

ACC

10000/143/1093

COMPLAINT, RE A
CLEANERS' EMP
JUN., JULY 1946

10000/143/1093

COMPLAINT, RE AC CIVILIAN STAFF KITCHEN &
CLEANERS' EMPLOYMENT
JUN., JULY 1946

1 July 1946

Minute 4

Executive Commissioner:

1. I do not think that your request for a change in the channel of communication is supported by paragraphs 4(a) and 4(b). If I had referred the complaint to you it would have been with instructions to make as thorough an investigation as is covered by Major Bond's excellent report. The question of the size of the bread ration is but a minor point. The main issue was the complaint of graft and discriminatory administration. I do not see the connection between whether the midshift meal in Italy is warranted and Mr. Strachey's decision to institute bread rationing in the U.K. While I consider it equally immaterial, I understand that British personnel in this theater receive more food than their "counterparts in UK".

2. Major Bond is to be commended, I think, for an excellent report and the Headquarters Commandant likewise for the conditions therein disclosed.

W. H. Stone
 HENRY W. STONE
 Rear Admiral, USN
 Chief Commissioner

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Chief Commissioner

x The British troops are not concerned with their own welfare but with the welfare of their dependants in U.K.

May

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P.A.

3960

Send letter 2 of letter to 6712 Command, 3

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P.A.

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Send (via 2 of them) to HQ Command.

W. H. Stone

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Chief Comm.

Review with report of major

Bund called for. see 171A.

A.C. Galarin & Co.
Hd. And.

17/46.

JUL 1 1946

Chief Commissioner.

1. A few days ago you received an anonymous letter concerning the midshift meal, etc., in this HQ. I understand that you gave instructions direct that the matter be investigated by the Security Section and HQ Commandant.

2. This was done and the report is in this file. I have discussed it with HQ Commandant and am satisfied that it is correct and that the complaints are unfounded.

3. Colonel Walton who had received a similar complaint and who accompanied the HQ Commandant on an inspection some days ago, expressed himself as equally satisfied.

4. I would ask that similar complaints be handled through myself. Such is the regular channel. In this case I should have advised a different approach:

- (a) Because the letter was anonymous and being so had to be very much discounted even if it was worthy of attention at all.
- (b) Because in view of the universal shortage of food in Europe and especially since rationing of bread in UK, our approach to the whole question of midshift meal must be made with great care. The reactions of British personnel to the Italian food situation are now strong. The Italians who benefit from the midshift meal now consume more bread (by about 138 grams per diem) than their counterparts in UK. The Labour & Wage Sub-Committee of AFPS at their last meeting have recommended the withdrawal of the midshift meal from employees of contractors working on Allied jobs and the withdrawal of the bread element from the meal provided to others.

5. I appreciate that the anonymous letter was directed against the administration of the meal - but the above facts must be taken into consideration in our general approach and I cannot stress too much British feeling regarding food in Italy.

M.S.L. Brigadier.
Executive Commissioner.

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

APO 394

Office of the Executive Commissioner

Ref. AG/14367/PS

6 July 1946

SUBJECT: Conditions of Civilian Staff.

TO : HQ. Commandant.

The Chief Commissioner wishes to commend you for the very good condition amongst the cleaners etc. in this building as shown by Major Bond's report.

BY COMMAND OF REAR ADMIRAL STONE

N. W. HIND SMITH

Chief Staff Officer
to Executive Commissioner

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

APO 394

Office of the Executive Commissioner

2A

Ref. AG/14367/PS

6 July 1946

SUBJECT: Conditions of Civilian Staff.

TO : Major Bond
Public Safety Division.

The Chief Commissioner wishes to commend you for your excellent report regarding the civilian staff.

BY COMMAND OF REAR ADMIRAL STONE,

N. W. HIND-SMITH

Chief Staff Officer
to Executive Commissioner

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HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISS.

Public Safety Sub-Commission

APO 394

29th. June, 1946.

SUBJECT : Anonymous Complaint re conditions of Civilian Staff.
 TO : H.Q. Commandant,
 (thru Col. Rye, A/Director, Public Safety Sub-Comm.)

1. With reference to attached anonymous letter addressed to Admiral Stone.
2. This letter is similar to all anonymous letters of this particular type, there being all the usual trimmings, allegations and complaints against particular persons included to bolster up the real motive for the writing of the letter.

After reading the letter it would appear obvious that the last paragraph forms the main thought of the complaint and that the writer is harbouring a grievance in respect of having lost or about to lose her employment. This is borne out to some extent by extensive enquiries made which tend to refute all the allegations as mentioned in the letter.

