

ACC

10000/135/708

10000/135/708

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE, OUT
OCT. 1944 - APR. 1945

TOP SECRET

60A

*Confidential*FROM: AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.TO: ADMIRAL ELLERY W. STONE,
CHIEF COMMISSIONER,
HEADQUARTERS, ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

DATE: 26TH APRIL, 1945.

REF: AFSC/352/4/CRG.

36 report S.I. 2/24

Concerning our conversation about the Italian Air Minister's intention of visiting BOLOGNA and MODENA from FLORENCE, I understand that H.E. CASPAROTTO has agreed to postpone his visit, but he intends now to ask the Prime Minister to ask you to authorize his journey, not as Air Minister but as President of the Returned Prisoners Association.

2. For your information I gather that some business men have already been granted passes to BOLOGNA by GENERAL HUME'S Office.

IR

I.E. RHODIE,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

1926

TO: DR. CESARE PALIAVICINO,
VIA ALBERTO MAGNO, 9
ROME.

FROM: AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

DATE: 25TH APRIL, 1945.

REF: ASSO/R/SPEC INT 1.

59^A
312/41^A
We are informed that owing to recent developments the Ministry of Aircraft Production regrets that the proposal to employ you in the United Kingdom must be dropped for the time being.

2. Should the situation change, we hope to communicate with you again.

I.R.
I.R. HEDDIE,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

1925

Translation.

58A

Rome, 14th April 1945

The Air Minister
Ref. 10863/2638 Coll.

Dear Air Vice Marshal,

Referring to my previous letter of 2nd February 1945, No. 3008, I have to inform you with regret that I have been obliged to abandon my proposal to recall Generale di Divisione Aerea Renato SANDALLI to temporary service because, on the initiative of the High Commissioner for Epuration, the President of the Council of Ministers has laid down that there is to be no recall of officers placed on the reserve, in the sense of Article 2 of D.L. 6gt. 11.10.1944, No. 257.

General SANDALLI has left active service according to the law quoted above, for which reason, notwithstanding different wishes, I find myself still unable to avail myself of his services.

At the same time, bearing in mind what you informed me in your kind letter of 1st February (AFSC R/I/Spe./Int., regarding Generals SANDALLI and CAPPA, I deem it necessary to point out to you that the High Commissioner has sent an appeal to the Central Commission for Epuration for the loss of rights and pension in respect of the above Generals.

I immediately informed H.E. the President of the Council of Ministers of this request, asking him to intervene because, in my opinion, Generals SANDALLI and CAPPA do not merit such grave sanctions, all the more so in view of the fact that, already having been judged by the Epuration Commission and placed in the 1st ¹⁹²⁴ grade, they were first declared immune and second they were declared exempt from debts incurred due to having distinguished themselves in the struggle against the Germans.

It shall be my concern to inform you of

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At the same time, bearing in mind what you informed me in your kind letter of 1st February (AFSC R/I/Spe./Int.), regarding Generals SANDALLI and CAPPÀ, I deem it necessary to point out to you that the High Commissioner has sent an appeal to the Central Commission for Epuration for the loss of rights and pension in respect of the above Generals.

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It shall be my concern to inform you of the reply which I receive in this connection.

GASPEROTTO

Air Vice Marshal
W.A.B. Bowen-Buscarlet
Air Forces Sub Commission
R O M E



Roma,

19 APR 1945

SEA

IL MINISTRO DELL' AERONAUTICA

10868/2618 G.P.

Signor Vice Maresciallo,

riferendomi alla mia precedente lettera del 2 Febbraio 1945, n° 3088, debbo con mio rincrescimento informarla che ho dovuto abbandonare il mio proposito di richiamare in temporaneo servizio il Generale di Divisione Aerea Renato Sandalli perchè sull'iniziativa dell'Alto Commissariato Aggiunto per l'Epurazione, la Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri ha disposto che non sia dato corso a riassunzioni e richiami di ufficiali collocati in ausiliaria, ai sensi dell'art.2 del D.L.Lgt. 11.10.1944, n° 257.-

Il Generale Sandalli ha lasciato il servizio attivo in base alla citata disposizione di legge, per cui, nonostante ogni miglior desiderio, mi trovo nell'impossibilità di avvalermi nuovamente della Sua opera.-

Con l'occasione, tenendo anche presente quanto Ella ebbe a comunicarmi con la Sua gradita del 1° Febbraio u.s., AFSC/R/I/Spe.Int., nei riguardi dei Generali Sandalli e Cappa, ritengo doveroso renderLe noto che l'Alto Commissariato suddetto ha presentato ricorso alla Commissione Centrale per l'Epurazione per la perdita del diritto a pensione a carico dei Generali predetti.-

./..

1923

Ho subito informato S.E. il Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri della questione pregandolo di intervenire perchè, a mio avviso, i Generali Sandalli e Cappa non sono meritevoli di così grave sanzione, tanto più che essi, già giudicati dalla Commissione di Epurazione di 1° grado, furono dichiarati il primo immune, ed il secondo esente dagli addebiti mossigli per essersi distinto nella lotta contro i tedeschi.-

Sarà mia premura segnalarLe la risposta che mi perverrà al riguardo.-

det.

L. J. J. J. J.

Signor Vice Maresciallo
W.A.B. Bowen-BUSCARLET
Air Forces Sub-Commission
R O M A

876

579

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

CONFIDENTIAL.

AFSC/D/1/SHCO INT.

28th March, 1945.

Dear

I am sending herewith a formal application by Mrs. HANSEN to return to U.K. as soon as possible, together with a covering letter by myself.

2. Pearce has made enquiries at the Embassy and they would grant an entry visa to U.K. at once. They also say their Security side has nothing against Mrs. B. An exit visa has, however, to be obtained and this application with my covering letter, plus any remarks which you may care to make, should go on to Col. HILL-DILTON at 6.2 A.M. I hope you will be able to put this across with him, as I know you feel that Mrs. B. deserves all we can do for her. Also, can I ask for your good offices in respect of a passage for her to the U.K?

3. This recurrence of the trouble here, and the state of nerves which she is in, have put her in a sorry state of health, and I am afraid that even her 14 days at Positano will not pull her round the bend, and she should be sent off home as soon as we can arrange it. I know it will be a lot down for this Office here, but if she did come back I am afraid it would only be a short time before the trouble would start all over again, and she cannot put out her best in the state of health she is now in.

Yours

W.B.

Air Commodore F. Woolley, CBE, DFC,
C.I.O.,
Headquarters, M.A.A.F. C.M.F.

1921

53^A
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

AFSC/A/1/STEC IMP.

22nd March, 1945.

I am returning herewith your letter of the 20th March, and the passport for SIG. ALESSANDRINI.

2. I find that it has got to pass through your Ministry of Affairs to our Political Section, and any attempt by me to pass it through any other channels would result in a waste of time.

I have the honour to be
Your obedient Servant,



W.A.D. BOWEN-BUSCALET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

1920

H.E. Doctor Luigi Gasparotto,
Minister for Air,
Italian Air Ministry,
Rome.

51ⁿ

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

AFSC/R/1/SEEC INT.

2nd March, 1945.

S. 1/2/37^e

With reference to your letter of the 28th February, 1945, ref. 5417/2002/COIL. and further to my conversation with General Aimonio Cat on this subject.

2. Your intention to recall Colonel GATTANO SOMMELLA into Service and appoint him inspector of the Administrative Offices of the Operational Units has my approval.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,



W.A.B. BOWEN-JUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

H.E. Doctor Luigi Gasparotto,
Minister for Air,
Italian Air Ministry,
Rome.

1919

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC INT.

2nd March, 1945.

With reference to your letter of the 27th February 1945, reference: 5743/AG, I wish to inform you that the proposed nominations as laid out in your letter have my approval.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,

W.B.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

H.E. Doctor Luigi Gasparetto,
Minister for Air,
Italian Air Ministry,
Rome.

A
49

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

Spec. int 1
~~DO/DATE/240.~~

24th February, 1945.

I received this morning through the medium of the A-D-C. to Col. FISKE your representations concerning the posting away from Rome of Squadron Leader Morrow.

2. I fully appreciate the value of his services to your Church in Rome, and have been aware of this for the whole time that I have been in the city. I regret, however, that the posting has been made on the authority of the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, M.A.A.F, to whom I submitted your representations at once by telephone.

3. He regrets very much that the exigencies of the service will not permit of the retention of Squadron Leader Morrow in Rome.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,



W.A.B. BOWEN-EU-CARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

His Excellency Myron Taylor,
Personal Representative of the President of
the U.S.A. to His Holiness the Pope.

1918

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

Spec Int 1

DO/WAB/24.1.

24th February 1945.

S. 11/49

Dear

With reference to our telephone conversation of this morning, herewith copy of a letter I have sent to H.E. Myron Taylor. This is in case General Baker is brought into the picture.

Yours

W.B.

Air Commodore F. Woolley, OBE, DFC,
C.I.O.,
Headquarters,
H.A.A.F.
C.M.F.

1917

47

FROM: AIR VICE-MARSHAL W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING,
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION.
ROME.

TO: REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICER,
LAZIO UMBRIA REGION.
A.P.O. 394.

REF: S/1425.

DATE: 24TH. FEBRUARY 1945.

SECRET.

51/2/34

We thank you for your letter reference S/1425 of 22nd. February, which is much appreciated.

While it is not considered necessary to conduct further enquiries on this particular case, we should be glad to receive at any time information which you may consider to be of interest to us.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

1916

45^A
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

AWSO/R/1/SPEC INT.

19th February, 1945.

spec. int.
With reference to your letter of 14th February 1945, ref. 3040,
I wish to inform you that the proposed nominations as laid out in your letter
have my approval.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,

W.B.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

H.E. Doctor Luigi Gasparetto,
Minister for Air,
Italian Air Ministry,
Rome.

1915

39A

FROM: AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

TO: REAR ADMIRAL ELLERY W. STONE,
CHIEF COMMISSIONER,
ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

DATE: 5TH. FEBRUARY 1945.

REF: AFSC/R/1/SPEC;INT;

CONFIDENTIAL.

With reference to my letter to H.E. Gasperotto of
1st. February, which I submitted to you, on the subject of General
Sandelli and the other retired Generals.

You may be interested to see the Minister's reply,
a copy of which I enclose.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

1914

Il Ministro dell'Aeronautica

3088

Roma, li 2 Febbraio 1945

Signor Vice Maresciallo,

sempre sensibile alle considerazioni che mi pervengono dall'E.V., mi affretto a mandarle copia della lettera che ho diretto al Sig. Generale di Divisione Aerea Renato SARDALII, in occasione del suo collocamento in posizione ausiliaria.

Il provvedimento è stato preso in sede di sfoltimento degli alti gradi della R'Aeronautica, data l'esuberanza di essi rispetto al fabbisogno, e determinato perciò da ragioni semplicemente contingenti.

Come l'E.V. vedrà dalla copia della lettera in questione, ho avuto cura di aggiungere di mio pugno una parola di riconoscimento dei servizi resi alla Patria.

L'E.V. ha osservato che il provvedimento di collocamento in posizione ausiliaria è stato adottato anche nei riguardi di altre persone con le quali il Generale SARDALII non dovrebbe essere confuso. Ciò è perfettamente vero; ma, d'altra parte, non è stato possibile evitare che con lo stesso provvedimento fossero colpiti Ufficiali anche in situazioni essenzialmente diverse, perchè era necessario giungere alla contrazione del personale dei più alti gradi in relazione a quanto la ho prospettato circa le condizioni dell'Arma e le sue mutate e sensibilmente ridotte esigenze.

Le aggiungo che per alcuni nei cui riguardi si sarebbero dovuti adottare provvedimenti di maggiore rigore, quali

il collocamento a riposo o in congedo assoluto, ho creduto di dover tener conto delle rispettive posizioni economiche ed ho quindi dato parere favorevole per l'invio in posizione ausiliaria.

Mi occorre ad ogni modo rilevare che per quei Generali per i quali furono adottati provvedimenti di carattere amministrativo che non toccano la loro onorabilità, si provvederà a tenerli presenti per il richiamo in servizio per uffici e commissioni che è mio intentimento di costituire. E in tal caso sarà tenuta in particolare considerazione la persona del Generale SANDALLI.

Comunque se l'E.V. desidera più ampi chiarimenti, sarò lieto di avere un colloquio con V.E., per il che mi metto sin d'ora a Sua disposizione, soggiungendole che in tale occasione potrei esserle più preciso per quanto altro contenuto nella Sua gradita lettera.

Con la più distinta considerazione

L. J. J. J.
A S.E. il Vice Maresciallo dell'Aria

W.A.B. BOWEN BUSCARLET

Sottocommissioni Forze Aeree

Commissione Alleata. + ROMA +

38^B

Roma, 29/1/45

2586 di prot.

