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LSC/222

THREATENED RAILWAY STRIKE

July - Aug 1945

222

THREATENED RAILWAY STRIKE IN BARI AREA

July - Aug. 1945

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Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785021

Brig. Wagon 843232.

Cpl. Parnell 843457

Ally. Davis 543171 ENT. 57.

Ally. Snoddy. (GE)

0005

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
LABOUR SUB-COMMISSION

FF/cc

14 August 1945.

TEL : Ext. 493

REF : LSC/222.

SUBJECT: Threatened Strike of Railway
Workers in Bari.

TO : Vice President, Economic Section.

1. Reference LSC/222 of 31 July 1945.

2. Following the decision of the Italian Government to authorize the payment of a Liberation bonus of 3,000 lire to State and Para-State employees, it has been ascertained from the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro that the strike of railway workers which was threatened to take place on the 15 August 1945 has now been called off.

DAVID G. SACHS
Deputy-Director
Labour Sub-Commission.

Copy to: Executive Commissioner,
Transportation Sub-Comm.,
Lt.Col. L.C. Pannell.
MRS. (TN.- F. British Finance)

6114

HEAD-QUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
AFC 394
LABOUR SUB-COMMISSION

FF/cc

TEL. : 489081 - 493

31 July 1945.

REF. : LSC/222.

SUBJECT: Threatened Strike of Railway
Workers in Bari.

TO : Vice President, Economic Section.

1. Reference LSC/222 of 24th July 1945.

2. It is understood that the general question of the rates of wages payable to railway workers, and also the question of the grant of an "anticipo" to the workers in Bari pending the solution of the problem of the authorization of a Liberation bonus, was considered at the meetings of the Council of Ministers held in Rome on Friday and Saturday last, the 27th and 28th July 1945.

3. It was resolved that full consideration of these matters cannot be accorded until such time as a new Minister of the Treasury was appointed.

4. The position at Bari is that the strike which was threatened to take place on the 27th July was averted, but a further strike is now scheduled to take place on the 15th August if no remedial action is taken by the Government in the meantime.

W.H. BRAINE
Director
Labour Sub-Commission

Copy to: Executive Commissioner,
Transportation Sub-Comm.,
Major G.H.B. Davis
MRS. (TN.- F. British Finance)

6113

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 894
LABOR SUB-COMMISSION

File
FP/row

TEL : Ext. 204

24 July 1945

REF : LSC/222

SUBJECT: Threatened Strike of Railway Workers in Bari

TO : Major G.H.B. Davis, R.E.,
Military Railway Service
C.M.F.
Rome

1. With reference to your Th.A/P/66/44 of 24 July, and telephonic conversation this afternoon.

2. It has been ascertained from the Joint Secretary of the CGIL that that organization has been in communication with the President of the Camera del Lavoro in Bari.

3. It now appears that the problem assumes two aspects:

- (a) The general question of the increase in wage rates of railway employees throughout Italy, and
- (b) The demand of the Bari workers for a liberation bonus similar to that awarded to workers in Northern Italy.

4. The Joint Secretary of the CGIL agrees that (a) above is a national question and can only be dealt with on national lines. In regard to (b), he is pressing the Minister of Transport La Malfa to endeavor to arrange for the granting of an immediate anticipo of 2,000 lire pending consideration of the question of the award of a liberation bonus.

5. These points are to be considered at the meeting of the Council of Ministers to be held on Friday, 27 July 1945.

6. In the meantime the President of the Camera del Lavoro in Bari has assured the Joint Secretary of the CGIL that he will use every endeavor to avert a strike in view of the foregoing arrangements, and will keep in constant touch, reporting by cable or telephone as is necessary on any developments in the situation.

W. H. BRAINE
Director, Labor Sub-Commission

6112

cc: Acting Vice-President, E/S
Transportation Sub-Commission

Subject:- Labour Unrest of Railwaymen
in Bari Compartimento.

Military Railway Service,
C.M.F.
Tel. Firebox Ext. 9350.
Outside Line 843426.
Ref. Tn.A/P/66/44.

24 July 1945.

To :- Labour Sub-Commission,
HQ, Allied Control Commission.

1. Further to this morning's telephone conversation: Mr. Proctor - Majors Small - Davis.
2. Ing. Palmerio's report is attached for your perusal, although it does not appear to contain all the facts requested. This was pointed out to Ing. Palmerio who stated that any other action which had possibly been taken would have been on a verbal basis and that no records of this nature were available.
3. Attached is also a Memorandum on the discussion which is stated to have taken place yesterday evening at a meeting of the Ministers.
4. Will you kindly let me know the result of your proposed enquiry of the General Hq. of the Labour Unions.

G.H.B. Davis

6111

(G.H.B. DAVIS) Major. R.E.,
for Brigadier.
Director, Military Railway Service.

Enclos.

ROME.

24 July 1945.

MEMORANDUM.

1. In the Cabinet Meeting of the Ministers on July 23, the Minister of Transports has given a report on the possibility of a strike of the I.S.R. personnel in the Bari Compartimento.
2. The General Headquarters of the Labourers' Unions, contacted in the matter, will try to do its best to avoid the strike.
3. As to the economic increases asked for by the Bari Compartimento personnel, the question can be examined later on, as this matter concerns ALL the Government employees.

(signed) PALMERIO.

