

785016

ACC

10000/143/343

785016

00/143/343

SHOOTING INCIDENT AT GGFF BARRACKS
FEB. - MAY 1944

ACC/14012/2/1/PS

Acc/14012/2/1/PS.

Shooting Incident at G.G.F.F. Barracks

Folio Referred to Date

0163

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NNN No.

785016

10000/143/343

THIS FOLDER
CONTAINS PAPERS

FROM

FEB 14

TO

MAY 14

CATALOGUE

SEE ALSO 14030/2 - DISCIPLINE OF
ALLIED TROOPS - REG II

1A 18 Feb - From G.G.F.F. Report on shooting incident at G.G.F.F. Bks.
 2A 19/2/44 From G.C.C. Salvador. Negro Soldiers from Guardia Truista
 3A-B 19/2/44 From: Land, 3 Militant - Incident - American troops at Salinas
 4A-B 28/2/44 From: Hq ACC Regt - Recommendation for American MP's
 5A-B 25/2/44 From: 6th Section, S.I.B. Police - Murder of Galvez by leader Negro Soldiers

MINUTE SHEET.

0388

Amat

~~Amat~~

~~Amat/1139/29~~

Pls ~~SECRET~~

14/9/43.

~~NOTICE CAN HORRIFIED.~~

Destroy

20/10/47

(D)

0166

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No.

785016

61

REAR HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
Public Safety Sub-Commission

15 May 1944.

ACC/14012/2/1/FS

SUBJECT: Incident at GOLF Barracks, Salerno.

TO : Army Sub-Commission (Rear HQ).

1. with reference to your minute with 3 letters attached respecting incident at GOLF Barracks, Salerno, on 17 Feb. 1944, I enclose herewith copy of report of Court-Martial held in connection therewith.
2. Investigations failed to identify the person responsible for killing the one member of the GOLF.
3. Basic documents are returned herewith.

3349
A. E. Young
A. E. YOUNG, Colonel,
Deputy Chief, Public
Safety Sub-Commission.

ERP/9

785016

14017/2/1

C 4

10A

HEADQUARTERS
96TH SERVICE GROUP, AIR SERVICE COMMAND
OFFICE OF THE GROUP COMMANDER

A.P.O. 650
U. S. Army
12 May 1944

SUBJECT: Report on Court-Martial Cases.

TO : Colonel M. H. Meaney, A.C.C., Salerno, Italy.

The following report on Court-Martial cases of First Lieutenant Omar D. Blair, 0573959, AC, Technical Sergeant John L. Mitchell, 16030000, Staff Sergeant Harold G. Blue, 32239452, and Private Otis J. Hicks, 13117674 all of the 366th Service Squadron, 96th Service Group, who were tried under charges indicated with results as shown below:

1st Lt. Omar D. Blair 0573959, AC

CHARGES:

Violation of the 95th and 96th Articles of War.

SENTENCE:

Not confirmed.

Technical Sergeant John L. Mitchell, 16030000, General Court-Martial #10, Hq XII AFSC, 2 May 1944.

CHARGE:

Violation of the 93rd Article of War.

SENTENCE:

To be dishonorably discharged the Service, to forfeit all pay and allowances due or to become due, and to be confined at hard labor, at such place as the reviewing authority may direct for two (2) years. (Period of confinement reduced to one (1) year at hard labor.)

Staff Sergeant Harold G. Blue, 32239452, Special Court-Martial #15, Hq 96th Serv. Gp., 10 April 1944.

CHARGE:

Violation of the 96th Article of War.

SENTENCE:

Acquitted.

Private Otis J. Hicks, 13117674, General Court-Martial #9, Hq XII AFSC, 26 April 1944.

CHARGE:

Violation of the 96th Article of War.

SENTENCE:

To be dishonorably discharged the Service, to forfeit all pay and allowances due or to become due, and to be confined at hard labor, at such place as the reviewing authority may direct for five (5) years.

For the Group Commander:

PERCY L. JONES

Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

There were eight soldiers involved in this case. Charges against the others have been dropped for lack of evidence.

*Seen
AS*

REAR HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
Public Safety Sub-Commission
APO 394

9 March 1944

SUBJECT: Shootings of U.S. Soldiers
in Salerno.

TO : Col. Graham, Commander 94 Sub. Area.

1. Thank you very much for the report on above subject.

2. The Italian War Ministry is quite naturally interested in this case, as are we. I should greatly appreciate being kept informed of developments as the investigation and prosecution continues.

PAUL G. KIRK
Colonel, Inf.
Chief Public Safety
Sub-Commission

14761/PS

2/4/44

7A

Col. Kirk:

Lt. Col. Quinn-Smith
Army Pub. Commissioner phoned
to inquire what progress
is being made in the investi-
-gation into the death of the
Member of Guardia di Finanza
man on 17 February. I
informed him of the status of
the inquiry as I know it!

He said the Minister
of War Italian Government
keeps asking him about the
case.

Mearns

SUBJECT :- Murder and Unlawful Wounding
by Negro Soldiers of US Army.

6A
HQ 94 SUB AREA.
A/516/8.

4 Mar 44.

Public Safety Sub Commission,
Allied Control Commission.

Reference conversation Colonel KIRK - Area Commander, herewith
copy of report from SIB.

ENC/LHM.

R. Howard Graham 3347
Colonel.
Comd.

66th. Section,
Special Investigation Branch,
Corps of Military Police,
C.M. Forces.

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref: 663TB/A/44/99.

COPY

SUBJECT :- Murder and Unlawful Wounding by
Negro Soldiers of U.S. Army.

To :- AREA COMMANDER,
94 Sub-Ares.

Sir,

In response to your request for a report from this Section respecting the above mentioned subject, I would respectfully bring to your notice the following facts :-

Firstly, I would say that the investigation of these matters is proving extremely difficult and complicated, and the truth and necessary evidence can only be obtained by prolonged and thorough investigation on the part of the Officers concerned. Therefore, at this stage, I have little additional information to impart respecting these matters.

I am given to understand, Sir, that you have received preliminary reports respecting the incidents in question; however, I respectfully submit the following additional information respecting the present position regarding these matters.

1. The shooting incident at Salerno, when one member of the Guardia di Finanza was killed and five others wounded.

This case has been handed over to the American C.I.D. and it is being dealt with by them; we are rendering all possible assistance.

The developments at present are that all members of the named party are under arrest. The Officer who brought them into town has stated that the first of the party who fired the first shot was the one who fired the first shot.

proving evidence can only be obtained by prolonged and thorough investigation on the part of the Officers concerned. Therefore, at this stage, I have little additional information to impart respecting these matters.

I am given to understand, Sir, that you have received preliminary reports respecting the incidents in question; however, I respectfully submit the following additional information respecting the present position regarding these matters.

1. The shooting incident at Salerno, when one member of the Guardia di Finanza was killed and five others wounded.

This case has been handed over to the American C.I.D. and it is being dealt with by them; we are rendering all possible assistance.

The developments at present are that all members of the armed party are under arrest. The Officer who brought them into town has also been arrested. S/Sgt MITCHELL, the man who fired the first shots, (which injured three men) is to be specifically charged with this offence.