Gentile Generale;

in applicazione dell'art. 2 del Decreto Legislativo 11 Ottobre 1944, n. 257, S.E. il Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri ha disposto il collocamento in posizione ausiliaria di V.S. - Il relativo decreto è in corso di registrazione.

Il provvedimento è determinato dalla situazione contingente, in quanto il mantenimento nei ruoli del servizio permanente effettivo della totalità del personale, specie nei gradi più elevati, non è compatibile con la nuova organizzazione che la R^A Aeronautica deve assumere e che comporta, come prima inevitabile conseguenza, la contrazione della forza organica.

Nel momento in cui V.S. lascia il servizio attivo, mi è gradito inviarle il mio saluto, grato dei servizi resi al Paese. Con alta considerazione

dumo Gasparotto

N.B. Le parole sottolineate sono state aggiunte di pugno di S.E. il Ministro. =

1911
1910

P. C. C.

CAPO DI CABINETTO

TRANSLATION.

FROM: H.E.GASPAROTTO,
MINISTER FOR AIR,
ITALIAN AIR MINISTRY, ROME.

TO: AIR VICE-MARSHAL W.A.B. BOWEN-EUSCARLET,
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

DATE: 2ND. FEBRUARY 1945.

REF: 3088.

Always happy to meet any of your wishes, I hasten to send you a copy of a letter that I sent to Division General Renato Sandelli on the occasion of his retirement on the auxiliary list.

The General's retirement was in accordance with the provisions being taken for the reduction of the number of senior officers, and was determined merely for reasons of contingency.

As you will see from the copy of the letter in question, I took care to add in my own handwriting a word of thanks for the services which General Sandelli has rendered to the country.

You have observed that retirement on the auxiliary list has been effected in the case of some persons with whom General Sandelli ought not to be confused. This is perfectly true, but, on the other hand, it was not possible to avoid the same provision being made for other officers who are in a situation essentially different from General Sandelli's, as it was necessary to reduce the senior ranks, as I have done, in accordance with the actual conditions in the Force and its changed and considerably reduced demands.

I would add that for some of those officers who ought to have been subjected to more severe treatment, either retirement without rank and pension or retirement with pension only, I have considered it necessary to take their economical situation into account. I have therefore agreed that they be placed on the

visions being taken for the reduction of the number of senior officers, and was determined merely for reasons of contingency.

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I would add that for some of those officers who ought to have been subjected to more severe treatment, either retirement without rank and pension or retirement with pension only, I have considered it necessary to take their economical situation into account and I have therefore agreed that they be placed on the auxiliary list.

I would also mention that those Generals who have been retired for administrative reasons which do not concern their honour will be kept in mind and may be recalled in order to occupy posts in offices and commissions which it is my intention to constitute. In this eventuality General Sandalli will receive particular consideration.

In any case, I shall be glad to have a talk with you and I place myself at your disposal, adding that on the occasion of our meeting I shall be able to be more precise regarding the remainder of your letter.

With my sincerest wishes,

L. GASPAROTTO.

TRANSLATION.

REF. 2586.

ROME, 29th. January 1945.

My Dear General,

In accordance with Article 2 with legislative decree No. 257 of 11th. October 1944, H.E. The President of the Council of Ministers has effected your retirement on the auxiliary list. The relative decree is in process of registration.

This provision is determined by the existing situation, as the maintenance on the permanent list of the whole of the Air Force personnel, particularly the senior ranks, is not compatible with the new standards to which the Italian Air Force must now conform and which, inevitably, necessitate a reduction of the organic forces.

In this moment, when you are leaving the active list, I am happy to send you my best wishes, grateful for the services which you have rendered to the country.

Yours very truly,

1908

GASPAROTTO.

0 8 4 4

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In this moment, when you are leaving the active list, I am happy to send you my best wishes, grateful for the services which you have rendered to the country.

Yours very truly,

1908

GASPAROTTO.

N.B. The words underlined were written by H.E. himself.

CHIEF OF CABINET,

MARIO PORRU.

FROM: AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

TO: AIR MARSHAL SIR JOHN C. SLESSOR, K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C.
HEADQUARTERS,
M.A.A.F.
C.M.F.

DATE: 3RD. FEBRUARY 1945.

REF: AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

SECRET.

Dear

My Staff have been discussing the question of these press attacks on the I.A.F. with the Public Relations Branch here. They agree with us that what is required is something good in the Press about the I.A.F. and not these continued irresponsible attacks.

The suggestion is that Public Relations should invite some of the more reputable papers to send representatives to me, and that I should give them some idea of what the I.A.F. is doing against the enemy, and of what assistance the Allies have been to the I.A.F.

Naturally this will want very careful handling, and I do not know whether you would feel disposed to give me some sort of directive saying what I may, and what I may not, tell them. I do feel, however, that a little propaganda in favour of the I.A.F. would do a lot of good. I have not discussed this with Stone up to the present, as I feel that the limitations on what I say must be from a Service angle.

At present we have a concrete request from ^{pg 07} Press agency to answer a questionnaire, and when this comes along I shall submit it to you, with my proposed replies, for your criticism.

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Yours



W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

36^A

FROM: AIR VICE-MARSHAL W.A.B. BOVEN-BUSCARIET,
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

TO: H.E. DOCTOR LUIGI CASPAROTTO,
MINISTER FOR AIR,
ROME.

DATE: 1ST. FEBRUARY 1945.

REF: AFSC/R/1/SPSC.INT.

My attention has been called to a notice in the newspaper 'RISORCIMENTO LIBERALE' of 31st. January 1945 stating that certain Generals of the Italian Air Force had been retired 'in ausiliaria'. I believe that this notice also appeared in other papers. Among the Generals named were: Generals Urbani, Ranza, Cappa, Ilari and Sandelli.

I was surprised to see General Sandelli's name in this list and made some enquiries. I was told that there have been attacks against the General due to his fascist background, and to avoid further investigations he was placed on the 'ausiliaria' list. I am at a loss to understand this, as he had been declared immune on 30th. September 1944, when he was in service. On 16th. November we were informed that he was at the disposition of the Cabinet.

As you know, General Sandelli was Air Minister and Chief of Staff for some considerable time, and in that capacity performed excellent work both for the Italian Air Force, and in aid of the Allies.

1906

While I have no objection to the retirement of Generals who are surplus to the requirements of the Italian Air Force, and indeed thoroughly approve of it, I feel that it is most unjust that an officer who has rendered such valuable service should have his name coupled with such notorious fascists as Generals Urbani and Ilari. Much the same applies to General Cappa, who is deserving of better treatment.

Ward 2000. 8.1

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was open to be

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

W.A.B. Bowen-Buscarlet,
Air Vice Marshal,
Air Forces Sub-Commission,
ROME.

OK

35 A

FROM: AIR VICE-MARSHAL W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

TO: REAR ADMIRAL ELLERY W. STONE,
CHIEF COMMISSIONER,
ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

DATE: 1ST. FEBRUARY 1945.

REF. AFSC/R/1/SPEC;INT.

CONFIDENTIAL.

With reference to the question of the retirement of certain Generals of the Italian Air Force which was discussed at this morning's Vice-Presidents' Conference, I attach my proposed letter to the Air Minister for your approval.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING,
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION.

1905

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,
ROME.

AFSC/R/10/1/AIR. 9 *copy for Spec Int 1.*

TOP SECRET.

9th January, 1945.

Dear

I am forwarding you a translation of a letter I have just received from General Aimone Cat, as I think that you will certainly wish to make some comments on its contents when you meet the General on the 13th. I have re-paragraphed the letter myself in order to be able to refer to it easily in my comments which follow.

2. It is clear that since my visit to Lecce with General Aimone Cat some trouble has worked itself up in the Fighter Wing. This has been due I think to:-

(i) The slack time they had in December due to weather and the enemy being almost out of range.

(ii) The departure of Piacentini.

(iii) The order to move two squadrons to CANNE.

3. The hopes of the Fighter Wing are stated shortly in paragraph 4 of the Chief of Staff's letter, and the order to move the Squadrons to CANNE must have dispelled any hopes which they might have had for the first of these aspirations, namely the employment of the Fighter Wing on the Italian front. I may say that I had been in communication with Pussy Foster who said that he was so overcrowded on his airfields that he could barely accommodate his own aircraft, and I have taken steps to have this put about among the fighters, so that the order to move to CANNE cannot have come altogether as a surprise.

4. Paragraph 5 gives the operational advantages which the Fighter Wing consider they would gain if they were employed on the Italian front. What it does not take into consideration is that the use of Macchis would probably be quite impossible owing to their already being in use by the Republican Air Force; that our pilots at B.A.F., just as much as the Italians, have to fly the water to reach the Balkans; that during the whole time they have been operating at Lecce they have lost no-one in the water, and to the best of my knowledge only two, or at the most three, since March 1944 when I took over the Sub-Commission, and that the sea crossing from CANNE to VIS is little, if any,

(11) The departure of Placentini.

(iii) The order to move two squadrons to CAMME.

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5. With regard to paragraph 5(c) of the letter, I do not agree that the morale of the pilots is really low. There was certainly no trace of it at Christmas and I think that the only thing that is wrong with them is a certain amount of disappointment and a lack of work.

6. Paragraph 6 which deals with the second aspiration of the Fighter Wing is really a plea to be regarded on the status of an Ally, but the various points raised certainly call for some comment:-

(a) It may equally be pointed out that our own Fighter Squadrons have been under canvas for at least a similar period, and that their conditions are no better than the Italians.

(b) This is certainly true, and for six months I have been fighting this tooth and nail, and so far I have got no change. Everyone agrees that the rations for operational crews are insufficient, but in spite of assistance from M.A.A.F. we have been unable to get anything done.

Continued /2.....

(c) This is largely the Italian Air Force's own fault as they had considerable stocks of clothing in their stores at Mungivacca, but preferred to try and get clothing out of us. As regards boots, we have already effected a considerable improvement, but here again the difficulty is that one cannot trust the Italians to ask for their bare requirements, they always ask for far more than they actually need.

(d) This is a matter over which I am afraid we have no control, although it is easy to imagine that it is not conducive to good morale.

(e) I am afraid that these sort of incidents happen only too often, but the difficulty is that the Italians will never report them properly. I believe that the incident referred to occurred near Lecce about the New Year, but I am quite unable to obtain any proper report on the subject. The fact, however, remains that Military Policemen, particularly Americans, are apt to disregard entirely the rank of Italian Officers when searching vehicles, and often display what almost amounts to violence in dealing with them; in this case I believe that pistols were drawn.

(f) Here again we suffer from lack of up-to-date information from the Italians, but I gather my Group Captain in Bari has taken the matter up with B.A.F.

(g) Here again it is a matter for proper liaison and getting in touch with B.A.F. I know that we and B.A.F. have done what we can, but in view of the confused state of the country in the Balkans, it is not surprising that information is scanty.

(h) The complaints in this paragraph probably go back to the old days when we had such difficulty as regards supply of equipment for the Airacobras, which as you know was not our fault. As regards the statement that we control supplies with diffidence and lack of faith, this is not to be wondered at in view of the tendency of the Italians to over-demand, which I have commented upon before. The example chosen of the Oxygen Masks is singularly unfortunate for the Italians as we have given them about 300 of these which is more than enough for their three fighter squadrons and two Baltimore Squadrons and Reserve, by a considerable margin. Actually 24 Oxygen Masks were issued for the Spitfire squadron, and the direct inference is that they are using more pilots in the Spitfire squadron than their establishment.

(i) This one makes me really angry. When we had the conference to decide which squadron was to get the Spitfires, I made it very clear that if they gave it to a squadron which was not one of those already in training at Vesuvius, we would never consider any question of a third Airacobra squadron. To make this quite clear I reiterated it more than once. There is no doubt that the Staff, probably abetted by the squadrons, have been trying to pull a fast one on us ever since. I have again and again explained the reasons why this squadron is not to be considered for the Spitfires, and it must be the reason-

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6. Paragraph 7 of the letter is quite a new one to me. I know of course that the Fighter Wing remained loyal to the Badoglio Government before we took control of them, and that there were many individual acts of great bravery in bringing the aircraft over to our side, but I have never been told that there was any desire for any particular recognition of this fact.

7. The measures referred to in paragraph 8 of the letter were merely that I was asked if they could use pilots who had hitherto been considered as reserve pilots, to relieve those who were tired after their efforts of November and December. While we might think that the individual number of sorties carried out by individual pilots was small, it must be remembered that they are definitely not properly fed. I gave orders to General Piacentini to do this a long time ago, and had no hesitation in telling General Aisone Cat, through Remondino, that he could use reserve pilots in any way that he wished.

