, but that they were grossly exaggerated and that at the utmost, there were probably only a few sparse groups of disbanded troops who were trying to hide in the countryside.

She said that, Rome the Germans were committing all kinds of acts of vexation and atrocity, arresting and persecuting men and molesting people to such a point that life had become unbearable. I purposely told her that nothing of the sort was happening in Siena and that, on the contrary, the Germans were well liked because they were behaving themselves decently.

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After dinner we all got up and, although she did not ²³⁸⁵ us in so many words, she made it quite clear that she would appreciate our accompanying her in view of the late hour and the fact that she did not have a permit to be out-of-doors after curfew. So we offered to accompany her home and, guided by her, we walked a certain distance and ended up in a cul-de-sac. There she said she had evidently lost her way and asked us to accompany her to the Hotel Excelsior, where she would ask the acquaintances with

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whom she had travelled to let her have the address of the house where she had taken her room. At this point I noticed two persons who had been following us, but I was unable to recognise them on account of the darkness; one of them switched on an electric ^{light} torch for a moment a few yards away from us. We accompanied the girl as far as the entrance of the Hotel Excelsior, where we said good-bye and confirmed our appointment for 8.30 the following morning at the Travel Bureau.

As soon as the girl had passed into the hotel, we looked round and gained the impression that nobody was following us. I was curious to know how the girl would act once inside, so I looked through the half-shut door of the hotel for a few moments and saw that she was leaning on the reception desk and talking animatedly and with obvious familiarity with a German officer whose rank I was unable to ascertain.

On our return to the hotel, Maj. Mannucci and I agreed that the girl was probably a spy in German pay. We were perfectly at ease as far as our conversation with her was concerned, but the fact that we had repeatedly noticed, during the day, that we were watched, caused us some concern.

The following morning 28th March, at a little before 8 the maid informed us that a young lady wished to see us. I could not imagine who it could be, so asked the maid to request the lady to wait until I was dressed. But the visitor insisted on being received immediately, so, clad in pyjamas, I went forward to meet her and asked her to come in.

I found out later on that the girl had asked the waiter of the restaurant for our names and he gave her the information.

When she entered the room she appeared to be rather excited and told us that the night before, after leaving the Excelsior for her room, she had been stopped by two individuals whom she took for police agents and who, after requesting to see her identity

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She added that she had come to advise us of this so as to enable us to cancel the appointment and to leave immediately if we thought this would be advisable. I remained quite cool and told her that we were grateful for her trouble, but that since we had nothing to fear, we would go to the Travel Bureau as arranged.

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As far as she was concerned, I informed her, she was free to come or not, just as she thought best. She replied that she thought it advisable not to show up and left, after saying good-bye.

Half an hour had hardly elapsed and we were just on the point of leaving our room when there was again a knock at the door and two persons came in who presented themselves as agents of the Prefecture of Siena. They asked us for our identity cards. We showed the required documents. They asked us whether we were armed, and we answered negatively. They then requested us to leave with them and to precede them to the office of the Chief of the Province. These two persons were Mr. Riccobene and Mr. Bonelli.

At the Prefecture we were shown into the Prefect's waiting-room. There we found Capomaniolo Vitolo, the Prefect's secretary, and another person whom I recognised as being one of the two men who were watching us in both restaurants the day before. The latter spoke Italian fluently, but with a foreign accent. We were introduced to him by the agents who had brought us along. He asked them where the other person was, and when they replied that they had not brought the individual along with them, he ordered them to go back immediately to fetch the person in question.

The above-mentioned person whom I had recognised and who later on turned out to be a German "maresciallo" of the S.S. by the name of Mario Finner, examined our identity cards, without saying a word to us and then left the office, where we remained alone with Vitolo. We asked Vitolo for the reason of our arrest, but received evasive answers. After a short wait the two agents and the German N.C.O. returned, accompanied by the girl we had met the night before. Finner asked us whether we knew her. We replied in the affirmative and gave a short description of how we had got to know her, and this she confirmed. The German then opened the bag which the girl was carrying and took out two white envelopes in our presence. From one envelope he took out a white envelope.