At present it is not known who comprised the party which returned and opened fire in the Barracks, thereby killing 33 men and injuring a further two, but every effort is being made to clarify this and to detect those responsible. All the Thompson machine guns brought by the party under the Officer have been impounded and ballistic tests are being made in an endeavour to ascertain who fired the fatal shots.

This is the position regarding this case to date.

2. The stabbing incident at Paiana, wherein an Italian civilian was fatally stabbed.

This case is being dealt with by this Section and, at present, one Negro American soldier is in close arrest for this offence.

The facts of this case, briefly, are that on 17 Feb 44, a number of R.A.F. personnel and Negro soldiers were in Paiana; under the influence of drink. The party broke up, until only four remained, two R.A.F. and two Negroes.

..... Sheet 2

- 2 -

These four men apparently caused various disturbances in the town, culminating in them being attacked by a number of civilians, armed with sticks and stones. One R.A.F. man and one Negro were pursued into a house, where they were beaten up by the civilians. Both these men are now in hospital and are progressing favourably.

The other Negro and R.A.F. man ran down the street followed by civilians. The Negro stopped and turned to face his pursuers, daring them to come forward, at the same time drawing his trench knife. One civilian then apparently attacked, armed with a short bayonet. He was then fatally stabbed by the Negro, who naturally pleads self-defence. As stated, this Negro is now in close arrest.

Great difficulty has been experienced in this case owing to the impossibility of obtaining truthful statements from the Italian witnesses. They have been reluctant to talk (1) they fear that they may be proceeded against for attacking the soldiers. (2) They fear retaliation by the Negro soldiers, and, (3) they apparently wish to aid the family of the dead man. By this it is assumed they do not wish to prejudice any subsequent claim for compensation.

However, at least two apparently useful witnesses have at last been induced to speak the truth and the case against the Negro soldier will proceed almost immediately. It may, of course, turn out to be a case of manslaughter rather than murder. There is no doubt that the soldiers were the original cause of the trouble.

The foregoing are the facts of this case to date.

All authorities concerned have been informed of these incidents and every effort is being made by the American authorities to prevent any repetition. Trench knives have been withdrawn from all negro soldiers in the district and arrangements have been made to police the district surrounding the camps. At present there have been no further incidents of this nature. Any further ~~information~~ useful information obtained will be brought to your notice as soon as practicable.

Respectfully submitted,

F. Johnson.

F. JOHNSON Cont.

However, at least two apparently useful witnesses have at last been induced to speak the truth and the case against the Negro soldier will proceed almost immediately. It may, of course, turn out to be a case of manslaughter rather than murder. There is no doubt that the soldiers were the original cause of the trouble.

The foregoing are the facts of this case to date.

All authorities concerned have been informed of these incidents and every effort is being made by the American authorities to prevent any repetition. Trench knives have been withdrawn from all negro soldiers in the district and arrangements have been made to police the district surrounding the camps. At present there have been no further incidents of this nature. Any further ~~information~~ useful information obtained will be brought to your notice as soon as practicable.

Respectfully submitted,

F. Johnson,

F. JOHNSON Capt.
O.C., 66th Sect S.I.B. C.M.P.

Field
25 Feb 44.

3345

Ref: 66SIB/A/1/99.66th Section,
Special Investigation Branch,
C.M. Police. C.M. Forces.

25 Feb 44.

Subject :- Murder and Unlawful
Wounding by American Negro SoldiersTo :- AREA COMMANDER,
94 Sub - Area.

The attached Interim Report, relative to
the above subject, is respectfully forwarded for your
information.

F. Johnson
F. JOHNSON Capt.

Field.

O.C. 66th Sect. S.I.B. C.M.F.

Distribution :- D.P.M. 3 District,
A.C.C. (Public Safety Dept.) 3344
D.A.P.M. 94 Sub - Area.
File. Via *Adm. Services* 2650

CONFIDENTIAL.

Ref: 66813/4/44/99.

66th. Section,
Special Investigation Branch,
Corps of Military Police,
C. M. Forces.

SUBJECT :- Murder and Unlawful Wounding by
Negro Soldiers of U.S. Army.

TO :- AREA COMMANDER,
94 Sub - Area.

Sir,

In response to your request for a report from this Section respecting the above mentioned subject, I would respectfully bring to your notice the following facts :-

Firstly, I would say that the investigation of these matters is proving extremely difficult and complicated, and the truth and necessary evidence can only be obtained by prolonged and thorough investigation on the part of the Officers concerned. Therefore, at this stage, I have little additional information to impart respecting these matters.

I am given to understand, Sir, that you have received preliminary reports respecting the incidents in question; however, I respectfully submit the following additional information respecting the present position regarding these matters.

1. The shooting incident at Salerno, when one member of the Guardia di Finanza was killed and five others wounded.

This case has been handed over to the American C.I.D. and it is being dealt with by them; we are rendering all possible assistance.

The developments at present are that all members of the armed party are under arrest. The

0178

Firstly, I would say that the investigation of these matters is proving extremely difficult and complicated, and the truth and necessary evidence can only be obtained by prolonged and thorough investigation on the part of the Officers concerned. Therefore, at this stage, I have little additional information to impart respecting these matters.

I am given to understand, Sir, that you have received preliminary reports respecting the incidents in question; however, I respectfully submit the following additional information respecting the present position regarding these matters.

1. The shooting incident at Salerno, when one member of the Guardia di Finanza was killed and five others wounded.

This case has been handed over to the American C.I.D. and it is being dealt with by them; we are rendering all possible assistance.

3343

The developments at present are that all members of the armed party are under arrest. The Officer who brought them into town has also been arrested. S/Sgt. TICHILLI, the man who fired the first shots, (which injured three men) is to be officially charged with this offence.

At present it is not known who comprised the party which returned and opened fire in the Barracks, thereby killing one man and injuring a further two, but every effort is being made to clarify this and to detect those responsible. All the Thompson machine guns brought by the party under the Officer have been impounded and ballistic tests are being made in an endeavour to ascertain who fired the fatal shots.

This is the position regarding this case to date.

CONF /

SHEET TWO.

2. The stabbing incident at Raiena, wherein an Italian civilian was fatally stabbed.

This case is being dealt with by this Section and, at present, one Negro American soldier is in close arrest for this offence.

The facts of this case, briefly, are that on 17 Feb 44., a number of R.A.F. personnel and Negro soldiers were in Raiena, under the influence of drink. The party broke up, until only four remained, two R.A.F. and two Negroes.

These four men apparently caused various disturbances in the town, culminating in their being attacked by a number of civilians, armed with sticks and stones. One R.A.F. man and one Negro were pursued into a house, where they were beaten up by the civilians. Both these men are now in hospital and are progressing favourably.

The other Negro and R.A.F. man ran down the street followed by civilians. The Negro stopped and turned to face his pursuers, daring them to come forward, at the same time drawing his trench knife. One civilian then apparently attacked, armed with a short bayonet. He was then fatally stabbed by the Negro, who naturally pleads self-defence. As stated, this Negro is now in close arrest.

