

ACC

10000/141/61

PREMIER'S VISIT  
SEPT. - NOV. 1944

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PREMIER'S VISIT TO FLORENCE, 1944  
SEPT. - NOV. 1944

Date

Minute Sheet No. 2.

Page.

14 Nov.

COS. Capt. Maj. (3) Talbot)  
Herewith letter (p.1) you asked  
for. RRT.

4.

Ch Sect.  
Many thanks. C. directs  
that the "Compendium shall be  
closed"!  
20/11  
Lester Nash  
LWS

Adjit

Nov. 21 See that all officers note that  
the promise of 4 days notice is  
obtained.  
L. ART

MINUTE SHEET No. 1.

date

page

Feb. 21

V.P. To Mr. Pearce. I had no knowledge whatever of this visit or its contribution of the party. Beyond a courteous reply to Kirkwood, do you think any action on my part necessary. In future, however, I propose to ask Mr. Kenton to let me know ~~so~~ when that I may request appropriate advice? Do you agree?

1.

As follows  
Col.

~~Int.~~ (2)

22/9/44.

Col. Kirkwood's letter is, I think, deserving of a very courteous reply including apology for his not being forewarned of the trouble he has been put to, at the same time excusing Col. Spicer from personal blame!!

Yes this HQ appears to beg these trips in a big way so his up at least 4 days prior notice to be given to you by P. H. S. Secy. 1913

TOP SECRET

Pass to d. G. (3)  
I have discussed this with  
Capt Temple.

11/5/6

Chief Commissioner

215/cc

To: d. G.  
Wm S. Dooland, Major  
C.A.S.  
15 Nov '44

Report on Prime Minister's Visit to  
Florence

13 November 4

Chief of Staff

With reference to the attached copy of a letter from PWB  
can you please inform me if the recital of events set forth therein  
is accurate, together with any other comments that appear pertinent.

ELLEN W. STONE  
Commodore  
Chief Commissioner

1912

cc: ECOS, CA Section  
'A' Files

1 Incl: Ltr 40/XVII/MLW, 3 Nov 44, fr PWB Unit No. 14

(4196)

TOP SECRET

1203

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS  
INFORMATION AND CENSORSHIP SECTION  
PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE BRANCH

3A

PWB UNIT No. 14, USA, APO 512

TOP SECRET

Ref: 40/XVII/MLW

Mr. John Rayner, D.P.W.O.,  
Mr. George Edman, A.D.P.W.O.  
Mr. Lanham Titchener.

General policy is to build up the Italian Government.

On September 16th, the Prime Minister, Bonomi, and a party came to Florence. We heard of the visit after their departure, and Ferris of the News Division, who has been liaising closely with A.M.G. on all news stories, approached the City Commissioner, Lt. Col. Michie, for an explanation of why we had been given no notice of the visit.

Col. Michie replied that we had purposely been kept in the dark, and that everything possible had been done to prevent Bonomi from coming to Florence, and that he did not wish Bonomi's stay to have any publicity.

The Provincial Commissioner, A.M.G., Lt. Col. Rolph, informs me that shortly before the Prime Minister's arrival, he, Rolph, telephoned General Hume to find out what arrangements had been made for the visit, and was told that the Prime Minister's own people must look after him.

One of the Prime Minister's party saw Col. Rolph and asked him where the party might lunch, as no rations had been brought up. Col. Rolph approached the Officers' Club where he was told that the Prime Minister was "just like any other Itie", and finally, after Bonomi had been kept waiting for 15 minutes in the lobby of the Excelsior Hotel, he was served with a scratch lunch.

Yesterday, Brig. Upjohn, A.C. requested that we play up the Prefect of Florence to try and give him some sort of standing here. Naturally we shall do our best, but such things are rather difficult when the Prime Minister is known to have received the treatment described above.

/s/ G. M. Sinclair Noble

G. M. SINCLAIR NOBLE  
Major, The Buffs  
CC F.W.B. Unit No. 14 1911

h196

COPY

TOP SECRET

COPY

1206

file 4/1/60

HEADQUARTERS  
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION  
INTERIOR SUB COMMISSION  
APO 394

CA (15)  
2  
PCT

SEMI OFFICIAL

23 September 1944

My dear *Kirkwood*

Thank you so much for your personal letter of 16th September.

First of all may I say how extremely appreciative we are in this Sub-Commission of all the trouble that you went to and of all you did, without warning, which should in all courtesy and decency have been given you.

