

ACC

10000/143/1555

10000/143/1555

POLICE LABORATORIES
JULY-DEC. 1944

Minute
1

TO : C.A. Sec.

Folio 2 A for approval and signature please

Blawie Lt. Col.
Colonel
D.P.S.

10/12/44
Room 8 5th Floor
Ext 686 PS S/C.

3579

4A
HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
Public Safety Sub-Commission
APO 394.

Notes of a meeting with Dott. U. Sorrentino, Director
of the Scientific Police School, Rome, on
3th December, 1944.

Fingerprints.

With regard to the system of fingerprint classification Dott. Sorrentino stated that he proposed to register fingerprints under the Gasti system and also under his own, which was still in the experimental stage. He did not think it possible to decide whether his new system was superior to the old until he had registered some 30 to 50 thousand sets of prints and had thoroughly tested it in the light of practical experience. His new system was based on a dual classification: fingerprints of the right hand were classified separately from fingerprints of the left hand and when sets of prints were received for identification two separate searches were made, thus forming a double check.

Dott. Sorrentino said that he was not in a position to judge the merits of the different systems of classification used in various countries, but he thought that it would not be practicable to change to an entirely different system in Italy. However, under the old Italian system it was possible to transmit by cable, fingerprint classifications to countries using different systems. In fact, this had been done in the past without difficulty.

Dott. Sorrentino explained that ³⁵⁷⁸ requests for expert scientific investigation in criminal matters were

Fingerprints.

With regard to the system of fingerprint classification Dott. Sorrentino stated that he proposed to register fingerprints under the Gasti system and also under his own, which was still in the experimental stage. He did not think it possible to decide whether his new system was superior to the old until he had registered some 30 to 50 thousand sets of prints and had thoroughly tested it in the light of practical experience. His new system was based on a dual classification: fingerprints of the right hand were classified separately from fingerprints of the left hand and when sets of prints were received for identification two separate searches were made, thus forming a double check.

Dott. Sorrentino said that he was not in a position to judge the merits of the different systems of classification used in various countries, but he thought that it would not be practicable to change to an entirely different system in Italy. However, under the old Italian system it was possible to transmit by cable, fingerprint classifications to countries using different systems. In fact, this had been done in the past without difficulty.

Dott. Sorrentino explained that ³⁵⁷⁸ requests for expert scientific investigation in criminal matters were made to his department. In the University of Rome there was a Legal Medical Institute and for certain specialized aspects of legal medical science, for example, the examination of blood stains and the analysis of poisons, Dott. Sorrentino referred to the Legal Medical Institute for expert assistance.

Dott. Sorrentino showed me round the laboratories which were meagrely furnished, most of the equipment having been removed by the Fascists or the Germans. Dott. Sorrentino explained his difficulties in obtaining even the absolute essentials, i.e. there were no filing cabinets for his fingerprint collection. He said that he had approached the Ministry of the Interior, who, while being sympathetic, had done little or nothing to provide any material. I formed the impression that the Ministry were not fully aware of the importance of the work of the Scientific Police School, especially the fundamental necessity of establishing a proper criminal record system. I promised that I would suggest to Dott. Ferrari and the Capo di Divisione that they should accompany me on a tour of inspection during which Dott. Sorrentino should make known his needs.

Dott. Sorrentino also explained that in order to ensure the proper functioning of the central registry it was essential that each Questura should have at least one trained official to specialize in criminal identification and scientific police work. He had recommended this to the Ministry of the Interior, but had been told that it was impossible to provide one specialist at each Questura owing to the lack of Public Safety personnel. I suggested that this matter again should be impressed on H.E. Ferrari and his staff during their proposed visit.

Photographic material was almost exhausted, largely owing to the assistance given to the Allied forces who had submitted requests for the developing and printing of photographs. Dott. Sorrentino ³⁵⁷⁷asked the Allies for material, but had been told that none was available.

material. I formed the impression that the Ministry were not fully aware of the importance of the work of the Scientific Police School, especially the fundamental necessity of establishing a proper criminal record system. I promised that I would suggest to Dott. Ferreri and the Capo di Divisione that they should accompany me on a tour of inspection during which Dott. Sorrentino should make known his needs.

Dott. Sorrentino also explained that in order to ensure the proper functioning of the central registry it was essential that each Questura should have at least one trained official to specialize in criminal identification and scientific police work. He had recommended this to the Ministry of the Interior, but had been told that it was impossible to provide one specialist at each Questura owing to the lack of Public Safety personnel. I suggested that this matter again should be impressed on H.E. Ferreri and his staff during their proposed visit.