Great difficulty has been experienced in this case owing to the impossibility of obtaining truthful statements from the Italian witnesses. They have been reluctant to talk because (1) they fear they may be proceeded against for attacking the soldiers. (2) they fear retaliation by the Negro soldiers, and, (3) they apparently wish to aid the family of the dead man. By this it is assumed they do not wish to prejudice any subsequent claim for compensation.

the civilians, and are progressing favourably.

The other Negro and N.A.P. man ran down the street followed by civilians. The Negro stopped and turned to face his pursuers, daring them to come forward, at the same time drawing his trench knife. One civilian then apparently attacked, armed with a short bayonet. He was then fatally stabbed by the Negro, who naturally pleads self - defence. As stated, this Negro is now in close arrest.

Great difficulty has been experienced in this case owing to the impossibility of obtaining truthful statements from the Italian witnesses. They have been reluctant to talk because (1) they fear they may be proceeded against for attacking the soldiers. (2) They fear retaliation by the Negro soldiers, and, (3) they apparently wish to aid the family of the dead man. By this it is assumed they do not wish to prejudice any subsequent claim for compensation.

However, at least two apparently useful witnesses have at last been induced to speak the truth and the case against the Negro soldier will proceed almost immediately. It may, of course, turn out to be a case of manslaughter rather than murder. There is no doubt that the soldiers were the original cause of the trouble.

The foregoing are the facts of this case to date.

All authorities concerned have been informed of these incidents and every effort is being made by the American authorities to prevent any repetition. Trench knives have been withdrawn from all Negro soldiers in the district and arrangements have been made to police the district surrounding the camps. At present there have been no further incidents of this nature.

CONF /

SECRET CODE.

Any further useful information obtained will
be brought to your notice as soon as practicable.
Respectfully submitted.

Field.
25 Feb 44.

F. Johnson

F. JOHNSON Capt.
C.O., 56th. Sect. S.I.B. C.M.A.

Ref: A/33/40

A/F 14761/pc 28 FEB 1944

130029

1st Ind ✓

GMB/pjh

HQ, A.C.C., Region II, APO 394, 23 Feb 44.

4A

To: R.C. and M.G. Section, ACC HQ, Naples.

(Att: Brigadier Lush)

Copy: Director, Public Safety Sub-Commission, Salerno ✓

1. The basic communication is forwarded for your information. The undersigned concurs in the recommendation of Major Green that an adequate detachment of American Military Police should be brought into this area to preserve order, and also wishes to add that appropriate action should be taken against the 366 Service Squadron.

G. H. McCaffrey
G. H. McCaffrey
Lt. Col., Inf.
R.C.

785016

ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
SALERNO PROVINCE

SUBJECT : Negro soldiers fire on Guardia Finanza. 19/2/1944.

TO : R.C., A.C.C. (Reg. II).

A.C.C., Public Safety, Salerno.

I have to report an unfortunate incident which occurred in Salerno (City) on the evening of the 17th instant, when one Finance Guard was killed and five wounded by negro troops of the American Army.

The facts as reported by the Colonel Commanding the Regia Guardia di Finanza, Salerno Province, are as follows.

At about 18.20 hours, Captain Blasio Bernardo, commander of the Finance Guard of Salerno Town was about to leave the barracks with his head maresciallo. At the doorway they met two other guards who were being followed by two American negro soldiers who wanted the guards to give them their pistols. Captain Blasio stopped the two negro soldiers at the entrance to the doorway and tried to explain to them that the Finance Guards could not do this. The negroes then commenced to threaten and one of them produced a pistol and pointed it at the Captain's face.

After further attempts to pacify the negroes who were becoming more threatening, the Captain called on other Finance guards who were present and detained one of the two negroes. The one armed with the pistol ran off whilst the other was detained to await the English Military Police who were immediately sent for. A number of American Negro soldiers then gathered outside of the door of the barracks demanding in threatening language the release of the man detained. They were ordered to go away and the door was closed. Meanwhile two Military Policemen arrived and commenced to make their enquiries regarding the happenings.

Some time later (at about 19.30 hours approximately) an American negro officer arrived with about ten soldiers all armed with Tommy guns and forced their way into the barracks. One of these soldiers fired his gun and three of the Finance guards were wounded. The two Military Police intervened to pacify the negroes and eventually Military Police reinforcements arrived under Captain Kohler O/C 510 Coy C.M.P. and took charge of the situation removing all of the negro soldiers to his Headquarters for investigation, the wounded men meanwhile having been removed to the hospital.

Later, at about 20.45 hours, four negro soldiers armed with Tommy

and detained one of the two negroes. The one armed with the pistol ran off whilst the other was detained to await the English Military Police who were immediately sent for. A number of American Negro soldiers then gathered outside of the door of the barracks demanding in threatening language the release of the man detained. They were ordered to go away and the door was closed. Meanwhile two Military Policemen arrived and commenced to make their enquiries regarding the happenings.

Some time later (at about 19.30 hours approximately) an American negro officer arrived with about ten soldiers all armed with Tommy guns and forced their way into the barracks. One of these soldiers fired his gun and three of the Finance guards were wounded. The two Military Police intervened to pacify the negroes and eventually Military Police reinforcements arrived under Captain Kohler O/C 510 Coy C.M.P. and took charge of the situation removing all of the negro soldiers to his Headquarters for investigation, the wounded men meanwhile having been removed to the hospital.

Later, at about 20.45 hours, four negro soldiers armed with Tommy guns knocked at the door which was opened by one of the Guards who thought that it was some of his comrades, returning to the barracks. The negroes burst into the courtyard, the guards endeavoured to explain that there was no negro soldier there detained at the barracks, but one of the negroes raised his tommy gun and fired a burst of shots killing one of the guards instantly and wounding another. The negroes backed towards the door of the barracks and beckoned to some of the guards to follow them but immediately the negroes crossed the threshold, one of the guards slammed the heavy wooden doors.

Another burst of Tommy gun fire was thereupon fired through the door and another guard was wounded. The negroes then decamped.

The Military Police were again summoned and searched the vicinity but found no trace of the assailants. Officers of the 66th Special Investigation Section C.M.P. were informed and they arrived and commenced investigation. The American C.I.D. were also informed and are collaborating with the S.I.S. in their investigations which are still proceeding.

From enquiries already made, it has been ascertained that the negro soldiers were members of the 366 Service Squadron, U.S. Army.

Another fatal incident involving an American negro soldier but entirely unconnected with the above incident occurred at DALIANO, Province of Salerno. From enquiries, it appears that this resulted from a drunken brawl in which some Air Force American negro soldiers had become engaged with civilians. The facts as stated are as follows: The soldiers had been drinking from house to house breaking into houses and generally creating trouble all the afternoon but eventually most of them drifted away leaving an Air Force man and one negro continuing making trouble in the house of a woman of 80 years of age. Civilians then apparently decided to take the matter of these two into their hands and attacking them with sticks beat them up. The Air Force man jumped through the window of the house and escaped, and the negro, more or less badly injured, eventually managed to reach the street. Here he met an unarmed civilian Tarino Giuseppe age 19 who had not been concerned in the incident and immediately attacked him. The civilian crouched against the wall to escape from his assailant and the negro stabbed him with an Italian pattern bayonet which he was carrying as a sheath knife, killing him instantly. The negro soldier Private Caranca Watson of the 1765 Ordinance Company, 96 Service Group U.S. Army is in hospital as a result of the injuries he received. The whole matter is being investigated by the 66th Special Investigation Section C.M.P.