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of ice together with the girl. Practically immediately afterwards we were also called into the same office. Prof. Chiurco, Chief of the Province, asked us for our identity card and, having examined them, asked us to explain our relations with this girl. We repeated to him what we had already told the maresciallo, who was present. Turning to the girl he asked her to indicate the person who had given her the note, and she pointed to Major Mannucci. At the same time Chiurco showed us the incriminating document on which the following was written: "Tiber obstructed, bridge destroyed, proceed". We expressed in no uncertain terms, our surprise and indignation at the unjust accusation and Major Mannucci immediately put the following question to the girl, questions which quite obviously caused her embarrassment and which she answered as indicated below:

"Why do you say that I gave you this note?"

"Because you gave it to me."

"When?"

"Last night."

"Why should I have given it to you?"

"To bring it to Florence."

"To whom?"

"To a certain Cerini."

"You know him?"

"No."

"Do you know how to find him?"

"No."

"How then will you deliver the note?"

"I would find the person."

"But why should I have given you this note without giving you precise instructions?"

This question was not answered because the German M.C.O. intervened and, turning to Chiurco said: "Excuse me, Your Excellence, but these questions will have to be put to the Young lady by us."

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We then turned to Prof. Chiurco and asked him whether he had not already realised the absurdity of the accusation. We also told him about the visit the girl had ^{ad} paid us that same morning and the reason given by her for coming. We asked him whether, after the girl's communication, he thought it likely that Major Mannucci would have left the note in the girl's possession - provided he had actually handed it over to her the night before - when it looked

as if we were going to be arrested at any moment.

Prof. Chirco did not answer our questions but asked us to go into the waiting room. The girl and the German N.C.O. remained in his office, but joined us a few moments later.

Finner asked us to follow him and ordered the agents to take the girl to the Questura.

I would like to point out that neither Major Mannucci nor I were searched. Major Mannucci was carrying a leather brief-case and nobody asked for it until late ^{at} the night of the day of our arrest.

We went down into the courtyard of the building, where we had to wait a short while. Then we were hand-cuffed by a maresciallo of the Questura and asked to step into a car which took us to Florence where we arrived at eleven p.m. at the headquarters of the German S.S. in Via Bolognese 67. When we were passing the Cannon d'oro I asked the Maresciallo whether he could not send someone up to my room to get my clothes, as I was feeling cold, but he replied: "You won't need it now, we shall let you have it later on." They brought us into an office on the second floor, and, without having questioned us at all, took off the handcuffs and led us to the basement of the building where we were put into separate cells together with other prisoners. The cells contained no seats nor chairs of any kind and we were given nothing to eat until late at night. The same night they took us by lorry, together with about 15 other prisoners and guarded by Italian and German Militiamen, to the Murate prison.

It was only a short while before leaving that an N.C.O. of the Militia (Sergeant Bertelli) asked Major Mannucci to hand over the brief-case which he had kept up to then.

At the prison, after the usual formalities, we were put in the same cell together with two other prisoners. There we passed the night and the whole of the 29th, receiving nothing more than

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At the prison, after the usual formalities, we were put in the same cell together with two other prisoners. There we passed the night and the whole of the 29th, receiving nothing more than bread and water. There were three disgusting straw mattresses on the floor for us, and each one of us had a dirty and
blanket. 2381

Towards 21 hours of the 29th some warders came along and informed us that they had received instructions from the S.S. to place us in separate cells. I was placed alone in a cell in the observation department in the basement of the Murate prison. On my left was a cell for lunatics where a prisoner,

who was bound, clouted at the top of his voice day and night without interruption. The cell on my right was empty.

My cell was without a window-pane and had no mattress. The ^{treatment} received was most severe. The only food given was a piece of bread and some horrible soup once a day. My bed was composed of one torn blanket and nothing else. I was allowed out to take a breath of fresh air when possible, and after all the other prisoners had already had their walks. I was always alone on such occasions and guarded by a warder.

On various occasions I asked for special food, but although my request was granted after four days, I never received the food. When I left the prison I was informed that the S.S. had given instructions to have me closely watched and treated as badly as possible.

On the morning of the 3rd day I was brought by car to the Command of the S.S. in Via Bolognese, accompanied by an armed republican militiaman and an agent of the German S.S. in mufti. I was placed in a cell in the basement, together with a young Jew who had twice escaped from a concentration camp of Treviso and had twice been retaken. They had already previously tortured the boy in the most terrible manner, including the burning of his nails, the use of knife-edged handcuff, etc. and he was later again tortured because they wanted to find out where his mother and father were hidden. I remained shut in the cell for the whole day without soup or bread. Between 22 and 23 hours, I was again taken by a lorry to the Murate prison and locked up in my cell.