8. As regards 10(a) I took this matter up with General Piacentini several times, and about a week ago I wrote to the Minister asking if he could do something to obtain an increase of pay for all ranks. As regards 10(b) I have referred to this in my preceding paragraph.

Continued /3.....

9. At first I felt rather disappointed that General Aimeo Cat had written a letter of this kind, but after some thought I feel that he is only putting forward the views of the Fighter Wing. These young men are extremely temperamental, in fact their temperament is something quite outside our normal experience; They also have the Italian mental characteristic of obstinacy in that however many times a thing is pointed out as being impossible or impracticable they still consider it a grievance if they are not given it. They, and the Italian Air Ministry, suffer from a totally wrong conception of the depth of Allied resources. I have never stopped trying to convince them that we are extremely hard-up for a number of things and can never afford to relax. I am afraid that they are not convinced, and I doubt if anyone ever could convince them.

10. You will no doubt want to know what my views are as to what you say to the General. I feel that you will have to be rather hard with him and point out that it is not possible to transfer the Italian Fighter Wing to the Italian front just because the pilots wish it. The practical reasons which prevent it can be pointed out to the General, and he must make these clear to the pilots.

You should point out that they are helping to clear the Germans out of Italy just as much by fighting over Yugoslavia as they would be fighting over Italy.

I think he should also be told that while we are undoubtedly to blame over the question of the feed for operational crews, many of the troubles of equipment shortages are their own fault, partly due to their bad organization which causes them to demand stuff which they are already in possession of, and partly to their habit of over-demanding.

11. It should be made quite clear to him that our resources are not unlimited, and that we have had to stint ourselves in some cases to provide the Italians. Our experience is that rather than go to the trouble of obtaining an item of equipment which they obviously possess, though it may not be ready to hand, they would far rather go and get it out of the Allies.

12. I think he should be told that the Italians are not in a position to demand the status of an Ally, and that the position is that the more good work they can do for us, the better they will be treated at the Peace Table, and that he must impress this on his pilots.

13. I think he should be told that he will stand or fall by whether he is able to put this over properly. On our side we may be able to hold out some hopes as regards re-arming with Allied types, or even a change of theatre. It might be possible to work out some scheme of permit which would be recognised by the Allies and would avoid incidents such as those described in his letter.

14. We should, I think, do everything possible to bring the food question to an immediate head.

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14. We should, I think, do everything possible to bring the food question to an immediate head.

15. I am afraid this is rather long winded, but I know you will want to be fully in the picture when you meet the General.

Yours

W.B.

Air Marshal Sir John Slessor, KCB, DSO, MC,
Headquarters,
M.A.A.F.
C.M.F.

28
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION. ROME.

AFSC/1/SPEC.INT.

January 4th. 1945.

TOP SECRET.

Dear

You were kind enough to say in your letter ACAS(I)/211A/44 of 2nd. November 1944 that the last papers submitted to you by my Intelligence Staff were of interest, so I think that you may like to see some more which deal with the recent Cabinet crisis in Italy.

Number 1 is a more up-to-date edition of the paper which I sent you on 11th. October last. You will see that this revised paper is dated 22nd. November 1944, and was therefore completed a few days before the crisis occurred.

Number 2 gives the reasons for the crisis, and comments on the Sforza veto, and relates the passage of events up to a week after the resignation of the Bonomi Government.

Number 3 gives the details of the Cabinet as finally constituted, and comments on the possible candidates for the posts of Under-Secretary for Air and Chief of Staff for Air.

Number 4 gives a summary of events following the situation at the end of Number 3, and shows how the final choice of the Under-Secretary of State and C.A.S. was arrived at.

Number 5 gives a detailed report of the careers of the new Air Minister, Under-Secretary, and C.A.S.

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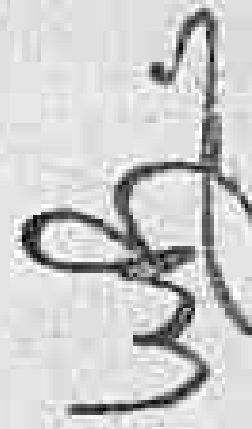
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Number 5 gives a detailed report of the careers of the new Air Minister, Under-Secretary, and C.A.S.

Finally, Number 6 gives thumbnail sketches of members of the new Italian Government.

I hope that these will be of interest. I believe that you were consulted by Air Commodore Woolley, when he was recently in U.K., about Mrs Brents, and I hope that these reports will convince you of the value of her work.

Yours



W.A.B. Bowen-Buscarlet,
Air Vice-Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding.

Air Vice-Marshal F. Inglis, C.B.E.
AC.A.S. (I)
Air Ministry, WHITEHALL.
London.

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

30.

AFSC/SPEC.INT./1.

January 5th. 1945.

Spec Int. 9/7^A, 6^A, 5^A

Spec Int 17/37^A

Dear

You will remember that I mentioned to you last night that we had some details of the background of the key people at the Air Ministry and of the various Ministers in the new Government.

I said I would let you have them, and here they are.

Yours

W.B.

W.A.B. Bowen-Buscarlet,
Air Vice-Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding.

1901

Rear Admiral Ellery W. Stone,
Chief Commissioner,
Allied Commission.
ROME.

AIR FORCES SUB - COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION, N. ROME.

~~TOP SECRET~~

SECRET.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

28th. November 1944.

I enclose copy of report on the Italian Industrialists, which was mentioned at our last meeting.

EB
for E. Brenta,
Air Vice-Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding.

Wing Commander H.M. Fisher,
Allied Liaison Section.
Headquarters.
M.A.M.A.F.
C.M.F.

1899

0850
~~TOP SECRET~~
AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION. ROME. 24

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

November 28th. 1944.

Confidential.

Spec Int 14/20
I enclose a copy of my report on the Italian political situation, the original of which was handed to the Liaison Section on Friday last.

I am also enclosing a report on the Italian manufacturers, which I trust will be of interest to you. A copy of this report is being forwarded to the Liaison Section.

E. Brenta

E. Brenta,

Air Vice-Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding.

1898

Chief Intelligence Officer,
Headquarters,
M.A.A.F.
C.M.F.

TOP SECRET
 AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION,

A
20

SECRET.

AFSC/R/1/SIAC LHM.

22nd November, 1944.

Dear

Spec Int 14/20

Confirming our telephone conversation of this morning, I have now made arrangements to come down on Friday November 24th with Mrs. Brenta, and we should reach your Office shortly after 14.00 hours.

2. Mrs. Brenta, if not I myself, will be available the following day if we want to talk any more about it. We will produce the paper on the present political situation, and leave it to you to ask questions.

Yours

WB

Wing Commander H.M. Fisher,
 Allied Liaison Section,
 Headquarters,
 M.A.A.F. C.M.F.

1897

FROM: AIR FORCE SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION, ROSE.

SECRET.

TO: INDUSTRY SUB-COMMISSION,
H.Q. A.C. ROSE.

DATE: 20TH NOVEMBER, 1944.

REF: AFSC/S/1/BREC INT.

spec 9.5/2/108

I should like to thank you for your letter AC/5519/IND of the 17th November, and your most interesting report on Professor Saraceno.

2. I agree with you that it is most unwise to remove people who are doing a useful job of work in rehabilitating the Country, merely because in the past they have been fascists or have had ordinary relations with the Germans. Those who made a racket of fascism, or who collaborated with the Germans against the Allies, are in a different category.

3. I would, however, suggest that it might be advisable for people who are employed on such work as Professor Saraceno to pass through the Expiration Tribunal before they are given the work. This would at least secure us from criticism in the press. I have in view a case which has caused us considerable embarrassment in this Sub-Commission, in which a General was recalled from retirement to be President of the Discrimination Tribunal, was then brought before the Expiration Tribunal (from which he was exempt in retirement), was operated and then sent back into retirement.

W.B.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCAHNET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

1896

18
AIR FORCES SUB - COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

TOP SECRET

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

SECRET AND PERSONAL.

19TH NOVEMBER, 1944.

With reference to your Secret and Personal letter to Mr. Macmillan, JCS. 1541 of 26th October 1944. I had a rather casual conversation with Mr. Macmillan during the course of a dinner party at the British Embassy, and it appeared to me that he did not quite realise the importance which you attached to the early appointment of a separate Air Minister.

I have just had another instance in which it is quite apparent that General Piacentini is using his position as Air Minister to dig himself into the dual role of Minister and Chief of Staff. In this particular case I am quite sure that he has made a move which will result in unfavourable criticism both in and out of the Italian Air Force, and will definitely affect the morale of the I.A.F.

WB
W.A.E. Bowen-Buscerlet,
Air Vice-Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding.

1895

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WB

W.A.E. Bowen-Buscarlet,
Air Vice-Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding.

1895

Air Marshal Sir John Slessor, K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C.
H.Q. M.A.A.F.
C.M.F.

AIR FORCES COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION.

TOP SECRET

Confidential.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

7th. November, 1944.

I have been approached by the Italian Air Ministry with a request that, following the appointment of Italian Ambassadors to the Court of St. James and to Washington, the Italian Government should be allowed to Appoint Air Attaches to their Embassies at London and Washington.

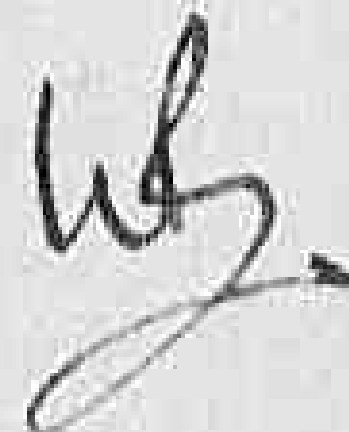
I think that this is largely the outcome of the Chief of Staff's refusal to allow Italian representation at the Chicago World Civil Aviation Conference, although it is naturally also due to some extent to the understandable desire of the Italian Government that Italy should once again take its place on its old footing as regards diplomatic representation.

As Ambassadors have now been appointed it seems to me that this may well be a question for the Foreign Office to decide or take up with the Chiefs of Staff. I should be very grateful for your advice as to whether your Embassy will take this up with the Foreign Office, or whether you consider that I should put it up to the Chiefs of Staff through A.F.H.Q.

I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your obedient servant,



1894

HIS EXCELLENCY,
SIR NOEL CHARLES, K.C.M.G., M.C.,
H.M. AMBASSADOR TO ITALY,
BRITISH EMBASSY,
VIA 20 SETTEMBRE,
ROME.

TOP SECRET

FORCES SUBCOMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

AFSC/P/1/SEC. INT.

TOP SECRET.

7th November, 1944.

I have just returned from Caserta where I have been discussing with the Chief of Staff, M.A.A.F., the various items of information which have recently come my way, and in particular my conversations with Bonomi and Scialoja.

2. The Chief of Staff asked me whether my present directive included anything which gave me authority to interfere in or discuss the political side of the Italian Air Ministry with the Italian Government. My answer was that the directive contained no such authority, but that the political questions which I had reported to you and to H.Q. M.A.A.F. had merely emerged from the conversations with Bonomi and Scialoja, and that I had considered it my duty to report the trend of these conversations, but that I would never presume to exert pressure in any particular direction without having received proper authority.
3. After some discussion the Chief of Staff suggested that I should put forward my own suggestions for a revised directive, which would cover our duties in respect of the political angle of the Italian Air Ministry and Air Force as we saw them. He also told me that in future the Branch of M.A.A.F. through which we should submit our information, and other matters connected with the political side, would be the Allied Liaison Section. This section works in closely with Mr. Macmillan's department at A.F.H.Q. The Chief of Staff also instructed me to work in as closely as possible with your Excellency, and to keep you fully informed of any information which we may receive which would be of interest to you.
4. Wing Commander Fisher, who is in charge of the Allied Liaison Section, is visiting Rome this week, and I am going to discuss the proposed directive with him. I feel strongly that I ought to discuss this matter with you, and that you should certainly approve the final directive before it goes to M.A.A.F. If you agree, I should be happy to call on you or without Wing Commander Fisher, at any time that is convenient to you.

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I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your



His Excellency,
Sir Noel Charles, K.C.M.G., M.C.,
H.M. Ambassador to Italy,
20, Via Settembre,
Rome.

14

AIR FORCE SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION

AFSO/R/M/SEC ITR.

TOP SECRET.

4th November, 1944.

Dear

Attached is a translation of a Memorandum which I have received from General Pincentini, which I think should be of some interest to you.

2. It has been translated from the Italian somewhat literally, and this has been done on purpose. It is therefore somewhat difficult to follow and I shall endeavour to explain some of the points as briefly as possible.