From the above facts it will be realised that the presence of these badly disciplined negro troops in this area is making the population very apprehensive and it is felt that, if it is imperative that they should remain in the neighbourhood, an adequate formation of American Military Police should be brought in to enforce law and order.

Forwarded for information.

Major A.P.C. (P.S.)
Salerno

(Sd. Maj. Green)

HEADQUARTERS
 UNITED CONTROL COMMISSION
 Public Safety Sub-Commission

Folio *1A* for action/information

C.P.S. *pytk*

D.C.P.S. *pytk*

Police *pytk*

Prisons *pytk*

Fire & C.D. *pytk*

Regn. & Licensing *pytk*

→ Adm. Officer *pytk*

Remarks:

..... *CC*
 *Cross Ref.*

*Tel call fr Col Graham (B)
 sub some comdr that info matter
 in hand, report will be sent to you for
 information, + request for coop
 eration in getting a decision
 action*

pytk PA *DB*
gsm 22/2

Subject:- Incident - American troops and Italians, SALERNO
17 Feb 44.

Confidential

Hq No.3 District CMF
Tel: 1111 Ext 10
146/1 A

19 Feb 44.

CG PBS

Copy to:- AFHQ Adv Adm Ech
Executive Commissioner
ACC NAPLES

1. I forward herewith a copy of a report dated 18 Feb from DAPM 94 Sub Area.
2. I have personally discussed these incidents with Comd 94 Sub Area who is in touch with the American commanding officers on the spot.
y DPM has been to SALERNO to investigate these incidents and is to-day getting in touch with the DPM at HQ BS.
3. Meanwhile I feel that you would wish to see this report immediately, in order to be able to initiate such steps as you may consider to be appropriate. I shall forward a copy of the full report as soon as I get it.

A. Celli

aj-gen.,
Comd., 3 District.

3338

COPY

REPORT.To: The Area Commander - 34 Sub Area

Sir,

I have to report that at Salerno on the 17th February '44 there were two incidents involving American coloured troops and Carabinieri of the Financia di Guardia.

The first incident was reported about 1350 hours and concerned two Americans coloured sgts who had been involved in an argument with the Financia di Guardia as a result of which the latter tried to arrest the Americans, and succeeded in detaining one in their barracks. It appears that the other sgt returned to camp and obtained the assistance of an American Lieut who took a party of men all armed with "Tommy" guns, to rescue the sgt detained in Salerno. The armed party obtained entry to the barracks and rescued their colleague without using any violence, though they adopted a menacing attitude. About this time one of their number got separated and thinking himself being surrounded by Italians fired two shots at random thereby causing superficial wounds to two Italians. At the instigation of a Military Police corporal who was present, arms were unloaded, and subsequently C.C. Provost Company arrived. The Guardia di Financia were interviewed and promised to take statements. The principal Americans were taken up to M.C. Provost Company for interrogation and the remainder of the Americans having been ordered to return to their unit under a senior sgt, were seen off the premises and into their truck which was seen to drive off. The American Unit concerned was 366 Service Squadron stationed near Montecorvino.

While the above mentioned interrogation was proceeding a telephone call was received about 2110 hours to say another incident had occurred at the same barracks in which one of the Financia di Guardia had been killed. The S.I.S. were informed, and on investigation it appeared that three or four coloured Americans armed with "Tommy" guns had forced an entry into the barracks, firing a number of rounds. One member of the Financia di Guardia was killed and two wounded. Concerted action was taken by S.I.S.; OC 'B' Coy 794 U.S. M.P. Bn and unit concerned. The case is being handled by OC 66 S.I.S. who is understood to have called in the American C.I.D. In addition to the foregoing, reports have been received of two further incidents on 17th Feb 1944, both of which are being dealt with by 66 S.I.S.

1. At Bellizzi about 0940 hours it appears an entry was forced

Provost Company arrived. The guards of Financia were interviewed and promised to take statements. The principal Americans were taken up to H.A. Provost Company for interrogation and the remainder of the Americans having been ordered to return to their unit under a senior sgt, were seen off the premises and into their truck which was seen to drive off. The American Unit concerned was 366 Service Squadron stationed near Ontecorvino.

While the above mentioned interrogation was proceeding a telephone call was received about 2115 hours to say another incident had occurred at the same barracks in which one of the Financia di Guardia had been killed. The S.I.S. were informed, and on investigation it appeared that three or four coloured Americans armed with "Tommy" guns had forced an entry into the barracks, firing a number of rounds. One member of the Financia di Guardia was killed and two wounded. Concerted action was taken by S.I.S.; OC 'B' Coy 794 U.S. M.P. Bn and unit concerned. The case is being handled by OC 66 S.I.S. who is understood to have called in the American C.I.D. In addition to the foregoing, reports have been received of two further incidents on 17th Feb 1944, both of which are being dealt with by 66 S.I.S.

1. At Bellizi about 0940 hours it appears an entry was forced into a house where furniture was damaged, and it is alleged, clothing and 3000 Lire were stolen. The description of the thief suggests that it was a sgt of American coloured troops.

3327

2. At Faiano it seems that 4 American negroes and two members of the R.A.F. were in the village drinking in various houses. At about 1830 hours there was a disturbance in the street and a civilian was found to have been stabbed fatally. Present information points to the perpetrator being a negro.

One negro and a member of the R.A.F. are in 58 General Hospital suffering from knife wounds. It is suspected these men had been in Faiano yesterday afternoon, but as yet they have not been interviewed owing to the effects of anaesthetic and no definite link has been established.

(Sd) 224222Z Capt.

D.A.P.M.
94 Sub Area.

18 Feb 44.

847 B

CONTROL COMMISSION

ALLIED ~~MILITARY GOVERNMENT~~
SALERNO PROVINCE

SUBJECT : Negro soldiers fire on Guardia Finanza.

TO : R.C., A.C.C. (Reg. II).

A.C.C., Public Safety, Salerno.

19/2/1944.

(27)

I have to report an unfortunate incident which occurred in Salerno (City) on the evening of the 17th instant, when one Finance Guard was killed and five wounded by negro troops of the American Army.

The facts as reported by the Colonel Commanding the Regia Guardia di Finanza, Salerno Province, are as follows.

At about 18.20 hours, Captain Blasio Bernardo, commander of the Finance Guard of Salerno Town was about to leave the barracks with his head maresciallo. At the doorway they met two other guards who were being followed by two American negro soldiers who wanted the guards to give them their pistols. Captain Blasio stopped the two negro soldiers at the entrance to the doorway and tried to explain to them that the Finance Guards could not do this. The negroes then commenced to threaten and one of them produced a pistol and pointed it at the Captain's face. After further attempts to pacify the negroes who were becoming more threatening, the Captain called on other Finance guards who were present and detained one of the two negroes. The one armed with the pistol ran off whilst the other was detained to await the English Military Police who were immediately sent for. A number of American Negro soldiers then gathered outside of the door of the barracks demanding in threatening language the release of the man detained. They were ordered to go away and the door was closed. Meanwhile two Military Policemen arrived and commenced to make their enquiries regarding the happenings.

