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CLANDESTINE FRONT

SEPT. - DEC 1944

MINUTE SHEET No.

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HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

A.P.O. 394

PUBLIC SAFETY SUB COMMISSION

SECURITY DIVISION

REF : SD/280

8 December 1944

SUBJECT : Subversive Movements

TO : Patriots Branch

1. The following extract taken from a periodical secret report is forwarded for your information.

Subversive Movements

A special report has been prepared and furnished on the origin and subsequent history of the ARMATA ROSSA which arose during the clandestine period as a unified military grouping of various Communist armed bands operating in the HOME area, after the Allied occupation of Rome, the ARMATA ROSSA split on an issue with the Partito Comunista Italiano who objected to its connections with the dissident Movimento Comunista. As a result most of the ex-ARMATA ROSSA personnel, led by ANTONINO ROME, went over to the Movimento Comunista, the backbone of which they now form. It is also extremely doubtful whether these elements gave up their arms under AMG proclamation.

As has been indicated before in these reports, the situation of the Partisans in both AOF and AOF is one which deserves close examination, as it contains elements which may easily result in subversive tendencies. Various political bodies, realizing the value of the partisan movement as a possible mass backing for the implementing of their own programmes, have been trying hard to obtain control of the Partisan elements in liberated territory. As is well known, the dissident Communists may already be said to be in control of the Movimento Partigiano. An attempt to counter-balance this is being made by the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale which sponsors the official Associazione Nazionale Partigiani d'Italia. So far however this Association has made little progress beyond setting up a head office at the Campidoglio (principally because it contains few, if any, real Partisans). A reliable contact report that a government circular was recently sent round to all Prefects instructing them to form sections of this Association in their respective provinces.

The whole danger of these manoeuvres both by CLN and Leftist groups is that the ex-Partisans may be developed into, and possibly later used as, political party militia.

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The whole danger of these manoeuvres both by OLM and Leftist groups is that the ex-Partisans may be developed into, and possibly later used as, political party militia.

Attempts to counteract this tendency are being made by Doctor MORITTI of the Associazione Partigiana d'Italia (a body distinct from the A/N Associazione Nazionale). MORITTI sensibly points out that the real Partisans, i.e. men who have actually fought the Germans, and the Fascists clandestinely should be given some proper form of recognition and assistance, without distinction of political tendency, and that, if rightly handled, this vast body of men whose participation is the best proof of their sincere anti-Fascism could be used as the best element of stability in resolving the present chaotic situation where an attempt is being made to restore Italy by parties which have little comparative numerical backing and no real roots in the

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country.

Another reliable source reports that from a conversation with a partisan who recently arrived from Italy, he gathered that partisan elements in Italy have already set up the framework of a clandestine government which will be ready to operate when the territory is finally freed. This organization does not recognize the authority either of BOLIVETTI or MENNI. Its programme is republican with Marxist tendencies and it admits of no compromise, however slight, with the Monarchy. Moreover in view of the reports received in North Italy of the treatment given by the Allies to partisans in AOF (i.e. disarmament, a few words of thanks but little material assistance or moral support), this clandestine Northern organization is becoming more and more anti-Allied.

W. Wells

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Ms. 26 OCT Recd

S O C I A L S T A T U T E

OF THE "UNION OF ITALIAN PATRIOTS"

(ex "Clandestine Front of Resistance")

UNIONE PATRIOTI ITALIANI

SE. N.	IN.
Col. MC. C. NY	
Maj. MAG.	
Maj. DEAC	
Col. FAV.	
C. C.	

V.le Giulio Cesare, 11-Tel. (362442)
Angelo Longolevere (362302)

Art. 1

An Association named "Union of Italian Patriots" is constituted in Rome.

Art. 2

The said Association has no political character.

Art. 3

The following are allowed to become members of the Union:

- all the Patriots (whether they be member of a party or an association with political character or not) who fought or, in any case, displayed their activity in the field and in spirit of the Clandestine Front against the nazi-fascism, either during or after the active part of the war;
- all those who have been in military or civil prisons;
- all those who were hurt by police measures of the past regime;
- their family.

Art. 4

All those who were bound with the old regime are not admitted as members in the Union and their applications are subject to discrimination and epuration according to the laws now in force.

Art. 5

The Association pursues the following aims:

- to make known the proposal of all the members to fight, intensifying the action that will lead the liberation of Italy from the fascist and German occupation;

Col. Mc...	NY
Maj. McG...	
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Cap. McG...	
Col. McG...	
Col. McG...	

V.le Giulio Cesare, 11-131 (352202)
Angelo Langotavere (352202)

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- d) - their family.