Photographic material was almost exhausted, largely owing to the assistance given to the Allied forces who had submitted requests for the developing and printing of photographs. Dott. Sorrentino³⁵⁷⁷ asked the Allies for material, but had been told that none was available.

8th December, 1944.

Wilder
A.F. WILCOX, Lt. Col.
Public Safety Sub-Commission.

AFW/ee.

3A
HEADQUARTERS ALLIED CO. MISSION
Public Safety Sub-Commission
APO 394.

Notes of a meeting with Dott. U. Sorrentino, Director of the
Scientific Police School, Rome.

7th December, 1944.

Dott. Sorrentino said that the "Scuola di Polizia Scientifica" which came under the direct control of the Ministry of the Interior, served the whole of Italy. Its three main functions were : -

- 1) To provide courses of instruction in scientific police work for police officials.
- 2) To provide a staff of experts who would deal with all aspects of scientific investigation in criminal cases.
- 3) To act as the central registry of criminal records.

Dott. Sorrentino explained that all the records and the majority of the equipment had been removed or destroyed by the Fascists or the Germans. It was therefore necessary to make a fresh start and to obtain new equipment.

As regards 1) at the present moment no courses of instruction were being held, the last course having finished in Sept. 1943. It was, however, proposed to begin a course of instruction as soon as the new recruiting campaign yielded new personnel.

As regards 2) some exhibits had been submitted from Italian Police Agencies for scientific investigation and also the Allied Police had taken advantage of the amenities offered by the School.

As regards 3) it had been necessary to re-establish the criminal record system which was based on fingerprints.

Dott. Sorrentino said that the "Scuola di Polizia Scientifica" which came under the direct control of the Ministry of the Interior, served the whole of Italy. Its three main functions were : -

- 1) To provide courses of instruction in scientific police work for police officials.
- 2) To provide a staff of experts who would deal with all aspects of scientific investigation in criminal cases.
- 3) To act as the central registry of criminal records.

Dott. Sorrentino explained that all the records and the majority of the equipment had been removed or destroyed by the Fascists or the Germans. It was therefore necessary to make a fresh start and to obtain new equipment.

As regards 1) at the present moment no courses of instruction were being held, the last course having finished in Sept. 1943. It was, however, proposed to begin a course of instruction as soon as the new recruiting campaign yielded new personnel.

As regards 2) some exhibits had been submitted from Italian Police Agencies for scientific investigation and also the Allied Police had taken advantage of the amenities offered by the School.

As regards 3) it had been necessary to re-establish the criminal record system which was based on finger print identification. By law the records of all persons arrested by the Police were required to be sent to the School for record keeping purposes. Questori were beginning to forward such records to the School. The finger print collection now numbered about 3,000. Prior to the war the collection was one million and a half.

The system of finger print classification used was the

old Italian system devised by Casti. However, Dott. Sorrentino had evolved some modifications and improvements to this system, which he proposed to institute. At the moment, in addition to classifying finger prints under the Casti system he was forming a duplicate classification under his own system.

The present staff consisted of himself and a co-Director with some 20 subordinate assistants.

Dott. Sorrentino saw no difficulty in giving courses of instruction on scientific matters as it was customary to call on a number of lecturers from the Universities.

The present staff was sufficient to cope with the number of cases now being submitted for expert examination though it would be necessary later on to expand the staff. The establishment of criminal records was in its early stages but would soon demand additional staff. Dott. Sorrentino explained that the finger print collection would increase very rapidly. It was probable that within a very short time between 7 and 8 hundred sets of finger prints would be received daily.

Wilcox

7th December, 1944.

A.F. WILCOX, Lt. Col.
Public Safety Sub-Commission.

3575

With some 20 subordinate assistants.

Dott. Sorrentino saw no difficulty in giving courses of instruction on scientific matters as it was customary to call on a number of lecturers from the Universities.

The present staff was sufficient to cope with the number of cases now being submitted for expert examination though it would be necessary later on to expand the staff. The establishment of criminal records was in its early stages but would soon demand additional staff. Dott. Sorrentino explained that the finger print collection would increase very rapidly. It was probable that within a very short time between 7 and 8 hundred sets of finger prints would be received daily.

W. J. Cox

7th December, 1944.

A. F. WILCOX, Lt. Col.
Public Safety Sub-Commission.

3575

ATW/ea.

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
Civil Affairs Section
APO 344

File
2 A

AG/14631/PS

Tel : 489081 - 365

9 December, 1944.

SUBJECT : Provision of Photographic Material.

TO : S.I.E. AFHQ (Attention of Lt. Col. Haddon).