3. Since the declarations by Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt the Italian Air Force have expected something quite out of the ordinary to be done for them in the way of direct assistance so that they can take their part to better advantage with the Allies. I have personally done everything possible to discourage any undue optimism in this respect. This memorandum however is the outcome of those hopes and gives an indication of what the Italian Air Force thinks could be done for them. Some of the points are purely for local solution, but on the whole it is an interesting document because it shows that they do think that a bigger and better Air Force might result in a betterment of the political situation.

4. As regards this situation I must say I cannot see what can be done without extraordinary measures to stem the growing tide of Communism. As the writer of the memorandum says, the more-sell-to-do classes seem to have lost all ability for leadership, all initiative and all energy, and do not appear to be able to form any sort of front to resist the growing leftist tendency; the shortage of food, the black market, and the fact that A.C.C. have, of necessity, withdrawn personnel from the Southern part of the country, have all contributed to the growth of this Communism. I think it is fair to say that wherever sufficient A.C.C. officials have been left behind in the Provinces there has at any rate been some attempt at self-Government on orderly lines by the Italians; at any rate people with a sense of responsibility had someone to appeal to in cases of lawlessness. It may well be that a strong Air Force, combined with other strong armed forces might have a sufficiently deterring effect to stop the trend to the left.

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5. Of course the future of Italy is not the immediate concern of the Air Forces Sub-Committee. Our job is to get the best out of the Italian Air Force and what is left of the Italian aircraft industry in direct support of the Allies, but you will, of course, realise that the political side is, to a large extent, bound up in this and the more sober and energetic elements which comprise the Armed Forces are very naturally perturbed at the state of affairs in the country.

6. With regard to the document in question, paragraphs one to five merely express the writer's opinion that the future of Italy is bound up in Anglo-American relations on a friendly basis towards Italy, and gives his opinion that the best way to do this is to set the Armed Forces on their feet again, and in particular the Air Force. In these paragraphs there is only one point, and that is in paragraph four when the writer speaks of the unlimited resources of the Allies. I have spent a lot of time in pointing out to him and to others that the resources are by no means limited, and that we are often strained to the very utmost.

Continued /2.....

-2-

7. Subsequent to paragraph five the writer gives his suggestions as to what he thinks should be done to put the Italian Air Force on its feet again. It is really a summary of various points which have all been submitted at one time or another, and which he takes this opportunity of raising again.
8. When our decision to give them a Squadron of Spitfires was made, I made it abundantly clear that it was to be instead of one of the Airacobra squadrons and not an additional squadron. In spite of this they are continually pleading to be allowed to take the third Airacobra Squadron into the line. I have told them very definitely that they cannot have this third Airacobra squadron, and I consider that we should stick firmly to this decision. It is hard luck on the pilots of this squadron, who are most anxious to go on operations, but they have only their own Air Minister and Staff to thank for any false hopes they may have entertained.
9. As regards the Bombers, it is a fact that the SM.82's and indeed the Cant 1007's are on their last legs. The 82's cannot be expected to last more than another month. The Italians have deserved that 205 Group are being re-equipped with Lancasters, and they think that their two Bomber/Transport Squadrons should be re-equipped with Wellingtons. The Bomber/Transport crews are highly trained and I do not think there would be any difficulty in converting them, if Wellingtons were available, and if it were considered that it would be the right policy to let them have these.
10. As regards the Royal Academy. The decision as to the number of cadets was made by S.A.C.M.E.D. I think that there is some misunderstanding here, and I am endeavouring to get it cleared up.
11. As regards airfields, I have explained again and again that even the Allies are very short of all-weather airfields. With typical Italian obstinacy they refuse to see this, and consider that we could have done better for them. They have several times voiced the opinion that our withholding of these is part of a definite policy to curtail their effort in our support. Needless to say I have done everything in my power to dispel this suggestion.
12. As regards Civil Air Lines, I have told them that this is a question which can only be decided at the Peace Table. We got innumerable requests from civilian firms for facilities to begin preparations to operate their lines in peace, and the Italian Air Force itself is deeply concerned in this subject. I am afraid that as far as the British are concerned we have so far shown a lamentable lack of interest in the future possibilities of operating air lines through Italy. The Americans and Russians have already got a big start over us in this. The definite request in this paragraph of the memorandum is to be allowed representation at the Washington Conference. This has already been disapproved by orders from Washington to the U.S. Representative on the Advisory Council for Italy.
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14. The remainder of the paper is taken up with small matters which are all either being dealt with by us, or have been dealt with. You will be aware of the progress of the attempts to get adequate food for our operational crews. We are getting the necessary clothing as fast as the supply situation will allow. As regards the toilet supplies, we have had a very firm refusal from A.A.I. and A.P.M.C. who state that there are inadequate supplies even for the Allies.

Yours

W.B.

Air Vice-Marshal G. Baker, CB., DFC.,
H.Q. M.A.A.F. C.M.F.

13

TOP SECRET

AIR FORCE COMMISSION, ALLIED COMMISSION, HOME.

AFSC/R/1/SEC INT.

TOP SECRET.

4th November, 1944.

Dear

13

You will remember that on the 7th May you wrote to me (DO/OFS/13393) about the progress made by the Italian Air Force. I have no doubt that you still retain some interest in us and I thought that you might be interested to see a memorandum which has been put in by the present Air Minister, General Piacentini.

2. It has been translated from the Italian somewhat literally, and this has been done on purpose. It is therefore somewhat difficult to follow and I shall endeavour to explain some of the points as briefly as possible.

5. Since the declarations by Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt the Italian Air Force have expected something quite out of the ordinary to be done for them in the way of direct assistance so that they can take their part to better advantage with the Allies. I have personally done everything possible to discourage any undue optimism in this respect. This memorandum however is the outcome of these hopes and gives an indication of what the Italian Air Force thinks could be done for them. Some of the points are purely for local solution, but on the whole it is an interesting document because it shows that they do think that a bigger and better Air Force might result in a betterment of the political situation.

4. As regards this situation I must say I cannot see what can be done without extraordinary measures to stem the growing tide of Communism. As the writer of the memorandum says, the more well-to-do classes seem to have lost all ability for leadership, all initiative and all energy, and do not appear to be able to form any sort of front to resist the growing leftist tendency; the shortage of food, the black market, and the fact that A.C.C. have, of necessity, withdrawn personnel from the Southern part of the country, have all contributed to the growth of this Communism. I think it is fair to say that whenever sufficient A.C.C. officials have been left behind in the Provinces there has at any rate been some attempt at Self-Government on orderly lines by the Italians; at any rate people with a sense of responsibility had someone to appeal to in cases of lawlessness. It may well be that a strong Air Force, combined with other strong armed forces, might have a sufficiently deterring effect to stop the trend to the left.

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5. Of course the future of Italy is not the immediate concern of the Air Forces Sub-Commission. Our main concern is to get the best out of the Italian Air Force and what is left of the Italian aircraft industry in direct support of the Allies, but you will, of course, realise that the political side is, to a large extent, bound up in this and the more sober and energetic elements which comprise the Armed Forces are very naturally perturbed at the state of affairs in the country.

6. With regard to the document in question, paragraphs one to five merely express the writer's opinion that the future of Italy is bound up in Anglo-American relations on a friendly basis towards Italy, and gives his opinion that the best way to do this is to set the Armed Forces on their feet again, and in particular the Air Force. In these paragraphs there is only one point, and that is in paragraph four when the writer speaks of the unlimited resources of the Allies. I have spent a lot of time in pointing out to him and to others that the resources are by no means limited and that we are often strained to the very utmost.

7. Subsequent to paragraph five the writer gives his suggestions as to what could be done to put the Air Force on its feet again. The first question, that of the fighters, is purely a local question. When we decided to give them Spitfires it was made quite clear that as they were being given a squadron

Continued /2.....

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of Spitfires, their Airacobras squadrons would be reduced from three to two, but in spite of this they have gone ahead and trained a third squadron. My opinion, and that of M.A.A.F. is that they should not be allowed to have this third squadron except perhaps towards the end of the war in Europe if this comes sooner than we thought. Our reasons for this are, firstly that there is insufficient airfield accommodation, and secondly that we will require all the Airacobras which we have been given to maintain two squadrons in the line for the rather longer period which the war in Europe is apparently going to last.

8. As regards the Bombers, it is a fact that the SM 82's and indeed the Cent 1007's are on their last legs. The 82's cannot be expected to last more than another month. The Italians have observed that 205 Group are being re-equipped with Lancasters, and they think that their two Bomber/Transport Squadrons should be re-equipped with Wellingtons. The Bomber/Transport crews are highly trained and I do not think there would be any difficulty in converting them, if Wellingtons were available, and if it were considered that it would be the right policy to let them have these.

9. As regards the Royal Academy, this again is purely a local question. I think that the whole thing is based on a misunderstanding which I hope we shall get sorted out in a short space of time.

10. As regards the airfields, it is an absolute fact that even the Allies are desperately short of all-weather airfields for the winter. I have explained this again and again, but in spite of this, with typical Italian obstinacy, they are of the opinion that we could do better for them, and have it at the back of their minds that it is part of a definite plan to curtail their effort in our support.

11. As regards Civil Air Lines, I have been told to point out to them that this is a question which can only be decided at the Peace Table. We get innumerable requests from civilian firms for facilities to begin preparations to operate their lines in peace, and the Italian Air Force itself is deeply concerned in this subject. I am afraid that as far as the British are concerned we have so far shown a lamentable lack of interest in the future possibilities of operating air lines through Italy. The Americans and Russians have already got a big start over us in this. The definite request in this paragraph of the memorandum is to be allowed representation at the Washington Conference. This has already been disapproved by orders from Washington to the U.S. Representative on the Advisory Council for Italy.

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13. The remainder of the paper is concerned with small matters which are being dealt with locally.

14. I hope that this will be of interest to you or to someone else at the Air Ministry. If it is not of immediate interest to you, would you be kind enough to pass it on to any other Department which might like to see it.

Yours

Air Commodore F.J. Pressanges,
Directorate of Overseas Operations,
Air Ministry,
King Charles Street,
Whitehall,
LONDON, S.W.1.

TOP SECRET

FUNCTIONS AND POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE REGIA
AERONAUTICA WITH REGARD TO THE GENERAL ITALIAN
POLITICAL AND MILITARY SITUATION.

TOP SECRET.

1. Present Situation.

The present politico-military situation requires consideration of the following points:

- (a) The Anglo-Saxon Powers are interested in an Italian renaissance, her political activity operating within their sphere, and above all within that of Great Britain.
- (b) The prestige of Russia has notably increased while the Extremist Parties in Italy have gained, and are gaining, ground for a variety of internal and international reasons.
- (c) Those Parties, including the rich class, which are desirous of order do not seem able to put forward a progressive political programme sufficiently strong to neutralise the Extremists. Not only that, but it appears evident they are late starters, even in the field of public assistance in the liberated cities, as well as being unable to infuse vitality in their political organisations, all of which goes to place them in a position of being in *tor* by the Extremists.

(d) The Armed Forces, indispensable to internal order, are in the throes of crisis and are being undermined by the indifference and diffidence of public opinion which tends towards an exaggerated exaltation of the Patriots.

(e) Persuasive Allied propaganda created impossible illusions in the minds of a population which, now, in contact with reality, cannot understand that the situation could not be otherwise than it is; and this situation has therefore brought out agnosticism and an anti-allied feeling greatly to the advantage of Communist propaganda.

(f) The declarations by Churchill and Roosevelt arrived a little too late, but provided their statements can be implemented rapidly and effectively the leftist movement can be neutralized and in time eliminated.

2. Suggested Remedies. These depend upon the condition of Italy in the near future. Two possibilities offer themselves:

- (i) That Italy enters into the Anglo-American sphere;
- (ii) That the Anglo-Americans will never consent to the formation of an Extremist Government in Italy.

1888

The positive and negative elements present in this choice point to the

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1888

The positive and negative elements present in this choice point to the wisdom of a rapid implementation on a concrete basis of the declarations by Churchill and Roosevelt, in which event the Italian People would be convinced that its interests and its future are better served in the Anglo-American political sphere. To do this the following is indispensable.

(i) Material and spiritual betterment of the regular Armed Forces.

(ii) Absorption of the material and spiritual energies of the Nation in active war by augmenting the war effort of Italy in Europe and elsewhere.

(iii) Persuasion of the upper class to take its place in the vanguard of the social and economic forces, thereby infusing vitality into the political forces.

3. Functions and Possibilities of the R. Aeronautica.

The work undertaken by aviation constitutes a decisive element in the internal situation as much as it does in the war effort for the following reasons.

That it constitutes the most generous and healthy expression of the Italian People;

Continued /2.....