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- b) - to pursue the right with the allies for the freedom of all the other countries;
 - c) - to remember the moral engagement to honour the memory of the dead in the clandestine struggle and of all the glorious and unknown fallen in the right for liberty which is going on in the world;
 - d) - to take the moral engagement to fight for the unity and independence of Italy;
 - e) - to make ascertained and recognized the necessities of the victims' families;
 - f) - to preserve always blazing in the future the fire that inspired and inspires ardently the Patriots' love for freedom, for the redemption of their country and against fascism, dictatorship, imperialism and militarism with conquering aims;
 - g) - to obtain that all the Patriots, who fought and fight either openly or otherwise, be qualified as "first rank combatant" (with all corresponding military, ranks, seniority rights; qualification of dead, wounded, mutilated and invalid by war) and also of all the allowances, corresponding indemnity, pension for them and their families;
 - h) - to strengthen and to set the value of the real contribute that the Patriots with any political tendency bring and continue to bring to the cause of freedom and human redemption;
 - i) - to render the best assistance possible to any member of the Union through employment in a productive work in one of the several Cooperative for production, agriculture, transportation etc. will be constituted. All these cooperatives will be organized in a trust;
 - l) - to render easier in the international field the true fraternization of all the conquered nations eliminating all the reasons of discontent that can determine the birth of such an historical climate which will cause new wars, ending european civilization bringing all progress to a stand still for a long future;
 - m) - at last to establish all the points of the Patriots' joint vindications in the social and economical field which will be communicated to the executive power in order to obtain a ready avowal.

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The Association has its Central Residence in Rome and a section in every city of Italy.

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The Union is ruled by a National Committee, composed of 25 members and by local Committees, composed of 3 to 5 members, according to

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the importance of the section. All the sections depend from the National Committee. The trust of the cooperatives will also be in strict dependence of the National Committee.

Art. 8

The National Committee, which was elected in the act of ~~constitution~~ constitution, will remain in office for a period of two years. After this term all the members will meet in the National Assembly and will vote for any dependent section.

Art. 9

The National Committee appoints the President and two Vice-Presidents. The President may be chosen outside of the National Committee.

Art. 10

There is no fixed membership charge, but it is not to be inferior to 12 lire per years.

Art. 11

The National Committee will manage the funds of the Union.

Art. 12

Particular Regulations will discipline the member's admission and his discipline, the administration, the elections, and everything else belonging to the internal working of the Union.

Art. 13

The President~~office~~ will appoint a secretary and two vice-secretaries with purely administrative functions.

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For the eventual amendments of this Fondation Statute it will be necessary to have the vote of two thirds of the National Assembly components. The system used is the referendum.



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" IL TEMPO "

30 September 1944 - No. 95

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THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE CLANDESTINE FRONT

by
Gen. ARCELLINI.

In an article signed by Gen. Bencivenga entitled "History of the Clandestine Front" and published in "IL TEMPO" of 23 September, mention is made of my name and replacement.

An Appointment which Failed.

The story is as follows:

The Italian Government, in full agreement and with the support of the Allies, appointed me at the beginning of January as its representative and Commander of the Clandestine Front of Rome, and also appointed Mr. X. as Civil Commissioner of Rome. They requested me to obtain, if possible, the collaboration of Gen. Bencivenga. In spite of repeated attempts I never succeeded in contacting the General. One day an appointment was fixed at a certain time at the entrance to S. Giovanni Hospital in order to proceed from there to the meeting, but it was postponed at the last moment. The National Liberation Committee had at the same time appointed Gen. Bencivenga chief of a Communal Junta with H.Q. at the Capital. For this reason Mr. Bonomi tried to get in contact with Gen. Bencivenga but also failed. In short, both for Mr. Bonomi and myself Gen. Bencivenga was not to be found. Not until the beginning of March did Mr. Bonomi receive two letters from the said

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However, in a telegram from the Government on 22 March, delivered to me only on the 27th, and of which the text moreover had been altered, Gen. Bencivenga was appointed Civil and Military Commander of Rome in place of myself and of Mr. X. who had been arrested a few days earlier. This appointment came as a surprise both to Mr. Bonomi and to myself, but certainly not to Gen. Bencivenga who, at the same time as he had declared in Rome that he was not accepting the appointment, informed Brindisi that he would accept.

Bonomi and Bencivenga.

When I assumed command I took care in the first place to get into touch with Mr. Bonomi. These contacts became frequent and everyone was impressed by the utmost cordiality, mutual esteem, real understanding and close and loyal collaboration which existed. The situation discussed in our conversations was not an easy one. On the political side full agreement was not achieved between the parties of the National Liberation Committee, and, moreover, the most determined opposition was shown to the Badoglio Government whose authority (and even less that of their representative) it refused to recognise. On the military side the organisation was faced with many difficulties of all kinds. Collaboration between military and party bands (which were formed soon after September at the same time as the military bands) gave rise to continual hard and difficult dealings between the late Col. Monzeruolo and the Military Committee of the C.L.N.