Some time later (at about 19.30 hours approximately) an American negro officer arrived with about ten soldiers all armed with Tommy guns and forced their way into the barracks. One of these soldiers fired his gun and three of the Finance guards were wounded. The two Military Police intervened to pacify the negroes and eventually Military Police re-inforce

785016

The facts as reported by the Colonel Commanding the Regia Guardia di Finanza, Salerno Province, are as follows.

At about 18.20 hours, Captain Blasio Bernardo, commander of the Finance Guard of Salerno Town was about to leave the barracks with his head maresciallo. At the doorway they met two other guards who were being followed by two American negro soldiers who wanted the guards to give them their pistols. Captain Blasio stopped the two negro soldiers at the entrance to the doorway and tried to explain to them that the Finance Guards could not do this. The negroes then commenced to threaten and one of them produced a pistol and pointed it at the Captain's face. After further attempts to pacify the negroes who were becoming more threatening, the Captain called on other Finance guards who were present and detained one of the two negroes. The one armed with the pistol ran off whilst the other was detained to await the English Military Police who were immediately sent for. A number of American Negro soldiers then gathered outside of the door of the barracks demanding in threatening language the release of the man detained. They were ordered to go away and the door was closed. Meanwhile two Military Policemen arrived and commenced to make their enquiries regarding the happenings.

Some time later (at about 19.30 hours approximately) an American negro officer arrived with about ten soldiers all armed with Tommy guns and forced their way into the barracks. One of these soldiers fired his gun and three of the Finance guards were wounded. The two Military Police intervened to pacify the negroes and eventually Military Police re-inforcements arrived under Captain Kohler O/C 510 Coy C.M.P. and took charge of the situation removing all of the negro soldiers to his Headquarters for investigation, the wounded men meanwhile having been removed to the hospital.

Later, at about 20.45 hours, four negro soldiers armed with Tommy guns knocked at the door which was opened by one of the Guards who thought that it was some of his comrades, returning to the barracks. The negroes burst into the courtyard, the guards endeavoured to explain that there was no negro soldier there detained at the barracks, but one of the negroes raised his tommy gun and fired a burst of shots killing one of the guards instantly and wounding another. The negroes backed towards the door of the barracks and beckoned to some of the guards to follow them but immediately the negroes crossed the thresh-hold, one of the guards slammed the heavy wooden doors.

ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT SALERNO PROVINCE

Another burst of Tommy Gunfire was thereupon fired through the door and another guard was wounded. The negroes then decamped.

The Military Police were again summoned and searched the vicinity but found no trace of the assailants. Officers of the 66th Special Investigation Section C.M.F. were informed and they arrived and commenced investigation. The American C.I.D. were also informed and are collaborating with the S.I.S. in their investigations which are still proceeding.

From enquiries already made, it has been ascertained that the negro soldiers were members of the 365 Service Squadron, U.S. Army.

Another fatal incident involving an American negro soldier but entirely unconnected with the above incident occurred at PIANO, Province of Salerno. From enquiries, it appears that this resulted from a drunken brawl in which some Air Force and American negro soldiers had become engaged with civilians. The facts as stated are as follows: The soldiers had been drinking from house to house breaking into houses and generally creating trouble all the afternoon but eventually most of them drifted away leaving an Air Force man and one negro continuing asking trouble in the house of a woman of 80 years of age. Civilians then apparently decided to take the matter of these two into their hands and attacking them with sticks beat them up. The Air Force man jumped through the window of the house and escaped, and the negro more or less badly injured eventually managed to reach the street. Here he met an unarmed civilian Ferino Giuseppe age 19 who had not been concerned in the incident and immediately attacked him. The civilian crouched against the wall to escape from his assailant and the negro stabbed him with an Italian pattern bayonet which he was carrying as a sheath knife, killing him instantly. The negro soldier Private Garance Watson of the 1765 Ordnance Company, 96 Service Group U.S. Army is in hospital as a result of the injuries he received. The whole matter is being investigated by the 66th Special Investigation Section C.M.F.

From the above facts it will be realized that the presence of these badly disciplined negro troops in this area is making the population very apprehensive and it is felt that if it is imperative that they should remain in the neighbourhood and adequate formation of American Military Police should be brought in to enforce law and order.

Forwarded for information.

some Air Force and American negro soldiers had become engaged with civilians. The facts as stated are as follows: The soldiers had been drinking from house to house breaking into houses and generally creating trouble all the afternoon but eventually most of them drifted away leaving an Air Force man and one negro continuing making trouble in the house of a woman of 80 years of age. Civilians then apparently decided to take the matter of these two into their hands and attacking them with sticks beat them up. The Air Force man jumped through the window of the house and escaped, and the negro more or less badly injured eventually managed to reach the street. Here he met an unarmed civilian Terino Giuseppe age 19 who had not been concerned in the incident and immediately attacked him. The civilian crouched against the wall to escape from his assailant and the negro stabbed him with an Italian pattern bayonet which he was carrying as a sheath knife, killing him instantly. The negro soldier Private Gerardo Watson of the 1765 Ordnance Company, 96 Service Group U.S. Army is in hospital as a result of the injuries he received. The whole matter is being investigated by the 56th Special Investigation Section C.M.P.

From the above facts it will be realized that the presence of these badly disciplined negro troops in this area is making the population very apprehensive and it is felt that if it is imperative that they should remain in the neighbourhood an adequate formation of American Military Police should be brought in to enforce law and order.

Forwarded for information.

L. L. L. L. 3335

Major A.P.O. (P.S.)
Salerno

translation

DISTRICT HQ OF THE GUARDIA DI FINANZA OF SALERNO

Salerno, 18 February, 1944.

To His Excellency the Minister of Finance.....Salerno
 To HQ of Military Garrison at.....Salerno
 To the King's Minister of the Military & Civil Tribunal at Salerno
 To HQ of the Legion of the R. Guardia di Finanza of.....Naples
 To HQ of Allied Police.....Salerno

Last night, at about 1830 hours, while Capt. Blasio Bernardi, commander of R.G. di Finanza of Salerno, was leaving the barracks together with Mares. Capo Picillo Salvatore, on a mission in the line of duty, they were approached at the gate by Appuntato Terra (Ground Corporal) Palmieri Genaro and Finanziere Terra (Ground Finance Private) Battaglia Giovanni, who in turn were being molested by two American negro soldiers who requested their service pistols from them. The above-mentioned officer went up to the two negroes, in front of the gate and tried to explain to them that the pistols could not be given away. The negroes, who spoke a little Italian, persisted in their demands, assuming a menacing attitude, and one of them pointed a pistol at the captain's face. The latter, notwithstanding, nonchalantly continued to ~~refuse~~ their request, but perceiving that their attitude was becoming more and more menacing, was compelled to ask assistance of two privates present in stopping the two negroes. One of the latter, the one armed with the pistol, succeeded in escaping while the other was detained, pending the arrival of the British police, who were immediately notified by other military personnel, to take off the arrested negro and to get a report of the facts in the matter.