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That it is animated by a sincere and enthusiastic combative spirit capable of capturing the imagination and raising morale;

That from the 8th September on it gave all that was asked of it without reserve, and this with old material;

That of all the Armed Forces it is the most compact, the most generous and combative and the most ready to sacrifice itself without limit;

That it is the only Arm of the Armed Forces that has been able to rise again and re-establish absolute trust between ranks and officers, while at the same time remaining politically clean;

That by reason of its enthusiasm, loyalty, love of Country and close association with the Allies (above all with the English) it could constitute a spear-head in the renaissance of internal and international politics, worthy of carrying Italy into the Anglo-American sphere of action.

For the above reasons I hold, not because I am an aviator, that of the three Italian Armed Forces the Air Force should be the one the English and Americans might best help and encourage.

4. Help and Backing.

It is evident that these two factors are determined by interests, means at disposal and significance.

As far as interests are concerned it seems to me self-evident, and therefore whatever might be the decisions at the Peace Table I think it is a pre-eminent interest to gain the sympathy and friendship of a people of forty five millions.

As regards means there is such a large margin of spare equipment in the possession of the Anglo-Americans, which would inevitably remain unutilised, that the release of necessary equipment would not be a sacrifice.

With regard to the significance the increase of activity by the Italian Air Force would result in the saving of Anglo-American lives and Anglo-American effort: without prejudice leaving the acknowledgement of such to the Anglo-Saxon sense of rectitude and justice. The aviators believe in this, they know that we must deal with facts and not words and they ask only: "Give us the tools to do the job".

5. Questions to be resolved.

The Air Forces Sub-Commission has always been a body of wide understanding, brinful of help and advice, and has taken to heart the real possibilities of the Italian Air Force and has interpreted its moral, material, technical and war-like needs, but not in all cases has there been analogous

1887

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1. Supply of aircraft.

Contrary to expectation, the delivery of the aircraft and their equipment requires much time, in spite of the work of the Air Forces Sub-Commission.

Fighters.

Of the 120 P.39 received, only 36 are now on operations. In spite of the fact that these aircraft do not enjoy the confidence of the personnel, in order to continue fighting they (the pilots) ask the concession of a third squadron, which they are ready to fly. The conceding of these aircraft would not imply any prejudice to the Allies, but on the contrary would provide conspicuous moral and material results in the sense of being ready to fight in any case anyhow.

Continued /3....

-3-

Bombers.

Because of old age and the lack of spare parts these are about finished. The personnel are depressed and ask for Allied aircraft in order that they may carry the war to Japan. Why therefore do the English not concede at least Wellingtons, which they have discarded in favour of Liberators. That alone would have an immense influence, and moreover would allow the use of all our Italian aircraft for transport, which would have an enormous importance in resolving the communications crisis that is paralysing the Country, and would ease considerably the Allied difficulties in this field.

II Royal Academy Training.

In order to provide a sense of vitality purely of a moral character, the Head of the Air Forces Sub-Commission allowed the admission to the flying academy of fifteen pupils. A later letter cancelled this and limited the number of old pupils to thirty five. Some observation on this point is necessary.

The withholding of permission to train these fifteen pupils is considered by the Italian aeronautical circles as a sign of suppression, and it is easy to imagine the moral effect upon personnel. If that were the intention, it would at least be politically wise to leave it to the end of the conflict. This negative decision is more strident in so far as it has not been extended with regard to the Navy and the Army, whose academies are functioning fully. Why not equal treatment?

The thirty five old pupils constitute an insignificant figure inasmuch as in free Italy there are one hundred and twenty such who according to law have a right to admission to the Academy even should they, due to overlarge number of officer, be turned down at the end of the year. It is indispensable that at least on paper these fifteen pupils be admitted and all those whom it is possible to trace be re-called.

III Flying Fields and Schools.

In recent months there has been a continual transfer from one airfield to another, which airfields have not been suitable to the type of flying carried out from them. That produces difficulties because accommodation is poor and out of date, all of which bears on the results.

It is a grave situation and withall depressing, and it should be changed, if there is not to be unfavourable comment. Is it possible that at this moment an airfield cannot be found for the Italian Air Force?

The Head of the Air Forces Sub-Commission has done everything possible, and the Commandant of B.A.F. the same, all without results. 4886
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would at least be partially equal. The negative decision is more strident in so far as it has not been extended with regard to the Navy and the Army, whose academies are functioning fully. Why not equal treatment?

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The Head of the Air Forces Sub-Commission has done everything possible, and the Commandant of B.A.F. the same, all without results. ⁴⁸⁸⁶ Americans could only re-adjust themselves slightly it would be possible for the Italians to be accommodated.

Matters in this direction have grown slowly worse and worse. It is therefore necessary to remove the impression that all this follows a pre-established and understated plan to diminish our contribution.

IV Civil Air Lines.

I understand that the problem is complex and difficult, but that something be done in this sphere is a veritable necessity.

Italy possesses two organisations of the first importance in this field, complete with personnel. The internal lines as well as those in South American could be run with the participation and under the control of British or American interests. It is urgent that something be done and contacts made.

In the political field it would be of prime importance for Italy if she could in some form be represented at the conference of Washington in November. Officially Italy could be represented as a co-belligerent, or on the other hand by an observer, or at least by a technician representing the two firms.

Continued /4.....

It would in any case have a highly beneficial effect in political circles, and consequently in the Country and in aviation circles. Furthermore it would indicate the future position of Italy in the field of international air traffic which cannot be otherwise than important in view of Italy's geographical position.

V. Air Ministry.

This has been empty for a month and a half. One hears it said it is to be handed over to a non-military organisation, but it should be pointed out that the Air Force is the only State organisation which does not reside in its own buildings. The restitution of the Air Ministry would be an incalculable material advantage in economy, work, installations, messes, etc. In fact, the whole matter begins to be a question of dignity and prestige, for neither Air Force circles or Public Opinion can account for the reason; consequently it has given rise to unfavourable comments. But why is there a resistance to its restitution?

It cannot be impossible since an American Captain has succeeded in obtaining permission to establish a statistical office in the building. A positive decision is necessary in this matter if only from the point of view of moral effect, material use, and to cut short gossip and ill feeling.

VI. Food, Clothing and Toilet Supplies.

Food.

The A rations of operational units have been cut by at least a third and brought to the level of those for non operational units. This is bad, the more so since one knows that the Head of the Air Forces Sub-Commission was almost able to secure full English rations for air crews. Later came the assurance that operational units would receive P.A.F. rations, but these have not materialised.

A solution for this question must be found, since English liaison Officers with the units have openly protested about an insufficiency of food.

It is symptomatic to quote the end of a letter by an English Wing Commander to a R.A.F. Medical Officer who had made a report on his medical inspection:

" it is all very well to make recommendations, but something must be done to improve the food and clothes situation of crews, after which progress in other directions would follow."

Clothes

Shoes are a matter of great urgency. If, with the approach of winter, a solution is not found to this grave question, health, as well as the

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Clothes

1885

Shoes are a matter of great urgency. If, with the approach of winter, a solution is not found to this grave question, health, as well as the whole efficiency of the personnel, will be undermined.

Toilet Supplies.

Another grave difficulty, which I have, through personal effort, tried to solve by acquisition on the open market, is the supply of soap, tooth paste, razor blades, tooth brushes etc. Continued requests to buy on repayment from the Allies have been negative, which does not compare favourably with conditions amongst P/W, who receive all these things monthly and gratis.

It is all the more upsetting since the Allies place great importance upon personal hygiene, though Italian personnel are unable to share their benefits. It would be a good idea if, at least in operational units, canteens were opened (even if run by English personnel) for the sale of these essentials.

CONCLUSION.

A renewed, disciplined and organised Italy along democratic lines cannot fail to form an active element in the Anglo American political cosmos. That much is implicit in the declarations of Roosevelt and Churchill.

Continued /5.....

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For this reason all the energies of the Italian People towards such an end should be helped, actuated and directed towards realization. This energy points to Italian Aviation as holding a spearhead position by its loyalty, combative spirit, sincere enthusiasm, human and material sacrifice, and political convictions.

The Air Force possesses all the necessary qualities for the construction of a motive element internally in the war effort whenever it is required. Its possibilities are considerable and, provided it has sufficient equipment, can be even augmented.

In this way its internal function in political orientation alongside that of the Anglo Americans can assume a form which will increase in effectiveness according to the means conceded.

All these large and small problems concerning the Italian Air Force which I have set forth above can be solved in a positive sense, augmenting enthusiasm and sentiments of friendship, encouraging personnel to exercise their utmost energies with the object of replacing effort and sacrifice on the part of the Allies. It would be a great comfort to the writer, who has devoted his energies to lead the Italian Air Force along lines as stated above.

(Sgd). P. Piacentini.

Bari.
16th October, 1944.

1884

(Sgd). P. Piscentini.

Bari.
16th October, 1944.

1884

12th

FROM : AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED COMMISSION, ROME.

TO : INDUSTRIA AERONAUTICA SANIITA

DATE : 3rd NOVEMBER 1944

REF. : AFSC/R/1/SEEC/INT.

INDUSTRIA AERONAUTICA SANIITA

1 Spec. Int. Encl. 2

With reference to your Memorandum requesting the appointment of Professor Vittorio Franchini to the vacant Chair of Economics at the University of Rome.

2. I have to inform you that I have taken this matter up with the Authorities and have been informed that no vacant faculty posts at the University of Rome are to be filled up until Northern Italy is liberated. Furthermore, I am told that the only way in which a Professor can be appointed or transferred to the University, is for him to submit his application to the faculty in which he wishes to teach, and to be regularly elected by that faculty.

2 Spec. Int. Encl. 3

3. It is suggested therefore, that Professor Franchini should make his application at the suitable time.

WB

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCAIET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING

1883

transmission

DALLA : SOTTOCOMMISSIONE PER L'AERONAUTICA,
COMMISSIONE ALLEATA, ROMA

ALLA : INDUSTRIA AERONAUTICA SANITA

DATA : 3 NOVEMBRE 1944

REF : AFSC/R/1/SPEC/INT

INDUSTRIA AERONAUTICA SANITA

Con riferimento al suo pre-memoria richiedente la
nomina del Professore Vittorio Franchini per una Cattedra vacante
di Economia all'Università di Roma.

Vi faccio presente che ho interessato le Autorità e
sono stato informato che nessuna Cattedra vacante all'Università
di Roma deve essere occupata finché l'Italia settentrionale non
sia liberata.

Inoltre mi è stato detto che l'unico mezzo per un
professore per essere nominato o trasferito all'Università sarebbe
di presentare domanda alla facoltà nella quale egli desidera
insegnare ed essere regolarmente nominato in detta facoltà.

Si suggerisce dunque al Professor Franchini di presentare
domanda a tempo opportuno.

W.B.

1882

W.A.B. HOWEN-MUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.ROME.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

3 Novembre, 1944.

DIRIGENTI S.A. ALFA ROMEO.

Preghiamo Cotesto On. Ministero di voler fornire a questa Sottocommissione il nome del Commissario e quelli dei dirigenti della S.A. ALFA ROMEO per le sue installazioni dislocate nella area di Roma.

Riteniamo di essere stati interessati alla nomina di detti dirigenti, ma con lettera che si trova attualmente nei nostri archivi di Bari, e siccome la questione sembrerebbe rivestire carattere di urgenza, preghiamo Cotesto On. Ministero, di volercene far pervenire copia con cortese urgenza.

W.B.
W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

MINISTERO DELL'AERONAUTICA,
GABINETTO DI S.E. IL MINISTRO.
ROMA.

1881

A.F.S.C.TRANSLATION.ROME.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC;INT;

November 3rd. 1944.

It is requested that this Sub-Commission may be supplied with the names of the Commissioners and other officials appointed to control the Alfa Romeo Co. in the Rome area.

It is believed that this Sub-Commission was approached about the appointment of these officials, but the letter is thought to be in Bari. As the matter is of considerable urgency it is requested that we may be supplied with copies of any correspondence on this subject.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL.
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

ITALIAN AIR MINISTRY,
ROME.

1880

AIR FORCES SUB - COMMISSION, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.

ROME.

AFSC/INT/7.

November 2nd, 1944.

Your Excellency,

With reference to your letter 8842/518 Coll. of 2nd. October 1944. I have to inform you that I made a formal submission of your request that Italy should be represented at the forthcoming Aviation World Conference to Allied Forces Headquarters.

I have now received a reply that this request had already been disapproved by order of Washington to the United States Representative of the Advisory Council for Italy.

W.B.

W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

1879

HIS EXCELLENCY,
GENERAL PIACENTINI,
MINISTER FOR AIR,
AIR MINISTRY.

ROME.

10
ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
G-5 Section
APO 512

G-5: 360.7-3.

TRJ/VJS/sab
27 October 1944

SUBJECT: Aviation World Conference.

TO : Headquarters, Allied Control Commission
APO 394.