I can only say, that inasmuch as this Sub-Commission is concerned, that we had no knowledge or intimation whatever of this visit or of the constitution of the party. How you or your officers arranged it all with the present lack of transport I really do not understand, but must express my admiration.

I am now making arrangements with the Prime Minister's secretary that all future visits and journeys of this sort will be given me 3 or 4 day's notice, such notice to include the constitution of the party, numbers, etc.

I do not wish to say any more except to say that there is some obvious bad staff work somewhere, but in fact your letter was the first knowledge I had of this affair at all.

Thank you very much for the way you have written, and I hope that this personal letter of mine will not only explain this Sub-Commission's position in the matter, but that, as a result thereof, future bad staff work which was flagrantly displayed in this case, will be avoided.

Yours,

Col R. C. Kirkwood,  
Regional Commissioner  
Region VIII

1910

HEADQUARTERS, REGION VIII  
ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT

RGK/ttg.

18 Sep. 1944.

341+  
Colonel E.G.B. Spicer,  
Director,  
Interior Sub-Commission,  
HQ. Allied Control Commission.

Dear Spicer,

I want to give you a brief report on the visit of Premier Ponomi to Florence by way of Siena last Saturday.

I received a message thru the ACC Liaison Officer with AAI at about 2000 hours Friday, 15 Sep. 1944, to the effect that the Premier, accompanied by seven Ministers, would arrive at a given airport near Siena at 0900 hours Saturday; that it was desired that I send an officer to meet the party with three cars to transport them to Florence, and that in Florence they were to be taken to the Palazzo Vecchio to General Hume's office there.

I had previously arranged a trip to visit the Pistoia Team and had arranged to leave at 0730 hours Saturday morning. I, therefore, detailed my Adjutant, Major Salter, to meet the party for me and I detailed Lt. Allen, of my MT Division, to take three cars and accompany the party to Florence.

Instead of eight people, eleven arrived but they squeezed into the three cars which would hold nine passengers comfortably. On the way to Florence the Premier stopped in Foggibonsi to inspect part of the town. He was recognized and enthusiastically greeted by the people and, eventually, by the Sindaco. He spoke briefly and then went on to Florence. En route one of the cars had a flat tire which was repaired without too much delay; and then was hit by the blade of a bulldozer being transported on a tank transporter. The blade of the bulldozer injured no one and did not affect the running of the car. It made a long gash in the top of the car much as a giant can-opener would. This car arrived in Florence late but eventually joined the remainder of the party.

En route to Montecatini to visit the Pistoia team, I stopped long enough in Florence to tell the Provincial Commissioner and the Prefect that the Premier and party would arrive there between 1100 and 1200 hours. The Premier and his party were not expected. There had been some advance information to the effect that the Premier would visit Florence in the future but no definite time had been set so far as the people at the Florence end knew. Certainly the Prefect and the Provincial Commissioner did not know. Similarly General Hume's Aide stated that General Hume's office did not expect the Premier.

1909

The Premier and party were taken to the Palazzo Vecchio to General Hume's office. They talked to a British Colonel and an American Lieut.-Col there, probably Colonel Wayne and Lt. Col. Michie. Arrangements for lunch for

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ETA  
IA

the party were hastily made. They lunched at the Excelsior Hotel. After lunch they met a Church dignitary, either the Archbishop or a Cardinal. They also had a conference with the Prefect. At the conclusion of this conference they returned to Siena and were conducted to the airport where they took a plane for Rome.

I feel that the Premier was not received in Florence in a manner that was entirely fitting to his position, but, if he was not so received, it was due, almost entirely, to the fact that the people in Florence did not know of his coming. I would suggest that if any similar parties are to be sent north that all concerned be given ample notice.

The cars I have available are not particularly suitable for high-ranking officials, but I gave them the best ones I have.

I am not entirely satisfied with the way this visit was handled at this end, but we did the best we could under the circumstances, and I wanted you to realize that any deficiencies were not due to neglect or indifference.

Best personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Robert G. Kirkwood*  
ROBT. G. KIRKWOOD,  
Colonel, FA, US Army  
Regional Commissioner.

1209

HEADQUARTERS, REGION VIII  
ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT

FAB  
RGK/tt  
18

18 Sep. 1944.

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Director,  
Interior Sub-Commission,  
HQ. Allied Control Commission.

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Best personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Robert G. Kirkwood*  
ROBT. G. KIRKWOOD,  
Colonel, FA, US Army  
Regional Commissioner.



1906

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