While this episode was taking place, I was in my office on the second floor, and after having been informed of the situation, descended immediately to the courtyard, and ordered several American negro soldiers, who had gathered before the gate in a very menacing attitude, to be sent away, and the gate to be shut. At this moment two English ~~six~~ policemen intervened, questioning the arrested negro soldier and the "finanziere" present who witnessed the matter.

Believing that the matter had come to an end, I returned to my office. A little later, however, I heard the firing of several shots of firing arms and, descending again to the courtyard, saw that three military personnel were wounded, (one in the throat, one lightly in the leg, and the other in the foot). I also saw a negro officer who was encircled by negro soldiers armed with machine guns heatedly talking to the English policemen, who were evidently rendered powerless by the unexpected armed aggression to cope with the matter. While ordering that the more seriously injured soldier be taken to the hospital, and ~~that~~ that the others be taken to a dispensary, I sent word to Capt. Koeler of the Military Police and Major Green, head of the Allied Police of Salerno, to intervene personally in the matter. In fact, shortly after, Capt. Koeler arrived with several of his M.P.s and came up to my office accompanied by the negro officer and the negroes armed with

0195

the other was detained, pending the arrival of the British police, who were immediately notified by other military personnel, to take off the arrested negro and to get a report of the facts in the matter.

While this episode was taking place, I was in my office on the second floor, and after having been informed of the situation, descended immediately to the courtyard, and ordered several American negro soldiers, who had gathered before the gate in a very menacing attitude, to be sent away, and the gate to be shut. At this moment two English ~~all~~ policemen intervened, questioning the arrested negro soldier and the "finanzieri" present who witnessed the matter.

Believing that the matter had come to an end, I returned to my office. A little later, however, I heard the firing of several shots of firing arms and, descending again to the courtyard, saw that three military personnel were wounded, (one in the throat, one lightly in the leg, and the other in the foot). I also saw a negro officer who was encircled by negro soldiers armed with machine guns heatedly talking to the English policemen, who were evidently rendered powerless by the unexpected armed aggression to cope with the matter. While ordering that the more seriously injured soldier be taken to the hospital, and ~~that~~ that the others be taken to a dispensary, I sent word to Capt. Koller of the Military Police and Major Green, head of the Allied Police of Salerno, to intervene personally in the matter. In fact, shortly after, Capt. Koller arrived with several of his M.P.'s and came up to my office accompanied by the negro officer and two negroes armed with machine guns (or automatic rifles). Of the two negroes, I recognized the one who had been arrested at the start of the incident. When Capt. Koller had gotten the facts of the matter, he asked me to make him a detailed report, and he in turn would advise me of the results of his investigations into the matter. Thereafter, all participants, police and negro soldiers, left the barracks.

About an hour later while I was still in my office, I heard several bursts of machine gun fire and several appeals for help. Returning again to the courtyard, I saw one finanzieri in a pool of blood, another wounded and in the arm, and perceived bullet marks on the gate and on the pierwork separating the courtyard from the barracks. Asking what had happened, I was informed that shortly before, someone had knocked on the gate and the guard there opened it believing that to be several of his companions returning from their rounds. Instead, four negroes ~~re-entered~~ armed with machine guns rushed in and shot off a few bursts of fire, one of them killing the guard, and then going out they continued firing through the gates which had been shut by now. One of these latter bursts hit another finanzieri in the arm.

-2-

This second episode was witnessed by his excellency the Minister of Finance who was with his staff in the dining room. He requested me to accompany him in again advising the chief of police of the occurrence. ~~After complying with this request,~~ In fact, after having complied with this request, Major Green and several other officers in his staff and a group of M.P.'s started to search the area around the barracks to ascertain that no other negro soldiers might be thereabouts.

From what has been told to me and from what I personally can vouch for, both the two armed aggressions that had taken place, the first, in the presence of the two British M.P.'s and the second after the intervention of the officers of the same M.P.'s, ~~they~~ could have been neither avoided nor mitigated, because they were absolutely unexpected. The conduct of my men was one of admirable calm, and the appearance of myself and some of the other officers must most certainly have avoided an armed reaction, either tardy or inopportune, that might have provoked much more painful consequences, which might thereafter have led to false ~~mis~~ misconceptions on the part of the Allied Forces.

Inclosed:

1. Report by Capt. Elsie Bernardo
2. " " Lt. Occhipinti Giuseppe
3. Statement by Col. Palmieri Gennaro
4. " " Pvt. Battaglia Giovanni.
5. " " " D'Auria Carlo, (Verbal).
6. " " " Castaldi Arcangelo
7. " " Col. Todaro Bruno
8. Death report of Sparano Pacifico by medical Lt. Picoorillo.
9. The approval of the King's Counsel in removing the corpse.
10. The statement of Pares. Capo Picillo Salvatore.

The Lt. Col. in Command,
(F/to Antonino Peluso).

3333

COMANDO CIRCOLO DELLA REGIA GUARDIA DI FINANZA DI SALERNO

N° _____ di prot.

Oggetto: Assalto alla caserma della R.G. di Finanza di Salerno da parte di soldati negri americani. -

Salerno, li 18 febbraio 1944

A S.E. il Ministro delle Finanze.....Salerno
 Al Comando del Presidio Militare di.....Salerno
 Al Procuratore del Re del Trib. Militare e Civile.....Salerno
 Al Comando della Legione della R. Guardia di Finanza di Napoli
 Al Comando della Polizia Alleata di.....Salerno.

0=0=0=0=0=0=0=0=0=

Ieri sera, verso le ore 18,30, mentre il capitano Blasio Bernardo, comandante della compagnia R.G. di Finanza di Salerno, usciva dalla caserma assieme al meresciello capo Picillo Salvatore, per eseguire una operazione di servizio e s'incontrava davanti al portone con l'appuntato terra Palmieri Gennaro ed il finanziere terra Battaglia Giovanni, i quali erano inseguiti da vicino da due militari negri dell'esercito americano, che pretendevano da essi la consegna della pistola d'ordinanza di cui ciascuno era armato. Il detto ufficiale fermò i due negri, sempre davanti al portone, e cercava di spiegare loro che le pistole non potevano essere consegnate. I due negri che parlavano un po' d'italiano, insistevano nella richiesta, assumendo atteggiamento minaccioso, e uno di essi puntava sul suo viso una pistola. Ciò nonostante il ripetuto capitano, dimostrando molta calma, cercava ancora dal farli desistere dal loro proposito, ma visto che il loro atteggiamento diventava sempre più minaccioso, si vedeva costretto a chiedere l'intervento di alcuni finanzieri presenti perchè fermassero i due soldati negri. Uno di questi e precisamente quello armato di pistola riusciva a scomparire, mentre l'altro veniva trattenuto, in attesa che la polizia inglese, immediatamente avvertita da altri militari, venisse a rilevare il soldato negro fermato e ad accertare i fatti.