3. To get a clear picture it will be easier to answer points individually as they are raised in the letter viz: -

4. Soup is bad and bread ration small. This is not true. Discreet enquiries have been made during the past two days of many of the cleaning staff and all agreed that the meals supplied were good, the amount of bread given was very substantial and the whole daily meal was very good value for the small sum which had to be paid. I have seen some of the meals supplied as also have some other Allied Officers including the H.Q. Commandant, and on each occasion there was certainly no cause for complaint.
5. Kitchen staff stealing food. Again nothing could be found to substantiate

this. Although it is admittedly possible for small items of food to be taken away from the kitchen and building especially by women who can so easily conceal articles under their clothing and escape the scrutiny of the police on the entrance door of this building and who naturally cannot search women in the same way as men, a surprise check was made of the civilian personnel mentioned as they left the building and observation was kept near the kitchen but no evidence was found of persons taking food away. In view of the fact also that the quantity of food supplied at each meal compares favourably with the amount of rations received the amount of pilfering, if any, would be very small.

6. Some cleaners are shown preference by the Assistant Romolo. Again women who have been spoken to have had nothing to complain of. Romolo has been the custodian of this building since 1928, lives in a house attached to the building, and it was ascertained that some few women do go (after finishing work for A.C.) to some offices in via S. Basilio which is nearby and where Romolo's cottage is situate. These offices are cleaned for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce under the direction of Romolo, and the women receive 300 lire per month for their work. This part of the complaint would appear to be made for jealousy and spite.

7. Cleaning materials being sold. Again nothing could be found to substantiate this. Women cleaners who were spoken to stated that they had no trouble in obtaining cleaning materials from Romolo or Pietro the supply man when required and that regular weekly issues of materials sufficient to maintain cleanliness of the building, are made. Many of the cleaning articles are purchased locally and therefore there is no question of selling good ones and buying cheap ones.

8. Romolo getting double pay. As shown in 6 above, Romolo has been the ~~custodian~~ ^{custodian} of this building since 1928, lives in a cottage supplied by the Ministry and receives a wage from them. This is no concern of A.C. who pay Romolo other wages for his work as Assistant and supervision of the civilian cleaning staff etc.

9. Bumba. This ~~another~~ man who does general duties in Office Space section in connection with the civilian employees. It is not true that he went to Sicily twice in a month, he did go there last month at the end in order that he might vote in the elections, as similarly all civilian employees were allowed absence from duty on that occasion.

10. Women dismissed at 2.30 pm. instead of 2 pm. This is rather frivolous. The present instructions for the cleaning staff are that 2 pm. is the time for them to finish their work in the various offices to which they are assigned. As soon as they are finished they make their way to the ground floor where they dismissed by Romolo when all have gathered. Their time of leaving varies a little each day according to the time some women take to arrive, it may therefore be any time between 2.10 pm. and 2.20 pm. before the women leave the building.

11. Hiring and dismissal of women. This is in my opinion the whole crux of the complaint. The majority of these women naturally under the present economic conditions, wish to keep their employment in A.C. knowing they have little chance of finding similar work elsewhere. When the first major reduction of civilian staff was made a short time ago, quite a few complaints were made by women who were dismissed inasmuch as they stated that they were in poorer financial conditions than ~~than~~ others who were retained. This may have been so, and whilst these women are engaged like all employees for the work they do and not their social condition, quite a lot of work was done by Officers of this Commission in Office Space section, H.Q. Commandant, and Mr. Romolo in investigating the financial and family circumstances of the women employees, and altering many of the ~~3954~~ ³⁹⁵⁴ conditions as to dismissal. Now as reductions in staff are contemplated, lists of women to be dismissed are prepared and exhibited beforehand, after investigation of all circumstances by Mr. Romolo, Office Space Section, and final submission for approval to H.Q. Commandant. Many women have expressed gratitude for this action

which is now being taken.

12. I consider that this complaint, like all anonymous complaints, is not worthy of notice. Mr. Romolo is well spoken of by Allied officers under whose control he works, and also by the great majority of the women who have been questioned. The complaint as to the food has no foundation, and although there is also nothing to suggest that larcenies are taking place, the attention of the Allied Commission Police and the Carabinieri have again been drawn to necessity of strict supervision of personnel entering and leaving the building. There is little doubt that this letter was written by someone harbouring a personal grievance against Romolo and the others, either for having been spoken to regarding their manner of working, or under the belief that their dismissal or proposed dismissal is due to Romolo etc. There is always jealousy among this class of women, especially Italian women, and there is little doubt that this, accentuated by the fact that they have need of work and knowing that further dismissals are imminent, will cause other such similar complaints to follow.