The following morning they again fetched me and brought me to room no. 40 on the second floor of the villa.

Maresciallo Finnei began a long interrogation which lasted 4 hours. I had to give an account of the whole matter. At a certain moment they said: "Major Mannucci stated that, when the young

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Maresciallo Finner began a long interrogation which lasted 4 hours. I had to give an account of the whole matter. At a certain moment they said: "Major Mannucci stated that, when the young woman asked you for a match, you replied: 'It would be better to have a lighter'". I answered that this could not be the case, since neither I nor the Major had said such a thing. During the interrogation the Command of the S.S. went in and began to talk with Finner. They took the knife-edged handcuffs - I imagine they were the ones used on the poor Jew - as if they were weighing the advisability of using them on me. Then they put them down and the Commander went out. The examination

was continued until towards 16,30 hours I was taken down to the basement where I remained until 24 hours.

I returned to the Murate prison with the usual lorry and there I remained until the day on which I was set free.

I had heard nothing more about Major Mannucci and I was very worried. The young Jew told me that for the last two days there had been a person sitting on a stool day and night, but I could never have imagined that it was Mannucci.

A warder in the Murate prison told me that Mannucci had been set free and had left. I could not imagine that this was true, because Mannucci would have communicated with me.

I was, consequently, most depressed and worried about him. Considering our situation, it was not improbable that he was already dead.

Whilst I was in the cell people went to the door on numerous occasions and made signs and gave me passwords which I did not know at all. I always answered that I understood nothing.

They only thing I persisted in asking for were food, blankets, a mattress and a pane for the window, but nothing was forthcoming. I was also informed that so far my cell had housed the following people: one ^{person} ~~people~~ had been shot, and three men who had not joined up when their age-groups had been called, and who had also been shot.

On the 3rd of April at three p.m. whilst I was taking a breath of fresh air, I was informed that order had arrived to free me.

Major Mannucci came to fetch me by car, together with an agent of the S.S.. In the car there was also Miss Luciana Odinal who had at last confessed that she herself was the author of the note and that Major Mannucci and I were entirely innocent.

We brought Miss Odinal to the S. Verdiana prison, where she was still ^{to be found} at the beginning of May.

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I think I can say that matters developed in the following manner:

- 1) Probably as a result of spies in Siena, the S.S. suspected us of helping the partisans, and consequently had us watched and discovered that we met people who, according to them, were suspicious.
- 2) Luciana ORDINAL, who was working for the Germans, received instructions to get to know us and to gain our confidence, so

es to be able to watch and discover our activities. I have been assured that for this she received a first payment of Lire 20.000 and that similar sum had been promised her in the event of success.

3) In order to make a better impression on the German^s and to hasten matters, the girl inform^{ed} them that she had already done a considerable amount of work in connection with our case, and then ruined everything by forging the note ^{which} with, incidentally, deceived the Germans completely.

4) The Germans asked the local fascist authorities (the Prefecture, the Federation, and the Provincial and Regional Commands) for information concerning us. The information received was extremely bad and this induced the Germans to investigate our case as rigorously as possible (Pinner told us so himself after we had been set free).

5) The Germans must have realised from the start that their spy had done a bad job, but they no doubt hoped that we would reveal something or contradict ourselves and thereby confirm their initial suspicions.

6) We were not accused of anything specific, nor were any names of people mentioned who were under suspicion together with us, because, after their failure, they expected that, by declaring us entirely free, we would, again take up our activities and ~~therefore~~ enable them to catch us red-handed. The close watch which was kept on us after our liberation ~~proves~~ the correctness of this assumption.

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7) The reason given for our arrest, as indicated on the document which was handed to us after we were set free, was that we were "Suspected of belonging to subversive associations" and brings us back to the original suspicion, after the Germans had been forced to exclude the other accusations, namely "espionage in favour of the enemy" which had appeared to be well founded when

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2379

7) The reason given for our arrest, as indicated on the document which was handed to us after we were set free, was that we were "Suspected of belonging to subversive associations" and brings us back to the original suspicion, after the Germans had been forced to exclude the other accusations, namely "Espionage in favour of the enemy" which had appeared to be well founded when Miss Odinal's accusation had been considered true.

The names of people whom we met during our period in prison and who were working for the German and Italian S.S. have already been given to the French S.I. who knew about our arrest and who asked us to call on them on the 5th of July.

Maglietta Pollari Giulio

Major, Cavalry

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