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REGION I, CONFERENCES
JUN. 1944

Minute sheet No. /

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See tank you.

Howard H.

Adrian

4 Jan. 1944

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3 June 1944

COLONEL R. C. B. SPIGER

Detail required is as follows:-

CALANISSETTA

1. Position at 8 April, according to Province Report:-
Prefect Aldisio (now Minister)
VPV Valala
VPI Dessena
2. 20 May - Aldisio proposed for this Prefecture RIVALLA, now VPV ✓
Reggio. No objection by Region VII or Region I.
3. 29 May - ACC approval given, on authority of Lord S. ✓

LENA

4. Position at 13 March, according to Province Report:-
Prefect Bruno
VPV Mozzi
VPI Rag. Kuvunis (not substantive VPI but
only Provincial Inspector)
5. Col. Hancock says Mozzi "is very highly thought of and could be con-
sidered suitable for an appointment as Prefect - see ACC/4/1/22/Int, No. 10.
6. 20 May - Aldisio proposed transfer of MOZZI to be Prefect of NUCRO
Sardinia. No objection by Region I or Region VII.
7. 29 May - ACC approval given, on authority of Lord S.

TRAPANI

8. Position as at 16 April, according to Province Report:-
Prefect D'Antoni
VPV Longo
VPI vacant
9. 20 May - Minister proposed
(a) Longo to be Prefect Trapani
(b) Palumbo, retired and merely resident at Trapani to be
Prefect of Ragusa.
Region I agreed as to Longo, but said Palumbo too old.
10. 29 May - ACC approval given on authority of Lord S.

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Reggio. No objection by Region VII or Region I.
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ENNA

4. Position at 15 March, according to Province Report:-
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VPI Rag. Kuvunis (not substantive VPI but
only Provincial Inspector)
5. Col. Hancock says Mozzi "is very highly thought of and could be con-
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6. 20 May - Aldisio proposed transfer of MOZZI to be Prefect of NUORO
Sardinia. No objection by Region I or Region VII.
7. 29 May - ACC approval given, on authority of Lord S.

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4210

SUMMARY:

1. Since RC's conference, a Prefect for Caltanissetta has been agreed on.
2. The unsatisfactory VP must be Vadala of Caltanissetta, since RC I speaks
so well of VP MOZZI of Enna.
3. As to Palumbo, why did not RC I mention charge of fascism in his cable
commenting on this proposed appointment? Appointment to Ragusa cannot
be stopped now - too late. The Italian Government must inquire into
his Fascism when he got there.

Ag. N. M. C.

1345
RL. ORT ON REGION I CONFERENCE.
PALERMO, 24 May 44.

JUN 1944

To:

VP Adm Section.

For special
attention
or action.

I duly attended the conference at Palermo and attach an agenda of the meeting which commenced at 0845 and did not finish until about 1830 hours.

Generally: The principal impression left upon me by the proceeding is the importance of the presence at these conferences of staff officers from HQ. Here provincial officers discuss their difficulties; no better opportunity could possibly be conceived of feeling the pulse of the whole Region, of ascertaining local conditions and opinions and of giving guidance as to policy or advice on difficulties. In my opinion it is essential that the three sections, RC & MG, Admin and Econ should invariably be represented and that in addition the principal policy - forming and administrative sub-comms should frequently attend by the Director or his Deputy and that the Directors of other Sub-Comms or their Deputies should attend at least once in every three months. There was so much that a Director could usefully have heard or said that I put the attendance of these conferences at a high priority in importance. I recommend that the combined Duties of a Director and his Deputy should be so arranged as to ensure freedom for attendance at these Conferences in the case of the more important Sub-Comms preferably every month and of other Sub-Comms once in every three months.

There still exists in Regions a misconception as to the respective responsibilities of RGMG and Sub-Comms which can most quickly and most surely be eradicated by the presence of senior responsible officers exercising their functions.

Control and direction does not consist merely of legislation. Not until one is in touch with difficulties and can guide and advise those on the ground and the latter are so imbued with the spirit and aim of the policy as to follow the intention without instruction can control and direction really be said to exist.

It is suggested that of the Adm Sec Sub-Comms, Legal, Interior, Health and Safety should attend Regional Conferences at least every other month and the remaining three Sub-Comms should attend once a quarter. The attendance should be coordinated by Admin Staff to even attendances and prevent the imposition of an undue burden.

Regional Commissioner's Remarks.