Durante lo svolgimento di tale episodio io mi trovavo nel mio ufficio che nel piano superiore, e informato dei fatti scendevo immediatamente nel cortile, ordinavo che alcuni soldati negri americani, i quali si erano asserrati dinanzi al portone in atteggiamento minaccioso, venissero mandati fuori, e facevo chiudere il portone stesso. In questo mentre intervenivano due poliziotti inglesi i quali cominciarono ad interrogare il soldato negro fermato e finanzieri presenti al fatto.

Ritenendo che l'incidente fosse ormai esaurito ritornavo nel mio ufficio. Poco dopo, però, udivo lo sparo di alcuni colpi di arma da fuoco e sceso di nuovo

mostrando molta calma, cercava ancora dal farli desistere dal loro proposito, ma visto che il loro atteggiamento diventava sempre più minaccioso, si vedeva costretto a chiedere l'intervento di alcuni finanzieri presenti perchè fermassero i due soldati negri. Uno di questi e precisamente quello armato di pistola riusciva a scappare, mentre l'altro veniva trattenuto, in attesa che la polizia inglese, immediatamente avvertita da altri militari, venisse a rilevare il soldato negro fermato e ad accettare i fatti.

Durante lo svolgimento di tale episodio io mi trovavo nel mio ufficio che si affacciava sul piano superiore, e informato dei fatti succedeva immediatamente nel cortile, ordinavo che alcuni soldati negri americani, i quali si erano asserragliati dinanzi al portone in atteggiamento minaccioso, venissero mandati fuori, e facevo chiudere il portone stesso. In questo mentre intervenivano due poliziotti inglesi i quali cominciarono ad interrogare il soldato negro fermato e i finanzieri presenti al fatto.

Ritenendo che l'incidente fosse ormai esaurito ritornavo nel mio ufficio. Poco dopo, però, udivo lo sparo di alcuni colpi di arma da fuoco sceso di nuovo nel cortile constatavo che vi erano tre miei militari feriti (uno alla gola, uno leggermente ad una coscia ed un altro al piede). Vedevo inoltre che un ufficiale negro attorniato da soldati negri armati di fucili mitragliatori parlava animatamente con i due poliziotti inglesi, i quali evidentemente erano stati impotenti ad impedire la inattesa ed improvvisa aggressione armata.

Mentre disponevo che il militare più gravemente ferito fosse accompagnato all'ospedale, e che gli altri due fossero accompagnati al posto di medicina, mandavo ad avvertire il capitano Koaler della polizia militare ³³³² il maggiore Green, capo della polizia alleata di Salerno perchè intervenissero personalmente. Infatti, poco dopo giungeva il capitano Koaler con alcuni suoi poliziotti e veniva nel mio ufficio accompagnato dall'ufficiale negro scortato da due soldati negri armati da fucile mitragliatore. Tra i due negri armati riconoscevo quello che era stato ferito all'inizio dell'incidente.

Dopo aver chiarito i fatti il capitano Koaler invitava a rendergli non appena possibile un dettagliato rapporto, facendomi noto che egli mi avrebbe fornito a sua volta il risultato dell'inchiesta da lui eseguita. Successivamente tutti gli intervenuti, polizia e soldati negri, lasciavano la scena.

-2-

Circa un'ora dopo mentre era ancora in ufficio udivo delle raffiche di fucile mitragliatore e delle invocazioni di aiuto. Recatomi nuovamente nel cortile osservavo per terra un finanziere in una pozza di sangue, un altro ferito ad un braccio e tracce di colpi sul portone e sulla vetrata che chiude il cortile della caserma. Chiesto cosa fosse accaduto, venivo informato che poco prima era stato bussato al portone che veniva aperto dal piantone il quale evidentemente riteneva che fossero suoi compagni che tornavano dal servizio. Invece facevano irruzione nella caserma quattro negri armati di facile mitragliatore, i quali sparate alcune raffiche di cui una causava la morte del piantone stesso, uscivano dalla caserma e sparavano ancora attraverso il portone che ormai era stato chiuso. Uno di questi altri colpi sparati del di fuori colpiva ad un braccio un altro finanziere.

A questo secondo spiccio era presente S.E. il Ministro delle Finanze che trovavasi con i dipendenti funzionari nella sala mensa e il quale mi ordinava di seguirlo per andare nuovamente ad avvertire il capo della polizia. Infatti, in seguito a tale richiesta, interveniva il maggiore Praen con altri ufficiali suoi dipendenti e un gruppo di poliziotti, i quali cominciavano a perquisire i pressi della caserma onde accertarsi che non fossero altri soldati negri appostati.

Da quanto esposto e come ho potuto personalmente constatare, le due aggravi sioni armate compiute, la prima alla presenza dei due poliziotti inglesi e la seconda dopo l'intervento degli ufficiali della stessa polizia, non si sono potute in alcun modo evitare a contenere, perche assolutamente inattese. Il contegno degli uomini da me dipendenti è stato improntato ad amirevole calma, e la presenza mia e degli altri ufficiali ha certamente evitato una reazione armata, tardiva ed inopportuna, che avrebbe potuto provocare conseguenze ancora più dolorose, ad eventuali falsi apprezzamenti da parte dei comandi delle Forze Alleate.

Unisco:

- 1°) un rapporto del capitano Rasio Bernardo;
- 2°) un rapporto del tenente Occhipinti Giuseppe;
- 3°) la dichiarazione dell'appuntato Palmieri Genaro;
- 4°) la dichiarazione del finanziere terra Battaglia Giovanni;
- 5°) il verbale d'interrogatorio del finanziere terra D'Auria Carlo;
- 6°) il verbale d'interrogatorio del finanziere terra Castaldo Arcangelo;
- 7°) il verbale d'interrogatorio dell'appuntato Todaro Bruno;
- 8°) la constatazione di morte del finanziere terra Sparano Pacifico redatta dal Ten. medico Poccorillo Giovanni Battista;
- 9°) il nulla osta della Procura del Re alla rimozione dei cadaveri;

10°) la dichiarazione del medico capo Picillo Salvatore.

ufficiali suoi dipendenti e un gruppo di poliziotti, i quali per illustrare i presunti della caserma onde accertarsi che non fossero altri soldati negri appostati. Da quanto esposto e come ho potuto personalmente constatare, le due aggravi sioni armate compiute, la prima alla presenza dei due poliziotti inglesi e la seconda dopo l'intervento degli ufficiali della stessa polizia, non si sono potute in alcun modo evitare o contenere, perché assolutamente inattuabili. Il contegno degli uomini da me dipendenti è stato improntato ad amabilevole calma, e la presenza mia e degli altri ufficiali ha certamente evitato una reazione armata, tardiva ed inopportuna, che avrebbe potuto provocare conseguenze ancora più dolorose, ad eventuali falsi apprezzamenti da parte dei comandi delle Forze Alleate.