1. With reference to letter Air Forces Sub-Commission, AFSC/INT/7 of 9 October, 1944 transmitting a request from the Italian Minister of Air to be permitted to send a representative to this conference. The U.S. POLAD advises this section that it is his understanding that this request has already been disapproved by orders from Washington to the U.S. Representative on the Advisory Council for Italy.

For the Asst. Chief of Staff, G-5:

T. B. JACKMAN
Lt. Colonel.

TOP SECRET
 AIR FORCE SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.

ROME.

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL.

AFSC/R/2/SPEC. INT.

1st. November, 1944.

Dear

Further to my letter of even reference of 24th. October, 1944, I attach herewith a report which I have just received, which may be of interest to you.

Will you please use the utmost discretion in using this information, as it is most important that the source should not be disclosed in Italian circles?

For this reason I have not passed a copy to Commodore Stone, in view of what I have already informed you about General Infante. I am due to discuss the two records of my conversations with Scialoja and Bonomi, tomorrow, with Stone, and will give him the gist of the information in a very general manner.

I have sent a copy of the attached report to Sir Noel Charles.

Yours

Wb.

AIR COMMODORE F. WOOLLEY, O.B.E., D.F.C.
 HEADQUARTERS, M.A.A.F.

1878

TOP SECRET
 AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED COMAND COMMISSION.
ROME.

CONFIDENTIAL.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

1st. November, 1944.

3134 5/B
 Spec. Int. 14/11/44

FURTHER to my letters of even reference of 20th. and 24th. October, I attach herewith a report by my Intelligence Staff, which confirms my impressions derived from my talks with Scialoja and Benoni.

I passed copies of the records of these talks to Commodore Stone, and on my return to Rome this morning I understand that he wishes to see me about them. In view of what I told you about General Infante I am going to use the utmost discretion in revealing the contents of the attached report to Commodore Stone. It is of the greatest importance that the source of the information is not disclosed to Italian circles.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W.B.
 W.A.B. BOWEN - BUSCARLET,
 AIR VICE - MARSHAL,
 AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

HIS EXCELLENCY,
 SIR NOEL CHARLES, K.C.M.G., M.C.
 H.M. AMBASSADOR TO ITALY.
 BRITISH EMBASSY,
 VIA 20 SETTEMBRE,
 ROME.

1877

~~TOP SECRET~~
AIR FORCES SUB COMMISSION ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.
ROME.

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

24th. October, 1944.

Dear

I had a long interview with Signor Scialoja, Under Secretary for Air on 19th. October, and a rather shorter one with Prime Minister Bonomi on 23rd. October.

I think you will be interested in my notes on our conversation, copies of which I attach herewith.

My general impression, following these conversations, is that early Ministerial changes are envisaged. This is confirmed by information received by my Intelligence Staff. There is no doubt that the Italian Air Ministry is expecting the appointment of a civilian as Air Minister, in the near future, and is keenly interested in who this is likely to be.

At the time of the formation of the present Government, General Mason Macfarlane told me that we were most unlikely to get a Service man as Air Minister, it would almost certainly be a civilian. We were then most preoccupied with ensuring that the Ministries of War and Aviation were not combined.

In the actual event a civilian could not be found acceptable to all parties, as the appointment of anyone holding political views would have upset the balance of the Government. General Piacentini was decided upon as a Service man, and therefore non-political. We were also promised that the Ministerial work would be largely

2.

done by the Under Secretary, thus leaving General Piacentini free to carry out his duties as Chief of Staff. We know now that this has not worked out at all, as promised.

If there are to be any changes we shall have to examine the nominees for the post of Air Minister very carefully indeed.



W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCARLET,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

COMMODORE ELLERY STONE,
ACTING CHIEF COMMISSIONER,
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.

1875

AIR FORCES SECRETARY GENERAL'S COMMISSION, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

24th. October, 1944.

Dear

On 23rd. October I had an interview with the Prime Minister, Signor Bonomi, and I attach a copy of my notes on our conversation.

2. My general impression, following this conversation, and that with Signor Scialoja on 19th. October, is that early Ministerial changes are in the offing. This is confirmed by information received by my Intelligence Staff. There is no doubt that the Italian Air Ministry is expecting the appointment of a civilian in the near future, and is keenly interested in who this is likely to be.

3. At the time of the formation of the present Government the Deputy A.O.C.-in-C. was in close touch with General Mason Macfarlane over the question of the appointment of an Air Minister. General Mason Macfarlane, at the time, told me that we were most unlikely to get a Service man as Air Minister, it would almost certainly be a civilian. We were then most preoccupied with ensuring that the Ministries of War and Aviation were not combined.

4. In the actual event a civilian could not be found acceptable to all political parties forming the Government, as whatever his party it would have upset the balance of the Government. As a result General Piacentini was appointed with the understanding that he would be left comparatively free of his Ministerial duties (which would be undertaken by Scialoja) so that he could devote most of his time to his work as Chief of Staff. Things have turned out rather differently, as you know.

5. We must keep a close eye on the Government nominees for the post of Air Minister if and when they decide to make a change.

Yours

WB

Air Commodore F. Woolley, O.B.E., D.F.C.,
Headquarters, M.A.A.F.

1874

TOP SECRET
 AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.

ROME.

CONFIDENTIAL.

24th. October, 1944.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

I have to report that yesterday, 23rd October, I had a meeting with the Prime Minister, Signor Bonomi. I attach herewith a copy of my notes on our conversation, for your information.

My general impression, following this conversation, and that with Signor Scialoja on 19th. October, is that early Ministerial changes are envisaged. This is confirmed by information received by my Intelligence Staff. There is no doubt that the Italian Air Ministry is anticipating the appointment of a civilian as Air Minister, and are keenly interested in who this is likely to be.

Yours

His Excellency,
 Sir Noel Charles. K.C.M.G., M.C.C.,
 H.M. Ambassador to Italy,
 British Embassy,
 Via 20 Settembre,
 ROME.

1873

TOP SECRET

53

MEETING BETWEEN A.V.M. BOWEN-BUSCARLET, AIR
OFFICER COMMANDING THE AIR FORCES SUB COMMISSION,
AND SIGNOR IVANOE BONOMI, ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER,

ON THE 23RD OCT. 1944

1. Allied Assistance to the Italian Air Force.-

Signor Bonomi immediately took the lead by expressing his satisfaction at the manner in which the Allies had assisted the Italian Air Force by supplying Allied aircraft for a number of Italian squadrons. A.V.M. Bowen-Buscarlet in turn remarked that the rehabilitation of the Italian Air Force must also be attributed to the excellent work done by the R.Aeronautica in salvaging and repairing damaged aircraft found on airfields and in bombed factories and putting them back into service.

2. Combined Post of Minister for Air and Chief of Staff.-

The P.M., alluding to the present situation where Gen. Piacentini fills both posts, gave it as his opinion that this was not a satisfactory arrangement. During the last war he, the P.M., as a civilian held the post of Minister for War and he therefore knew from personal experience that a Minister must devote the whole of his time to his ministerial duties. The A.V.M. expressed himself entirely in agreement with the P.M.'s views. The latter then explained that Piacentini's appointment to the dual post was due to the hurried manner in which the appointments had to be made. It was thought at first that the Minister for War might also take over the Air Ministry as had been the case during the last war. He realised however that the Italian Air Force was at that time the smaller of the three Armed Forces and that a separate Ministry

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3. What were the A.V.M.'s views on the R.Aeronautica was the next question put by the P.M. The A.V.M. had words of praise for the flying crews and the technicians who were doing an excellent job. There was much room for improvement in the administration and organisation generally.

4. This brought the conversation back to the present arrangement by which Piacentini holds the dual post of Minister for Air and Chief of Staff. The A.V.M. expressed his great admiration for Gen. Piacentini as

Chief of Staff. He would be faced with a very serious problem if he had to replace such a man who was more over so popular with the flying crews and set such a good example by occasionally taking part in their operational flights, thus displaying courage and the desire to share their risks. He was also glad to have met Signor Scialoja.

4.

These remarks appeared to confirm the P.M. in his opinion that it is essential that the present dual post of Minister Chief of Staff be discontinued. He referred to the possibility of certain ministerial changes in the near future which would enable him to put the matter right. Gen. Piacentini would then remain Chief of Staff and a separate Air Minister would be appointed.

5.

Epuration.

The question of epuration was then brought up by the A.V.M. He was not satisfied by the way epuration is being conducted. There also appeared to be conflicting opinions between the Air Ministry and the Epuration Commission. He then quoted the following two cases:

A

On the 29th July the Ministry notified the Air Forces Sub Commission that it was proposed to nominate Gen. Ettore PRANDONI and two other Air Force generals members of the Commission of Three appointed to deal with the discrimination of officers of general and Colonel's rank.

In a statement, undated, received yesterday from the Commission of Epuration of Military Personnel covering the cases dealt with during the first half of October, Gen. Ettore PRANDONI's name figures among those of generals who are to be retired from the Service "dispendiati dal Servizio", presumably because found guilty of fascist partisanship.

It would appear that Gen. PRANDONI, who had been re-

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In a statement, undated, received yesterday from the Commission of Epuration of Military Personnel covering the cases dealt with during the first half of October, Gen. Ettore PRANDONI's name figures among those of generals who are to be retired from the Service "disparati dal Servizio", presumably because found guilty of fascist partisanship.

It would appear that Gen. PRANDONI, who had been retired and was drawing his pension, was invited by the Ministry to rejoin the R.Aeronautica in order to sit on the Discrimination Commission, a very invidious task which he somewhat reluctantly accepted.

He left his retirement and rejoined the R.Aeronautica after which he was requested to appear before the Epuration Committee who pronounced judgement against him.

The A.V.M. was not going to criticise the decisions of the Epuration Committee as he had not seen the evidence, but it was certainly most unfortunate that a general appointed by the Ministry because he was considered a fit person to judge other officers of equal rank be subsequently retired by the Epuration Commission who apparently did not consider him a fit person to remain in the R.Aeronautica.

B A further case was that of Gen. CAVALLARIN. Undoubtedly he was a squadrist but he had collaborated loyally with the Allies since the Armistice and had proved himself a capable officer. He too had been retired from the R.Aeronautica. Whilst the A.V.M. had not seen the evidence, it would seem that in this instance the Commission was not keeping strictly to the letter of the law which affords a certain latitude in cases such as these and a lesser punishment would probably have been indicated.

6. Generally speaking, by proceeding ruthlessly against senior officers where there is not ample justification, we give rise to criticism, dissatisfaction and antagonism among the very people who are badly needed in Italy in these troublesome times and we are building up an opposition which may eventually become formidable. Such procedure may appease the masses, but is to the detriment of the Service.

7. The P.M. expressed himself fully in agreement with the A.V.M.'s views. He had formed the impression that the Allies favoured ruthless epuration. He would take note of these two cases.

8. Overdue Payments to Sundry Firms Working for the R. Aeronautica.-

The A.V.M. drew the P.M.'s attention to the fact that unless certain amounts totalling 26,000,000 lire, which form an infinitesimal part of the sum owed and now long overdue, were paid to certain firms who worked for the R.Aeronautica, they would have to close down, dismiss their workers and apply for a moratorium. The payments had been authorised by the Air Minister and approval had been obtained from the A.C.C., but nothing was being done about it at the Treasury. The delay appeared to be due to red tape at the Treasury. The P.M. stated he would take the matter up forthwith.

The P.M. 870

7.

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The P.M. then expressed his satisfaction at having had the opportunity of discussing matters with the A.V.M.

As we left his study the P.M. picked up the phone and stated he wished to see Signor Scoccimarro at once. Sig. Scoccimarro is High Commissioner for Defascising.

NOTE.

Since the Meeting with the P.M. the following information has been obtained on Generals PRANDONI and CAVALLARIN.

Gen. PRANDONI when invited to sit on the Discrimination Commission drew attention to the fact that he held the honorary title of Luogotenente della Milizia Fascista though he had never worn fascist uniform. It was considered by the Air Ministry that as the title had been awarded "ad honorem" not on account of any fascist participation but because he had served the Air Force with distinction, this should not count against him. It would seem that the Epuration Commission took a different view.

Gen. CAVALLARIN was with the 4th Z.A.F. at Bari when the Armistice was declared. He had been a squadrist but, as he gave proof of his desire to collaborate wholeheartedly with the Allies and openly opposed Gen. Ranza who adopted a slow-go policy, he gained the confidence of the then Air Commodore Foster. He was posted to Sardinia where he was to restore order from chaos.

but, as the situation developed, he heartedly with the Allies and openly opposed them. He gained the confidence who adopted a slow-go policy. He was posted to Sar- of the then Air Commodore Foster. He was posted to Sar- dinia where he was to restore order from chaos.

1869

TOP SECRETAIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, AIR FORCE CONTROL COMMISSION,ROME.MOST SECRET & PERSONAL.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC. INT.