Wheat harvest is the principal anxiety. Neglect by the Italian Govt to follow proper channel of communication causes a little friction. Country appears to be settling down; the wider base of central government seems to have satisfied local opinion. Representation on the Giunta Comunale should be similarly widened. The expedient of appointing local commissioners should be terminated if possible by appointing sindaco and local councils. One province alone has 32 commissioners. Some trouble has been caused by the fact that AMG paid sindaco whereas they are no longer paid. The question as to whether they are reimbursed for out of pocket expenses would be

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Provincial Commissioner's Reports:

AGRICULTURE:

Food - Black Bread 45/100 L.p.kilo. Bean and grain crops good. Political-Communist is strongest party. Loggia intriguing against Musotto, query with Aldisio. Supplies good - rail thefts e.g. holes cut in roofs of grain wagon; braces and bit hole through floor so grain pours out.

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Labour - no change. Sulphur mines are difficult: at one mine only a 100 out of 1,300 at work. Refugees - about 2,000 - refuse to spend their cash allowance on ground that everything should be found for them. Apparently do not consider the cash allowance as a part of the method of providing for their needs; the allowance is just their's. Crime - on downgrades - Red Cross clothing has been stolen. Petrol - notice of reduction of petrol allowance was not received until after civil ration had been issued. This left insufficient to keep essential services going. Had there-fore exceeded his allowance.

CALTANISSETTA & ENNA:

Interior - no Prefect. Vice Prefect not very satisfactory and will be removed when defascistisation is undertaken and is therefore not working. The local defascistising commissions should themselves be screened; they are not yet working. Food - Dislike of imported emergency foodstuffs - crushed beans are accepted but not liked. Dried soup is disliked, and condensed and powdered milks are regarded with suspicion. Crop prospects excellent. Political - Principal political parties are Christian Democrats and Communists. Black Market - Bread 50 L. P.K. Refugees - about 1,300 are completely ungrateful for anything that is done for them.

CATANIA:

Defascistisation Committee formed but not working. Food - seals is defective - there has been no increase of height or weight of children. Wages for unskilled labour paid by Army only 50 lire per day. These rates should have been increased by 70%, civil rate is 80/90 lire per day. Grain stocks are finished and now question of hand to mouth supplies from Messina. Army has asked for public lavatories to be provided, for over 2,000 years Sicilians have not used lavatories and does not want lavatories. Question is who will pay for the lavatories which the Army wants erected.

MESSINA:

Stevedore rates are proving a difficulty - they are not high enough to attract labour. There are insufficient schooners for the island's needs, at least six more are required yet ten are lying idle in Messina harbour which are quite suitable for coastwise traffic.

PAIERMO & TRAPANI:

Quiet - Crime, no change - some increases in number of cases of wire cutting - considerable length lead covered cable removed which is apparently an act of sabotage. Forged 1,000 lire notes in circulation, excellent imitations, 30 arrests have been made. 43 million Lire forged notes seized. OG Troops states no need to enforce Blackout but no official instruction on point has been received. G-4 has given instructions that cars required for Sub-Commission's officers in the Regions should be requisitioned. Latest provision for Allied Troops - travelling brothers for 1st-ate AA Sites.

Age 65 given as reason for unsuitability of Palumbo for promotion was an excuse, his background is unsatisfactory, is alleged fascist-further investigation is being made. He is a Christian Democrat. Aldo is installing his friends. Military Courts are frequently asked for by the Army for stealing army stores, it has been made clear that this is not allowable. Crop yield estimated excellent. Nervous about high cost of living. Mines have had to close owing to the shortage of materials - long lists of supplies urgently required to keep mines working have been supplied to HQ but nothing happens. There work is necessary to be done it

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...../Divisional Matters:

Divisional Matters:

Legal: Prison situation fairly satisfactory. Untried cases - some accused have been ten years awaiting trial. Provincial Commissioners will try to expedite trials. Very Italian civilians draw patrol in cars or must it be delivered into their car tanks.

Health: Approve of Italian Regional VCH scheme, he would stand to the Provincial VCH in a position somewhat analogous to the English Minister of Health stands to the County M.C. Cars were required for malarial control. Could patrol be entered for street watering. Some arrangements must be made to control retail price of medicines, were the Guardia Finanza suitable for this. The new welfare scheme was welcomed.

Safety: Sabotage - wire cutting had increased, probably more theft than vice but special mixed patrols of military and civil police had been organized to deal with it. Police patrols were being used to search for grain, in one case 40 tons had been found. Certain senior officials and Allied officers were not involved. Provincial committees for defascistizing were not working. Receipt of Scheda Personale not completed. Scheme FOR RELEASE OF Prisoners of War was outlined to meeting.

Education: Minister of Education was not clearing through the AG. Sindaco and GCRH are responsible for enforcing school attendance. 15% children absent for want of food or clothing.

Finance: Instructions have been given that Finance Officers are no longer to act as Sub-Accountants. ACC Finance officers in the field are to concentrate on trying to get Italian officials to do their job. Provincial Commissioners have now to undertake work of Sub-Accountants or detail another officer to do it and none can be spared. In the case of Syracuse this is a great hardship as unfostered trade valued at 35 million lire a month has sprung up between Malta and Syracuse and all finance is conducted through ACC, every merchant has to be paid and every payment means 5 or 6 signatures.