Unisco:

- 1°) un rapporto del capitano Blasio Bernerdo;
- 2°) un rapporto del tenente Occhipinti Giuseppe;
- 3°) la dichiarazione dell'appuntato Palmieri Gennaro;
- 4°) la dichiarazione del finanziere terra Battaglia Giovanni;
- 5°) il verbale d'interrogatorio del finanziere terra D'Auria Carlo;
- 6°) il verbale d'interrogatorio del finanziere terra Castaldo Arcangelo;
- 7°) il verbale d'interrogatorio dell'appuntato Todaro Bruno;
- 8°) la constatazione di morte del finanziere terra Sparano Pacifico redatta dal Ten. medico Poccirillo Giov Battista;
- 9°) il nulla osta della Procura del Re alla rimozione del cadavere;
- 10°) la dichiarazione del maresciallo capo Picillo Salvatore. =

Il t. colonnello comandante
(T/ro Antonino Paluso)

3331

DISTRICT HQ OF THE GUARDIA DI FINANZA OF SALERNO

Salerno, 18 February, 1

To His Excellency the Minister of Finance.....Salerno
 To HQ of Military Garrison at.....Salerno
 To the King's Minister of the Military & Civil Tribunal at Salerno
 To HQ of the Legion of the R. Guardia di Finanza of.....Naples
 To HQ of Allied Police.....Salerno

Last night, at about 1800 hours, while Capt. Blasio Bernardo, commander of R.C. di Finanza di Salerno, was leaving the barracks together with Mares. Carlo Piccolo Salvatore, on a mission in the line of duty, they were approaching at the gate by Via S. Maria (around Carmine) Palmieri Gennaro and Finanzi Tere (around Finanze di Salerno) Bastaglia Giovanni, who in turn were being molested by two American negro soldiers who requested their service pistols if they. The above-mentioned officer went up to the two negroes, in front of the gate and tried to explain to them that the pistols could not be given away. The negroes, who spoke a little Italian, persisted in their demands, assuming a menacing attitude, and one of them pointed a pistol at the captain's face. The latter, notwithstanding, nobly continued to refuse in their request but perceiving that their attitude was becoming more and more menacing, was compelled to ask assistance of two privates present in stopping the two negroes. One of the latter, the one armed with the pistol, succeeded in escaping while the other was detained, pending the arrival of the British police, who were immediately notified by other military personnel, to take off the arrested negro and to get a report of the facts in the matter.

While this episode was taking place, I was in my office on the second floor, and after having been informed of the situation, descended immediately to the courtyard, and ordered several American negro soldiers, who had gathered before the gate in a very menacing attitude, to be sent away, and the gate to be shut. At this moment two British police officers intervened, questioning the arrested negro soldier and the "finanziere" present who witnessed the matter.

Believing that the matter had come to an end, I returned to my office. A little later, however, I heard the firing of several shots of firing arms and, descending again to the courtyard, saw that three military personnel were wounded, (one in the throat, one lightly in the leg, and the other in the foot). I also saw a negro officer who was encircled by negro soldiers armed with machine guns heavily talking to the British police, who were identically rendered powerless by the unexpected armed aggression to cope with the matter. While observing that the more seriously injured soldier he taking to the hospital, and aware that the others he taken to a dispensary, I sent word to Capt. Locatelli of the Military Police and Major Gennaro, head of the Allied Police of Salerno, to intervene personally in the matter. In fact, shortly after, Capt. Kosler arrived with several of his men and came up my office accompanied by the negro officer and two negroes armed with

me of the latter, he was armed with the pistol, succeeded in escaping while the other was detained, pending the arrival of the British police, who were immediately notified by other military personnel, to take off the arrested negro and to get a report on the facts in the matter.

While this episode was taking place, I was in my office on the second floor, and after having been informed of the situation, descended immediately to the courtyard, and ordered several American negro soldiers, who had gathered before the gate in a very menacing attitude, to be sent away, and the gate to be shut. At this moment two English ex-policemen intervened, questioning the arrested negro soldier and the "finanziere" present who witnessed the matter.

Believing that the matter had come to an end, I returned to my office. A little later, however, I heard the firing of several shots of firing arms and, descending again to the courtyard, saw that three military personnel were wounded, (one in the throat, one lightly in the leg, and the other in the foot). I also saw a negro officer who was encircled by negro soldiers armed with machine guns, and noticed walking to the English policemen, who were identically rendered powerless by the unexpected armed aggression to come with a matter. While observing that the negro seriously injured soldier he taking to the hospital, and that the others be taken to a dispensary, I sent word to Capt. Koller of the Military Police and Major Green, head of the Police of Palermo, to intervene personally in the matter. In fact, shortly after, Capt. Koller arrived with several of his M.P.'s and came up my office accompanied by the negro officer and the negroes armed with machine guns (or automatic rifles). Of the two negroes, I recognized the one who had been wounded at the start of the incident. When Capt. Koller had taken the facts of the matter, he asked me to make him a detailed report, and I he in turn would advise me of the results of his investigations into the matter. Thereafter, all participants, police and negro soldiers, left the cracks.

About an hour later while I was still in my office, I heard several bursts machine gun fire and several appeals for help. Returning again to the courtyard, I saw one "finanziere" in a pool of blood, who was wounded in the arm, I perceived bullet marks on the gate and on the glasswork separating the courtyard from the barracks. Asking what had happened, I was informed that shot more, someone had knocked on the gate and the guard there opened it believing it to be several of his companions returning from their rounds. Instead, four goes rushed in armed with machine guns rushed in and shot off a few bursts of fire, one of them killing the guard, and then going out they continued firing through the gates which had been shut by now. One of these latter bursts hit the "finanziere" in the arm.

3330

-2-

This second episode was witnessed by his excellency The Minister of Finance who was with his staff in the dining room. He requested me to accompany him in again advising the chief of police of the occurrence. ~~After complying with this request,~~ In fact, after having complied with this request, Major Green and several other officers in his staff and a group of M.P.'s started to search the area around the barracks to ascertain that no other negro soldiers might be thereabouts.

From what has been told to me and from what I personally can vouch for, both the armed aggressions that had taken place, the first, in the presence of the two British M.P.'s and the second after the intervention of the officers of the same M.P.'s, ~~they~~ could have been neither avoided nor mitigated, because they were absolutely unexpected. The conduct of my men was one of admirable calm, and the appearance of myself and some of the other officers must most certainly have avoided an armed reaction, either tardy or inopportune, that might have provoked much more painful consequences, which might eventually have led to false ~~and~~ misconceptions on the part of the Allied Forces.

Inclosed:

1. Report by Capt. Elsie Bernaride
2. " " Lt. Gachipanti Giuseppe
3. Statement by Col. Palmieri Genaro
4. " " Fvt. Pantaglia Giovanni.
5. " " D'Auria Carlo, (verbal).
6. " " Castaldo Arcangelo
7. " " Cpl. Todaro Bruno
8. Death report of Sperano Pacifico by medical Lt. Paccorillo.
9. The approval of the King's Counsel in removing the corpse.
10. The statement of Mares. Capo Picillo Salvatore.

The Lt. Col. in Command.
(F/to Antonino Peluso).

0 2 0 4