The conviction that the military organisation was supported almost exclusively by the bands of the Royal "Carabinieri" induced people to think that there was some hidden purpose behind this, and gave rise to considerable

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The conviction that the military organisation was supported almost exclusively by the bands of the Royal "Carabinieri" induced people to think that there was some hidden purpose behind this, and gave rise to considerable mistrust. This fact has been confirmed by Mr. Bonomi to whom I explained that Col. Montezemolo had really depended upon the Royal "Carabinieri" only because they seemed to be the most reliable and because the problem of the clandestine restoration of the Roman Legions appeared to be easier to solve, and thus it was possible to entrust them almost automatically with restoring public order on the withdrawal of the Germans from Rome. Anyhow, I took care to eliminate at once any reason which could confirm the surmise

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that the Bands of the Royal Carabinieri were preferred and that there existed any hidden reasons.

The dealings with the Military Committee of the C.L.N. could thus be facilitated and continued in a satisfactory manner.

Montezemolo Arrested.

The situation remained nevertheless far from easy, so that Mr. Bonomi felt at last compelled to resign from the Presidency of the C.L.N. The situation changed, however, a short time later as a result of Russian recognition of the Government and also because of the speech from Naples of Mr. Togliatti, who pleaded for unity, having found the parties in Rome disciplined and ready to follow his advice. This change completely reversed the political situation, as a result of which Gen. Rencivenga (undoubtedly more fortunate than myself) benefitted. The change in the political situation also obviously affected the military situation which recovered from the heavy crisis caused by the arrest of many officers including Col. Montezemolo who, before me, had been the generally accepted leader of the organisation. The understanding between the Committee of the C.L.N. and the Military Centre continued to the full satisfaction of Gen. Odone who was appointed Vice-Commander by me of the military organisation. Also in this sphere Gen. Rencivenga found a far from satisfactory situation, about which he did not seem to be very anxious.

In fact, on 28 March I handed over command to Gen. Odone who, having been my Vice-Commander, had to take over the office of Chief of Staff to my successor. On 13 April, after various requests, he was able to contact his commander for the first time; indeed, during the 17 days of

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question of a General of the M.V.S.M. (Volunteer Militia for National Security) being unable to evaluate a situation and accordingly to intervene, but of Gen. Bencivenga himself who, during the World War of 1915-18 as Commander of the "Aosta" Brigade, acquired a well-deserved reputation as a gallant and skilful military leader.

One may believe that Gen. Bencivenga did not consider the situation sufficiently serious to warrant personal control, having left "San Giovanni in Laterano" before the arrival of the Allies in Rome. This fact, of course, does not in any way affect his ability: each commander knows where he considers the most opportune for the complete fulfilment of his duties as leader. His ability, moreover, has been acknowledged by the award to him of the Silver Military Medal for valour on the battlefield.

Gen. Bencivenga, in mentioning me as Rome Commander, points out that I am the same person who signed the "Order of the Day" to the "Black Shirts". This declaration - thoroughly unnecessary from a personal point of view - could appear malicious. I should show the same malice were I to point out that Gen. Bencivenga - well known and appreciated for his anti-Fascist sentiments - is the same person who, at the time of the Ethiopian war, considered it his duty to put himself at the disposal of the Black Shirts, a fact which was strongly brought to light by the newspapers of that time. But, whether necessary or not, in order to avoid any doubt about my identity, I have no objection to confirming that I am indeed the man, not of the "Order of the Day" of the 26th, but of the well known Circular of 30 July - well known in view of its publication in certain newspapers recently and by "Avanti": on 11 July ¹⁹⁴¹ where I was accused of having written the following in a reference

to the Duce: "..... who is still in our hearts", whereas in reality I wrote:

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The General Command of the M.V.S.M. was in a state of siege, surrounded by guns, tanks and troops. The possible behaviour of the Militia was still a matter of doubt. They were said to be on good terms with the Germans whose intentions were *perplexing*. The Militia had about 1,000,000 men and 200,000 regular officers, a hundred battalions and one mobilised armoured divisions, all bound by oath to Mussolini. An uprising of the Militia could have caused very serious consequences, so I had not only to avoid catastrophe but to dissolve the Militia in a short space of time. First of all, however, I had to take the responsibility in my own hands. This I did by issuing the telegraphic "Order of the Day" on the 26th and the above-mentioned Circular on the 30th. Then I could proceed with my work. In 44 days, having started on 27 July, the Militia had been almost entirely dissolved and disarmed by means of a series of subsequent measures without dislocation or accident. I believe I deserved well of my Country and that I performed well the difficult task with which I had been entrusted.

If anyone should regard my Circular of 30 July not an act of a Commander but an act of political faith he is wrong, ^{*although*} but surely in good faith. I am and always have been a soldier and my Country has been my only faith. I have always continued to work in the same direction in a straightforward manner and declared my private thoughts even when dangerous to do so. Under Fascism I have had accidents and blows at "Palazzo Venezia". I was listed on the "Black Book" and considered untrustworthy. To this I paid no heed and never even thought of restoring my reputation through Fascism - the least I could think of on 30 July 1943.

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Gen. Bencivenga, in pointing out that I signed the Circular, has committed two mistakes, one of less importance as I was in fact the author of the Circular, but the other of primary importance because, being a General, he should have been able to evaluate properly a command given by another General. Even from this one mistake one might think that he was not the author but the absentminded signer of his article.

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