It is suggested that Malta should send over its own buying agent in order to pay merchants from whom supplies are bought and arrange for banks to pay merchants.

It may facilitate matters if a system of payment by bills were organized. Inflation control is in Naples. The trouble with regard to payment of conscript of grain, (some growers have not yet been paid for last year's crop) is mostly due to the fact that growers have not submitted proper claims or accounts. Under the circumstances many producers are averse from selling this year's crop.

Of 353 communal budgets, only 12 have been received in satisfactory form. 54 more have been received waiting certain particulars; from 287 communes no budget of any form has been received. Communes do not want the scheme to work. Funds are at present supplied, they do not want to rely on what they have got to get in. Finance officers must get out and put pressure on communes.

Agriculture: Collection of potato crop is starting - no control of sales. Army requirements will be covered by requisition. Principal problem is caused by price of wheat having been fixed at 1,000. Checking of Ration Cards, procedure should be to check the register of citizens, deduct deaths and moves out, add births and moves in, which should show the population. All-owance has then to be made for those entitled to producer's milk and the remainder should be those entitled to ration

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Checking of Ration Cards, procedure should be to check the register of citizens, deduct deaths and moves out, add births and moves in, which should show the population. Allowance has then to be made for those entitled to producer's ration cards and the remainder should be those entitled to ration cards. HQ thinks that 50% only of the population requires ration cards.

Experience shows that the population varies according to the principal industry to from 50% to 70%. 4203 regard to HQ proposals for control of wheat and wheat prices. It will be extremely difficult to form the proposed local committees of two farmers and two farm workers. No farmer will neglect his farm at the height of the most important and busiest period of the farm year any more than farm workers can afford to lose the work which is by far the most highly paid of the year.

The price offered is totally inadequate - in addition to special harvest pay, harvesters receive 1 kilo bread and 1 litre of wine per day. Fixed salary employees receive two

...../quintals

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quintals per labourer plus extra for members of the family. The only way grain will be brought in will be by amassing the whole. Price must be 1,700 - 2,000 per quintal, 1,000 will not get the grain in. Inhabitants will buy sufficient grain to last them the year. The people's view is that this inadequate price proves that fascist rule still prevails and that they are still being exploited. For these among other reasons, it is most inadvisable to apply a decree of May 43 which was drawn up by a fascist government. Labour costs 30 lire per hour or 300 lire per day. Threshing costs 200 lire per quintal. It will be impossible to get grain in at 1,000 lire. Rich peasants will evade the law and supply the black market at a remunerative price and not amass at a loss. Total requisitions is essential - milling permits should be abolished. The peasants have not the same objections to a total requisition as they have to amassing. Farmers should not be left with grain for any purpose. They should buy back their needs and have ration cards. It is impossible to enforce the present system rigorously when the farmer is allowed to retain grain on all sorts of grounds and this grain is merely estimated, there is room for all sorts of fraud and collusion. A large number of relatively small frauds aggregate to an immense loss. The penalty for fraud should be imprisonment and not fine. Glaners should be allowed to work, what is left to them is impossible to collect, they even pick up individual grains but the total amounts to 15,000 quintals, this cannot be taken into account but it is so much more food. If glancing is forbidden, this food will just be lost. There is general dismay, disillusion and disapproval at the price which has been fixed. The cost to producers of growing the crop is not covered; the estimated total cost of production is 1,600 lire. This is the absolutely unanimous view of all Provincial Commissioners. Ration must be increased. If increased it may completely kill the black market. The crop will be large enough to allow of a ration big enough to make resort to the black market unnecessary. If the price is not increased the Region is faced with the prospect of facing insurrection or starvation. Stocks in hand are not sufficient to give the extra ration for harvesters which is laid down in the instruction received from Rome. In order to provide this ration an extra 5,000 tons of wheat would be required.

Economics: No 1 District is proposing to confiscate goods for alleged illicit export. It is suggested that neither they nor ACC had powers to confiscate goods, action for confiscation for this reason should only be effected through the Italian Courts.

Censorship: One officer only would be on ACC strength, he will be in charge of the whole censorship group, which consists of one Italian civilian for each province who will supervise work of the Prefect's censorship departments.

Transport: Instructions as to the provision of cars for ACC officials and for Italian officials received from G-4 and Supply Sub-Comm were conflicting. One instructed them to requisition cars and procure the re-requisitioning by the Italian Government, the other required that cars for Italian officials should be borne on ACC strength if petrol was to be obtained. Requisitioned cars should be those whose tyres, bat-

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