1. It has been reported by the Italian Ministry of the Interior that facilities have been afforded by the Scientific Police School in Rome for the scientific examination of exhibits.
2. In particular, at the request of Allied Police and Security Services, a considerable amount of photographic work has been undertaken. The photographic material (which is needed for Italian Police purposes) is now almost exhausted.
3. Dr. Sorrentino, Director of the School, who as you know is most co-operative, is anxious to do everything in his power to continue this kind of work for the benefit of the Allied Forces, but he has requested that photographic material be supplied to permit him to do so.
4. It will be appreciated, therefore, if you will arrange for sufficient material to be sent to Dr. Sorrentino to enable him to comply with any requests made by Allied Police and Security Services.

For the Chief Commissioner,


G.S. PARKINSON, Brig.
A/VP, CA Sec.
A/DCS, AC.

3574

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
ARMED CONTROL COMMISSION
R.C. and M.C. Section.
APO 394

July 1944.

Ref. : CA/

Subject : Scientific Aids to Investigation.

To : Regional Commissioners I to IX : Vice Presidents.

1. The attached circular from A.C.I. (Ref. AAI/1400/CHI(A)
of 18 July 1944 is forwarded for your information and reference if
required.

W. S. L. L. L.

M.S. LUSH,
Brigadier,
EXECUTIVE COMMISSIONER.

3573

303

CONFIDENTIAL

Wanted: Scientific Aids to Investigation

Adm. H.Q. Allied Armies in Italy.

CONFIDENTIAL

AAI/2408/AM.I(b)

18 July 1944

TO: FOR INVESTIGATION

1. Two laboratories, equipped to provide all security agencies with scientific aids to investigation, are now available in Rome.

2. These are located at:

(a) ISTITUTO DI MEDICINA LEGALE E DELLA ANATOMIA FORENSE
UNIVERSITA DI ROMA, 52 Viale dell'Universita

(b) SCUOLA SUPERIORE DI POLIZIA
Via delle Antichita

3. The first of these deals with the aspects of examination and investigation where expert medical knowledge is required i.e. forensic medicine.

4. The second deals with scientific investigation from a purely police point of view i.e. by fingerprints and other such means of personal identification.

5. While it is not possible to give a comprehensive list, the following indicates the kind of work which can be undertaken:-

- (a) Analysis of powders, liquids etc.
- (b) Identification by fingerprints
- (c) Detection and development of writing in invisible ink
- (d) Microscopic examination of all types
- (e) Ballistics
- (f) Expert examination of handwriting
- (g) Identification of typewritten documents

6. In order that the best use may be made of these laboratories, it is important that all security agencies should bear in mind the following points before utilizing their help.

(a) Science cannot take the place of the investigator. It is only after the preliminary investigations have been made that the aid of science can be solicited. Scientific aids can be best employed to convert the links in a chain of evidence.

(b) In order to obtain the best positive value from scientific evidence (i.e. if such evidence is likely to be required for trial) the following principles should be followed as far as circumstances permit.

(i) As few people as possible should handle the evidence that is to be examined. It should be handled as little as possible.

3572

Scientific aids to investigation, and now available in Rome.

2. There are located at:

- (a) ISTITUTO DI SCIENZE LEGALI E DELLA AMMINISTRAZIONE DELLA R. UNIVERSITA DI ROMA, 32 Viale dell'Università
- (b) SCUOLA SUPERIORE DI POLIZIA Via delle Mellare

3. The first of these deals with two aspects of examination and investigation about expert medical knowledge is required i.e. Forensic medicine.

4. The second deals with scientific investigation from a purely police point of view i.e. by fingerprints and other such means of personal identification.

5. While it is not possible to give a comprehensive list, the following indicates the kind of work which can be undertaken:-

- (a) Analysis of poisons, liquids etc.
- (b) Identification by fingerprints
- (c) Detection and development of writing in invisible ink
- (d) Microscopic examination of all types
- (e) Ballistics
- (f) Expert examination of handwriting
- (g) Identification of typewritten documents

6. In order that the best use may be made of these laboratories, it is important that all security agencies should bear in mind the following points before utilizing their help.

(a) Science cannot take the place of the investigator; it is only after the preliminary investigations have been made that the aid of science can be solicited. Scientific aids can be best employed to connect the links in a chain of evidence.

(b) In order to obtain the best protective value from scientific evidence (i.e. if such evidence is likely to be required for trial) the following principles should be followed as far as circumstances permit.

(i) As few people as possible should handle the exhibit they in turn should handle the exhibits as little as possible.

(ii) A detailed report should be kept of all persons through whose hands the exhibits pass, the following information should be obtained from each from such persons:

Time, date and place on which they first handled the exhibit.

Circumstances under which the exhibit first came into their possession.

- 2 -

The position of the exhibit at the time of finding or receipt, and, in the case of the first person to find it, the exact position and location of the exhibit. It is desirable but not essential that a photograph be taken of the exhibit before it is moved from the place in which it was originally found.