R. C. Bond, Major.
R. C. Bond, Major.
Public Safety Division.

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TRANSLATION

TO: Admiral Stone, Rome.

Please listen to the following:

In first place we get an uneatable soup, very little bread: the kitchen personnel is taking home everything i.e. beans, potatoes, "pasta", fats, bread you can ascertain this if you put somebody at the kitchen door at 13.30 and have them searched the assistant of the cleaning women knows everything and profits of this too, the obvious proof is that he profits of these women, takes his favorite ones home and lets them do his housework i.e. makes them wash, press, work, sew and that is why there are some here who work much and some doing nothing. The Commission issues excellent cleaning rags to the women, but Romolo together with the supply-man Pietro sell the good ones and buy cheap ones and of all the other things they must give to the personnel, they give a little bit and sell the rest, and they are two Communists one should beware of We would like to know why so many widows and family mothers with small children have been dismissed and until the other day married women with working husbands and without children have been hired, why have girls who can work as maids not been dismissed? And who can lead a more honest life than here? Why must this Romolo get double pay plus the house he has next to the Ministry - i.e. a pay as doorman and another as assistant. There are family fathers who cannot have one salary and he must have two. The third person who is in the direction to exploit is Zumba, who is already well off he went twice in a month to Sicily, and then also the hour when we come in must be respected, but not when we leave for the pleasure of this assistant we always go home at 2.30 instead of 2.

Therefore we ask you kindly to do something for these poor family mothers and to give work to all equally so much for each of us - and the work the assistant is doing can be done by an American or British soldier, ask the women to know the circumstances and the assistant is not necessary because when the offices are not clean claims are made in the Direction and the Officer in charge can interrogate the women and act accordingly.

Respectfully yours 3954

The sender is just a name so that you may receive the letter, but it's the personnel writing to you.

Preg.mo Ammiraglio Stone

R O M A

Prego ascoltare quanto segue:

Anzitutto si mangia una minestra immangiabile, pane pochissimo il personale di cucina si porta a casa di tutto cioè fagioli, patate, pasta, grassi, pane di questo lei si potrà accertare mettendo vicino alla porta della cucina verso le ore 13,30 una persona sua di fiducia e perquisirle all'uscita l'assistente delle donne di pulizia sa tutto e ci mangia anche lui, prova evidente, lui ne approfitta di queste donne quelle sue preferite se le porta in casa si fa fare le pulizie di casa cioè si fa lavare, stirare, lavorare, cucire, roba di lana ed è perciò che al Ministero c'è chi lavora tanto e chi non fa niente. La Commissione passa dagli ottimi stracci per le donne di pulizia mentre Romolo d'accordo col magazziniere Pietro si vendono i buoni e comperano i cattivi dei stracciaroli e di tutto il resto che devono dare al personale un pochino ne danno il resto se lo vendono, e sono due comunisti da guardarsi molto bene si desidererebbe sapere il motivo perchè sono state licenziate delle vedove madri di famiglia con piccoli bambini e sono state prese in servizio fino all'altro giorno delle donne sposate con i mariti che lavorano e senza figli, perchè ~~non~~ sono state licenziate le ragazze che possono andare a fare le donne di servizio? Che fanno vita più onesta di qui dentro? Perchè questo Romolo deve percepire due stipendi più la casa che ha al Ministero annesso - cioè uno stipendio come portiere e l'altro come assistente. Ci sono dei padri di famiglia che ne sospirano

uno di stipendio e lui ne deve avere due. Il terzo individuo che sta in direzione per sfruttare è Zumba, una persona già benestante in Sicilia è andato due volte in un mese, un'altra ancora si deve rispettare l'ora di entrata e non quella di uscita andiamo via per comodità di questo assistente invece delle due ore 2,30.

Perqio' preghiamo la S.V. Ill.ma di interessarsi di queste povere madri di famiglia e dare il lavoro a tutte uguali tanto per uno - e il lavoro che fa l'assistente può farlo un semplice soldato americano o inglese, interrogare le donne per sapere le circostanze e non occorre l'assistente perchè quando gli uffici non sono puliti reclamano in direzione, e l'Ufficiale di sezione saprà interrogare le donne e regolarli.

Con rispettosì ossequi.

Il mittente è un nome qualunque per farle ricevere la lettera ma è il personale che scrive.