20th October, 1944.

Dear

I have just had a long "off the record" talk with Scialoja, the Secretary for Air, and I am attaching a copy of my notes on this to this letter. I think you will be interested, and perhaps you will consider that the A.O.C-in-C or S.A.C. Med should see the notes.

2. He told us little that was new, but it was a satisfactory talk, in that it confirmed the opinions that we have held for some time about the Air Minister. I do not think that there is any cause for alarm at the moment, but we shall have to bear all this in mind when it comes to a change in the Government or a re-shuffle among the Ministries.

Yours

WB

Commodore

Air Vice-Marshal F. Woolley, OBE, DFC,
Chief Intelligence Officer,
Headquarters,
M.A.A.F.
C.M.F.

1868

TOP SECRET
 AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION, ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION,
 ROME.

CONFIDENTIAL.

AFSC/R/1/SPEC.INT.

20th October, 1944.

Delph

Further to our conversation of 18th October on the subject of General Piacentini, I have had a long "off the record" conversation with Signor Scialoja, the Secretary for Air, and I am attaching a copy of my notes on this to this letter.

2. He told us little that was new, but it was a satisfactory talk, in that it confirmed the opinions that we have held for some time about the Air Minister. I do not think that there is any cause for alarm at the moment, but we shall have to bear all this in mind when it comes to a change in the Government or a re-shuffle among the Ministries.

Yours

W.B.

His Excellency,
 Sir Noel Charles, K.C.M.G., M.C.,
 H.M. Ambassador to Italy,
 British Embassy,
 Via 20 Settembre,
 Rome.

1867

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

MEETING BETWEEN SIGNOR SCIALOJA UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR AIR AND A.V.M. W.A.B. BOWEN-BUSCALET A.O.C. AIR FORCES
SUB COMMISSION AT PALAZZO VECCHI ON OCTOBER THE 19TH 1944

1. CHOICE OF SCIALOJA a lawyer as undersecretary of State. The duties of an undersecretary of State are to ask questions in parliament. He is moreover the head of the civil service personnel over which the Minister has no jurisdiction.-
2. MINISTER FOR AIR SHOULD PREFERABLY BE A CIVILIAN, Scialoja and other members of Cabinet have a rooted objection to a serviceman being Minister. The duties of a Minister are purely administrative. His own name had been put forward when the formation of the present Cabinet was being discussed, though he personally did not aspire to ministerial rank. A civilian Minister would give servicemen the feeling that things had changed. There would be less favoritism. The reason why Piacentini was appointed Minister is that suitable candidates of the different political parties could not be sorted out to satisfy the six parties, consequently Gen. Piacentini, a serviceman and therefore non political, was appointed.
3. COMBINATION OF MINISTER AND CHIEF OF STAFF IS NOT SATISFACTORY, Piacentini has to devote a great deal of his time to Chief of Staff duties and consequently the administrative side receives

1866

serviceman being Minister. The duties of a Minister are purely administrative. His own ideas had been put forward when the formation of the present Cabinet was being discussed, though he personally did not aspire to ministerial rank. A civilian Minister would give servicemen the feeling that things had changed. There would be less favoritism. The reason why Piacentini was appointed Minister is that suitable candidates of the different political parties could not be sorted out to satisfy the six parties, consequently Gen. Piacentini, a serviceman and therefore non political, was appointed.

3. COMBINATION OF MINISTER AND CHIEF OF STAFF IS NOT SATISFACTORY, Piacentini has to devote a great deal of his time to Chief of Staff duties and consequently the administrative side receives insufficient attention. He is moreover a typical soldier and is not interested in the administrative side. In the 1915-1918 war the Minister for War seldom if ever visited the armies as his time was fully occupied at the Ministry. Piacentini spends about three days every week at Bari as Chief of Staff and his ministerial work suffers. Scialoja agreed that by holding the post of Chief of Staff as well as that of Minister Gen. Piacentini could retain his position of Chief of Staff in case of a Cabinet crisis.

4. VIEWS ON PIACENTINI. He is too impulsive and too dictatorial. On the other hand he occasionally makes a show of good feeling as when he suggested to Scialoja that he occupy his desk

during his absence. It was not thought that Piacentini was doing any real harm to the Italian Air Force, he might ruffle a few feelings and cause some discontent, but there was no immediate cause for alarm.

5. GEN. PIACENTINI AND POLITICS. A short while ago the Prime Minister Bonomi and Scialoja went to Florence. Piacentini did not ask Scialoja about his visit to Florence, but a few days later went there on his own account calling on the Committee of Liberation. Piacentini must have been aware of the fact that relations between the Committee of Liberation and the Prefect, representative of the Government under the Allies, were strained. By ignoring the latter and calling on the Committee of Liberation he betrayed his political tendencies which he as a serviceman should not have done.

6. PREFERENCE SHOWN TO YOUNGER OFFICERS. It is noticed that there is a tendency to appoint colonels in preference to generals and generally place younger officers in important posts. Scialoja and the Government's view is that experience should count more than age and that higher ranking officers had more experience than younger officers. It was pointed out to Scialoja that this was done with full approval of the A.V.M. when the Air Ministry was at Bari and the only generals available were found to be unsuitable because too slow and easy going.

7. GEN. PINNA. His appointment was desired by the Bonomi Government as it was felt that his presence would act as damper on Pia-

1865

which he as a serviceman should not have done.

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7. GEN. PINNA. His appointment was desired by the Bonomi Government as it was felt that his presence would act as damper on Piacentini. It was at first considered whether to eventually appoint him Chief of Staff, but it was later decided to make him responsible for the re-organisation of the Italian Air Force and post war problems. In Scialoja's opinion it was wrong to hold Pinna partly responsible for Valle's mismanagement of affairs even though he was Chief of Staff under Valle for some six years. During those years he repeatedly wanted to resign but was urged not to do so by other generals who had the interests of the Air Force at heart. It was then felt that Pinna was to a certain extent a safeguard. Scialoja was interested to hear that Pinna's rejection was due to A.C.C. opposition as he and the Cabinet were inclined to believe that Piacentini was responsible. Scialoja personally favoured

Pinna because he is among other things a lawyer and known to be very capable. He could not understand why if Pinna was not acceptable to the Allies in Rome he should be in Sardinia as High Commissioner. It was pointed out by the A.V.M. that A.C.C. had opposed Pinna's return to the Italian Air Force solely on the grounds of public and service opinion. Even the rumour of his return had caused caustic comment in the Service.

8. EPURATION. Scialoja held the view, also held by the Cabinet, that epuration should not be drastic and that only certain personnel be epurated who had had close association with Fascism. He appreciated that the public was clamouring for epuration and partly for this reason there was a tendency to deal with people of lesser account just because the real culprits such as Federzoni, Farinacci, etc. were in the North. He mentioned the case of Gen. Velardi whom Gen. Piacentini wished to retire. This officer was actually ordered to go to Spain and could not have disobeyed the order. It was wrong for one Government to punish an officer for having carried out an order given him by a former Government.

9. CRITICISM OF AIR FORCES SUB COMMISSION. It was the general opinion that the A.V.M. was doing all in his power for the Italian Air Force. The only criticism was the slowness in delivery of Allied air craft to equip the Italian squadrons. This coupled with the fact that the Army was apparently likewise being neglected, caused some unfavourable comment. He

1864

deal with people of lesser account just because the real culprits such as Federzoni, Farinacci, etc. were in the North. He mentioned the case of Gen. Velardi whom Gen. Piacentini wished to retire. This officer was actually ordered to go to Spain and could not have disobeyed the order. It was wrong for one Government to punish an officer for having carried out an order given him by a former Government.

9. CRITICISM OF AIR FORCES SUB COMMISSION. It was the general opinion that the A.V.M. was doing all in his power for the Italian Air Force. The only criticism was the slowness in delivery of Allied air craft to equip the Italian squadrons. This coupled with the fact that the Army was apparently likewise being neglected, caused some unfavourable comment. He realised that the delay was not due to the Air Forces Sub Commission, but this might not be apparent to the ordinary observer.

In conclusion Signor Scialoja asked the A.V.M. whether he would have any objection to his mentioning to the Prime Minister Bonomi two points raised in this meeting :-

- 1) Dual post of Chief of Staff and Minister
- 2) The Firma controversy.

SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH S/LDR P. DE HAAN

On leaving the building Signor Scialoja in the course of conversation with S/Ldr de Haan made the following remarks :

- a) THE POST OF MINISTER FOR AIR AND UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR AIR ARE OF EQUAL STANDING and consequently the Minister is not entitled to treat the Undersecretary as a subordinate, which in fact Piacentini does. An instance : a memo which was circulated with Piacentini's annotation as follows "Cappa, tell Scialoja and X (a clerk) to deal with this matter". This is the sort of thing Mussolini would have indulged in and should not be indulged in by Piacentini who poses as an anti-fascist. Nor has Piacentini any business to countermand orders issued by Scialoja regarding civilian personnel as he did on a recent occasion.
- b) REVERTING TO THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL MEDDLING Scialoja stated that Piacentini will one day dine with Ciano, the next write a letter to Scoonimarra and is daily becoming more and more involved in politics. It must be borne in mind that Piacentini has been very fortunate. In the ordinary course of events he would have been repatriated after the war and pensioned, instead of which he is now Minister and he is no doubt taking advantage of the present situation so as to launch out in political life after the war.
- c) MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER BONOMI. Would the A.V.M. like to meet Bonomi ? S/Ldr de Hean suggested that such a meeting would be very useful.

Signor Scialoja again expressed his satisfaction at having been able to discuss matters with the A.V.M.

1863

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1863

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TOP SECRET 2^A

FROM: AIR FORCES SUB-COMMISSION,
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION,
ROME.

TO: IE/COL. T.V. SMITH,
EDUCATION SUB-COMMISSION,
H.Q. A.C.C.

DATE: 18TH OCTOBER, 1944.

REF: AFSC/R/10/SPMG. IWL.

Attached herewith is an application from the Sannita firm at Benevento, requesting that Professor Franchini, who is president of the firm should be transferred from the Royal University of Bologna, where he holds the Chair of Economics, to the University of Rome, when Bologna is liberated. Professor Franchini has always resided in Rome, making frequent visits to Bologna in order to attend the University. The Chair of Economics at the Rome University became vacant on October 1st.

2. The Sannita firm has served the Allies very well, and their reconstruction from what was little more than a pile of rubble has been almost a miracle. As far as this Sub-Commission is concerned we would be prepared to support the proposal, so that Franchini's necessarily frequent contacts with the Allies and the Air Ministry be continued.

3. It is suggested that, if you approve of this, you would make the necessary representations in the right quarter. It is of course realised fully that this is no real affair of this Sub-Commission, but the transfer would undoubtedly facilitate our work.

W.A.B. Bowen-Jones

W.A.B. BOWEN-JONES, JR.,
AIR VICE-MARSHAL,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING. 1862

*S.A. Industria Aeronautica Sannita**Foglio V della lettera in data*

25

To: D. C. S. E.

From: A. M.

PREMESSO che la S.A. INDUSTRIA AERONAUTICA SANNITA di Benevento ,
 è l'unica Ditta aeronautica dell'Italia liberata che, rispon-
 dendo alle richieste del Comando Alleato e della Regia Aero-
 nautica con slancio patriottico e con vero spirito di abnega-
 zione si è prodigata nell'opera di ricostituzione e di rico-
 struzione mettendosi prontamente in grado di produrre materie-
 le bellico per la Regia Aeronautica;

CONSIDERATO che il presidente di detta Società è il grand'uff. avv.
 prof. VITTORIO FRANCHINI, che è , inoltre, professore ordinario
 di storia economica presso la Regia Università di Bologna;

RITENUTO che il predetto prof. Franchini con la imminente liberazio-
 ne della città di Bologna, sarà obbligato a raggiungere la pro-
 pria residenza , facendo mancare con la propria ~~assenza~~ *assenza da* Ro-
 ma quei contatti quotidiani con le Autorità Alleate e Aeronau-
 tiche Italiane che assicurano la continuità e l'incremento del-
 la produzione bellica aeronautica;

SI RENDE NECESSARIO disporre per il trasferimento d'ufficio o di ser-
 vizio del predetto prof. Franchini Vittorio dalla R. Università
 di Bologna a quella di Roma.

Si nota che il provvedimento è reso agevole dal fatto che la cattedra
 cui destinare il Franchini, risulta attualmente scoperta e libera presso
 l'Università di Roma; essendo il titolare stato collocato a riposo con
 1° ottobre corr. anno.

1861

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ITALIAN INDUSTRIES.

2B.

The attached memorandum contains a request that Professor Vittorio Franchini be transferred from the Royal University of Bologna, where he holds the Chair of Economics, to the University of Rome when the former city is liberated.