The circumstances in which the exhibit was handed to the next person, giving the name of the person to whom handed and the time, date and place of handling or method of dispatch.

(iii) Any person having custody of an exhibit should keep it under his direct personal control and/or under lock and key.

7. Applications for examination of exhibits may be made by any security Agency to Security Branch, H.Q. A.C.O. All such applications must be accompanied by a brief report relevant to the facts which it is desired to establish by scientific means. It is not necessary to submit the full facts of the case

(see para 9 below)

8. A hypothetical case is quoted below to illustrate the foregoing:

A spy is landed by parachute and manages to get out of his harness and proceed some distance from his landing place before being arrested. He is examined and interrogated, and, although he bears marks on his body consistent with having worn parachute harness, and is cut and bruised from the fall, he denies being the person who came down in the parachute. While the circumstantial evidence against him is strong, it is not conclusive and would not alone be accepted by a court. If however the parachute harness was carefully preserved together with the clothing of the suspect, microscopic examination would undoubtedly reveal that some of the fibres from the parachute had worn its way into the suspect's clothing and vice versa. A sample of the hair from the head of the suspect should also be taken, as it is almost certain that some of his hair would be found in the helmet.

9. In a case such as the above it would only be necessary to state when submitting the exhibits for examination: "Herewith parachute harness and clothing of person suspected of having descended by parachute. Please examine for evidence to prove suspect did use parachute."

Similarly were it desired to have a paper examined for invisible ink writing, it would only be necessary to submit the paper with a request that it be examined for writing in invisible ink, without giving full details of the case.

10. The foregoing gives a brief idea of the scope of these laboratories and of the procedure to be used. In general, it is better to submit all likely cases and receive a proportion of negative replies than to decide that scientific aids cannot help when, in fact, they may be able to do so.

11. It is suggested that officers of any security agency might take the opportunity of visiting these laboratories when they are in H.Q., so that they may see for themselves the means and extent to which scientific aids can be used in investigations.

Arrangements for such visits should be made with the Security Branch H.Q. Allied Control Commission, Ministero delle Corporazioni, M.I.C.

3571

Agency to Security Branch, Hq. A.C.U. All such applications must be accompanied by a brief report relevant to the facts which it is desired to establish by scientific means. It is not necessary to submit the full facts of the case (see para 3 below)

8. A hypothetical case is quoted below to illustrate the foregoing:

A spy is landed by parachute and manages to get out of his harness and proceed some distance from his landing place before being arrested. He is examined and interrogated, and, although he bears marks on his body consistent with having worn parachute harness, and is cut and bruised from the fall, he denies being the person who came down in the parachute. While the circumstantial evidence against him is strong, it is not conclusive and would not alone be accepted by a court. If however the parachute harness are carefully preserved together with the clothing of the suspect, microscopic examination would undoubtedly reveal that some of the fabric from the parachute and worn into the suspect's clothing and vice versa. A sample of the hair from the head of the suspect should also be taken, as it is almost certain that some of his hair would be found in the helmet.

9. In a case such as the above it would only be necessary to state when submitting the exhibits for examination: "Herewith parachute harness and clothing of person suspected of having descended by parachute. Please examine for evidence to prove suspect did use parachute."

Similarly were it desired to have a paper examined for invisible ink writing, it would only be necessary to submit the paper with a request that it be examined for writing in invisible ink, without giving full details of the case.

10. The foregoing gives a brief idea of the scope of these laboratories and of the procedure to be used. In general, it is better to submit all likely cases and receive a proportion of negative replies than to decide that scientific aids cannot help when, in fact, they may be able to do so.

11. It is suggested that officers of any security agency might take the opportunity of visiting these laboratories when they are in R.M.S. so that they may see for themselves the means and extent to which scientific aids can be used in investigations.

Arrangements for such visits should be made with the Security Branch Hq. Allied Control Commission, Ministry of the Corporation, H.M.S.

(signed) W. D. Adams, Lt. Col.
for Brigadier,
R.M.S. (I)

DISTRIBUTION:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Comd, Fifth Army. | Comd (OI) A.P.V.C. |
| Col, Eighth Army. | Comd A.C.U./M.C. |
| Col, 5 Corps. | 1 A.C.U. Unit. |
| Col, No. 1 District. | 2 A.C.U. Unit. |
| Col, No. 2 District. | 3 A.C.U. Unit. |
| Col, No. 5 District. | Comd, 1-2 Detachment. |
| Comd, 2nd A.C.U. | 16 P. S. Section. |
| Comd, P. S. S. | Min/O. |
| Security Branch, HQ. | |