Professor Franchini, president of the Macchi Co., and now president of the S.A. Industria Aeronautica Sannita, Benevento, has always resided in the capital, frequently traveling to Bologna in order to attend the University.

Colonel Brents suggests that the A.V.M propose to the competent authorities (Lt.Col. T.V. Smith, Education Sub-Commission?) that this transfer be made so that Franchini's necessarily frequent contacts with the Allies and the Air Ministry be continued.

Incidentally, the Chair of Economics at the Rome University became vacant on Oct. 1st.

711.

1869

Oct. 17th. 1944.

TOP SECRET

AN FIVE SUB-COMMISSION, COMMISSION,

ROLE.

AFSS/R/1/SUBC. III.

PERSONAL AND
TOP SECRET.

18th October 1944.

Dear

Following our conversation of Monday afternoon I am sending you herewith the following:

- (a) Short history of the Moscatelli case. 115
- (b) Short history of the Caypa case. 116
- (c) Report from one source on General Infante. 117
- (d) Report from second source on General Infante. 118
- (e) Report on General Piacentini. 119

2. Attachments (A) to (d) refer to what I told you about the influence which General Infante is asserting on Comodore Stone. Apparently they met in Washington sometime ago and when I say that Infante was a telecommunications expert, and as you know Stone was President of a big Communications Organisation (since, I believe, absorbed into Western Union) in America, you will see their mutual point of contact. They met a great deal, both in the Office and outside, and Stone at any rate refers to Infante by his Christian name.

3. ^{his own} The short ~~entire~~ I give you so that you can see how this influence is affecting us. I do not say that it is in any way doing us serious harm at the moment, or that it has any effect on the Italian effort in aid of the Allies, but I do feel that somebody on the British side ought to be aware of this state of affairs.

4. I need not ask you to take every precaution that these reports do not fall into wrong hands.

5. I attach a report on Piacentini as I think it would be of ¹⁸⁵⁹ interest to all at M.A.A.F. I am inclined to agree that this report is probably very accurate. I do not think, however, that his attitude is doing

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5. I attach a report on Piacentini as I think it would be of ^{great} ~~great~~ interest to all at M.A.A.S. I am inclined to agree that this report is probably very accurate. I do not think, however, that his attitude is doing any serious harm to the Italian Air Force's efforts in aid of the Allies. He is about the only Italian Officer I have met who has the slightest idea of really getting on with a job of work, and without his pressure from the top I am sure things would go more slowly; that pressure would probably be better asserted as Chief of Staff than as Minister, and I think that his attitude towards his subordinates would be more human in a capacity of Chief of Staff than it is at present.

6. I feel that he is intensely ambitious and I do know that he is becoming very politically minded and that he is in touch with the "extreme left". He has told me himself that he is in touch with them and that he is only in touch because he realises the great danger to Italy from this side. I do not know how far this is true, but I think that if he thought that he could be kept in power through the communists, he would have no hesitation in playing wholeheartedly with them. If, however, he is playing a double game he may be in for serious trouble as he is an amateur in politics, although pretty clever.

Continued /2.....

-2-

7. I hope you will find all this interesting. Please let me know if you want any more. I hope you manage to clear up that establishment question. Do Hearn will welcome the assistance of your little W.A.A.F.

8. Since dictating the above I have come across a report on a dispatch file by Matthews of the New York Times which might interest you. We have known for some time that the Vatican has been in contact with the Russians and have many mutual points of interest including Air Lines.

All the best,

Yours

W.F.

Air Commodore F. Woolley, O.B.E., D.F.C.,
Chief Intelligence Officer,
Headquarters,
W.A.A.F. C.M.F.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET.

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SHORT HISTORY OF THE MOSCATELLI CASE.

Colonel Moscatelli was an intimate of the Duce's sons, and in the opinion of nearly all Italian Air Force Officers I have met is a thoroughly bad lot and an adventurer. He is very anti-British.

As an Air Force Officer he took employment with O.S.S. without the permission of the Italian Air Ministry, and when called to make an explanation to my predecessor Air Commodore Foster, and to the Air Minister, he hoodwinked them both by the simple expedient of telling each that he had seen the other, and that it was all right.

Since then we have made various attempts to bring Moscatelli to trial on various charges preferred by the Air Ministry, but O.S.S. has always resisted our requests to have him temporarily released to the Air Ministry to answer the charges.

Finally I invoked the assistance of Commodore Stone, attaching a copy of a letter addressed to me by the Air Minister making formal charges against Moscatelli, and asking for my intervention with the American authorities to secure his release by them.

On 12th October Commodore Stone spoke to me about this question. He then began a general tirade against General Piacentini. He said that the only evidence we had produced was from Piacentini, and that in his view Piacentini was a rascal and nothing he did or said could be trusted. Everything he did was to further his own personal interests. The name of General Infante was brought into this conversation several times, and it is quite obvious that Commodore Stone's views are highly coloured by those of Infante.

As regards Moscatelli I told Stone that Piacentini's letter was only a small part of the evidence against him. Stone promised to forward a letter to O.S.S. if I would draft it. I have not given him this yet, however, as I wish to present our full case against Moscatelli to him, and my Staff are now at work on this.

Stone's attitude as regards these matters is not consistent, since he himself has always expressed a keen desire that all doubtful elements in the Italian Air Force should pass through the proper screening tribunals, and that nobody should be protected by any Allied organisation.

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TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

SHORT HISTORY OF CAPPA CASE.

General Cappa was the nominal head of the Clarentine Front during the German occupation of Rome. Opinions differ somewhat as to the actual extent of the work which he did in aid of the Front during this period.

2. On the fall of Rome Cappa was designated by the local military Commander as temporary head of the Air Force in the Rome area. When General Piacentini arrived in Rome as Air Minister he made Cappa his Chief of Cabinet.

3. About September 7th it came to our knowledge that at the beginning of that month General Piacentini had told Cappa that some defamatory letters about Cappa had been received by the Communist paper L'Unita, and that in order to prevent a press campaign against Cappa, Piacentini proposed sending him home for a short period. He proposed to give him a Command in the Milan area later and said that while he was at home he would "discriminate" him.

4. Following some inquiries, I was speaking with Captain Stone on 13th September on another matter, and mentioned what I knew about the Cappa case. Stone told me that, in his view, the retention or otherwise of a Chief of Cabinet was not a matter for interference by the Air Forces Sub-Commission, in fact he had never heard of any interference by any of the other Services Sub-Commissions.

5. On September 24th, during an interview with Piacentini, he told me that Cappa had asked to go home for a month. He told me that some instructions issued by Cappa during the early days of the German occupation had got into the hands of the Communist Press, and that a press campaign was threatened unless Cappa went home. I expressed surprise at the Air Ministry allowing itself to be blackmailed in this manner, and Piacentini told me he would forward me all the papers in the case.

6. On September 23rd I heard that General Cappa had been told to go home that morning.

7. I examined the papers concerning this case and two in particular were very damning, both were dated about a month after the formation of the Republican Government. In one he had ordered convalescent Officers to report to the Germans on their return from leave, and in the other he had ordered certain Cadets of the Air Force Academy to proceed to join with the Republican Government. His conduct at the beginning of the German occupation had been very vacillatory and lacked courage.

8. In spite of this, however, I learn that the Discrimination Tribunal had

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September 21st, during an interview with Piacentini, he told me that Stone told me that, in his view, the retention or otherwise of a trial of Cappe had asked to go home for a month. He told me that some instructions issued by Cappe during the early days of the German occupation had got into the hands of the Communist Press, and that a press campaign was threatened unless Cappe went home. I expressed surprise at the Air Ministry allowing itself to be blackmailed in this manner, and Piacentini told me he would forward me all the papers in the case.

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6. On September 25th I heard that General Cappe had been told to go home that morning.

7. I examined the papers concerning the case and two in particular were very damning, both were dated about a month after the formation of the Republican Government. In one he had ordered convalescent Officers to report to the Germans on their return from leave, and in the other he had ordered certain Cadets of the Air Force Academy to proceed North with the Republican Government. His conduct at the beginning of the German occupation had been very vacillatory and lacked courage.

1857

8. In spite of this, however, I learn that the Discrimination Tribunal had absolved him from blame. Their findings are not published, and are not final. They are of an advisory nature only. The Minister passes his opinion on the evidence, the case then goes to Marshal Messe, and finally back to the Minister, who has the last say in the matter, and can upset even Messe's decision.

9. I returned the papers to General Piacentini on 9th October, stating that I deliberately abstained from expressing any opinion, as Piacentini had the machinery for judging these cases and any interference on my part would be unwarrantable.

10. In my view, unless Cappe could disprove his authorship of the two documents referred to above, which he had apparently made no attempt to do, General Piacentini was perfectly correct in taking the action he did, though not at the point of a pistol held by the Press.

Continued /2.....

TOP SECRET

11. On October 12th I was speaking to Captain (now Commodore) Stone, and he began a general tirade against Piacentini. From his remarks it was quite clear that General Infante was at the back of this. He then asked if I knew anything about the Cappa Case. I gave him a brief résumé of what I knew, and asked whether he wanted anything further, to which he replied "No".

12. We had already got information that Cappa had been to see Infante, and it is obvious that Infante had seen Stone about it, hence his interest.

13. I do not absolve Piacentini completely in this case. It is known that his relations with Cappa had not been very cordial. Moreover since he became Minister Piacentini has shown no desire to accept anybody's opinions but his own. The Secretary for Air, Mr. Solaloin has hardly put his nose inside the Air Ministry since he assumed office, and with Cappa out of the way Piacentini would be virtually a dictator.

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GENERAL INFANTE.

Colonel Smith supplied the following information in connection with the above Officer.

He is extremely intelligent and a very good organiser and was responsible for organising Balbo's formation flight across the Atlantic. Whilst at the Air Ministry he was concerned with telecommunications and proved to be a very capable engineer. Many of the suggestions he put forward were adopted by the makers of telecommunication sets.

He placed orders for large amounts and this led to some suspicion that he was making money on the quiet. He appeared before a Court of Enquiry whilst Valle was Chief of Staff but the charges were proved to be unfounded.

When General Pricolo succeeded Valle, General Infante had to appear before a second Court of Enquiry, but nothing could be proved against him.

It was then decided to retire him on the grounds that he was unfit for further service in the Air Force, having lost a leg as the result of an air crash.

Colonel Smith describes him as a man of a violent temper and with strong likes and dislikes. Colonel Smith states that he is a frequent caller at the A.C.C.

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TOP SECRET.

Brother of Army Gen. Infante, Aide to the Lt. General.

Is an officer who has not been active in the Air Force circles since 1937 or thereabouts. Source states that he is decidedly dishonest and altogether unreliable. His activities up to the time of his "retirement" were mainly concerned with organization, particularly telecommunications; through which he maintained close contact with many industrial firms. He has always been known to be corrupt, but matters came to a head when it was discovered that a substantial sum of I.A.F. money had disappeared. Plenty of evidence pointed to Infante as the culprit. Confronted with an accusation he did not deny his guilt and even stated that he would stand court martial if necessary, but in that event he would denounce several other Senior officers for a variety of similar crimes. When it was seen that an open scandal might result, it was decided to drop the charges and as a consequence Infante was "retired" from active service.

Later, in a civilian capacity, he took advantage of his industrial contacts to do business for various firms both in Italy and abroad, through which he did himself well. Source recalls an incident when on a journey to Berlin in the capacity of specialist in night flying instruments, Infante joined him on the train, evidently having got wind of contracts in the wind, and persisted in playing the limpet even to staying in the same hotel. His presence was a great embarrassment to Casperi, the then aeronautical attaché, so much so that source was spirited away from the hotel in Phillips Oppenheim fashion in the dead of night.

Infante later held a controlling position in an independent firm (source does not recall the name) which was concerned with the production of beryllium.

Purely in the capacity of an officer Infante was a good organizer, though rude and overbearing.

On the whole an undesirable character.

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TOP SECRET.

GENERAL PIACENTINI.

Source admires General Piacentini, particularly his qualities as a Staff officer, but believes that his present manner of conducting affairs is decidedly mistaken. That is not only the opinion of source, but also of the majority of Air Ministry Officers, whose attitude has entirely changed from one of admiration and respect to one of disillusion or downright hostility. According to source this reaction arises not out of jealousy or disloyalty, but merely because of Piacentini's autocratic attitude. It appears that he never consults his Staff Officers on matters pertaining to the I.A.F., never even discusses the smallest problem, but rather acts in such a way as to recall vividly the behaviour of the old fascist big-wigs - with the same results.

Source is of opinion that Piacentini is an excellent man who really could do much for the Air Force and for Italy if he could be persuaded that democracy requires him to consider at least in some measure the views and opinions of those upon whom he depends for the success or failure of his projects.

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