6110

Ministry of Transport
General Affairs and Staff Service

Rome 23 July 1945
PAG/51/28/I

Subject: report on the trouble of
personnel in Bari Compartimento.

Director General
Military Railway Service
B u i l d i n g

The following report concerns the trouble of personnel in Bari
Compartimento.

1. On 16 July 1945 a telephone call from Capo Compartimento at Bari reported that the operating personnel in that Compartimento were threatening to strike if the I.S.R. Administration, within the maximum term of two days, would not grant an adequate indemnity, such as to enable them to meet their familiar expenses.
Identical report was received also from Prefetto at Bari.
2. On the same date, 16 July, the section representative of Railwaymen Syndicate at Foggia wired that the personnel in that locality were seriously agitated because of their poor economical conditions and they asked for urgent economical improvements to be granted anyway.
Previously, on 20 June, the personnel of railway plants at Foggia had discontinued their work for some two hours, to protest against the inadequate economical treatment, and they had started again to work only when the Prefetto promised to take steps with the concerned Authorities.
3. With reference to the above situation, on 18 July a wire was sent to the Capo Compartimento at Bari, instructing him to induce the personnel to continue their job and to inform them that a Commission, consisting of an officer of the Labour Sub Commission, A.C., and of ~~an~~ ^{an} official of I.S.R. General Direction, would call at Bari as soon as possible to examine the situation on the spot.
4. The morning of 21 July, at 0930, a meeting was held in Bari Capo Compartimento's office, under the presidency of Major Small of

Labour Sub Commission, A.C.

Present:

Eng. Carone Capo Compartimento at Bari
 Eng. Palmerio I.S.R. General Direction
 Doct. Papa compartmental representative of the Italian Railwaymen
 Syndicate.

some section and category representatives of personnel at Bari, Foggia,
 Taranto, Brindisi, etc.

5. Doct. Papa reported that, with the present salary, the personnel are
 unable to meet the most elementary needs, and he asked that the salaries
 be increased with an amount - to be paid under any title - of lire
 4000 per month.

He pointed out that, would such request be not met within Wednesday
 25 July, he could not assure that the personnel continue their job.

6. From investigations it resulted that:

According to agreements between Prefetto and Camera del Lavoro, the
 daily pay for a labourer belonging to a private industry has been
 fixed, effective 18 June 1945, to be of lire 280, including the presence
 and high cost of living indemnities. Besides, the following daily
 familiar fees are being paid:

Lire 11,50 for each parent living with the labourer

" 14 for the wife

" 13 for each child

An I.S.R. labourer, with wife and two kindreds, residing at Bari, gets
 the monthly net salary of some lire 6.500, that is some lire 217 per
 day, including the familiar indemnity. If the same labourer was
 residing at Foggia, he should get some lire 5.800 per month, that is
 lire 193 per day, including the familiar indemnity.

6108

7. Although a certain difference of economical treatment between
 State and private labour may be justified, as the job of private
 labourers cannot be continuative, however such difference could be
 reduced.

The Italian Railwaymen Syndicate pointed out several times that the
 economical situation of I.S.R. employees cannot be met any longer;
 the I.S.R. Administration tried to explain that the serious deficit
 of the Italian budget does not allow to meet further expenses. ./.

3

The I.S.R. personnel themselves don't ask for increases of salary, but, most of all, they ask for shoes and clothing to be purchased at a reasonable cost, according to their economical possibilities. Of course, any increase of salary is of no use if shoes and clothing, essential to live and work, are not available on the market. I suggest that, rather than salary increases, we ought to allocate more quantities of shoes and clothing, even salvage items, as it has been done in the past. Furthermore, it is to be considered that, should the railwaymen's salary be increased, the same economical measure ought to be taken on behalf of all the State employees.

Director General
DI RAIMONDO

Ca/23/7

6107

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HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
AFO 394
LABOR SUB-COMMISSION

FP/sh

TEL : 204 24 July 1945
REF : LSC/222
SUBJECT: Threatened Strike of Railway workers in Bari Area.
TO : Vice-President
Economic Section

1. Refer nce LSC/222 of today's date.
2. It is understood that Dott. La Malfa, Italian Minister of Labor, reported the position in regard to the threatened strike of Railway workers to the Council of Ministers at the Council meeting held at 17.30 hours on Monday 23 July 1945.
3. As the question of rates of wages payable to Railway workers is one that affects the whole of Italy and cannot be dealt with in the light of the position at Bari alone, it is understood that it was decided that the matter should be considered by the Council of Ministers at the earliest opportunity, possibly at the next meeting on Friday next, the 27th July 1945.
4. In the meantime the headquarters representatives of the Confederazione Generale del Lavoro undertook to do what they could with the view to averting the threatened strike at Bari.

S. M. BRAINE
Director
Labor Sub-Commission

Copies to:
Executive Commissioner
Transportation S/C
Maj. R. D. Baghorn, M.F.C.
Maj. G.H.B. Davis, M.F.C. (T.M.F. - British Finance)

6106

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

APO 394

LABOR SUB-COMMISSION

IT/sb

TEL : 204

24 July 1945

REF : LNO/222

SUBJECT: Threatened Strike of Railway Workers in Bari Area.

TO : Vice-President
Economic Section

1. A representative of Labor Sub-Commission proceeded to Bari on 20 July 1945 in company of Ing. Palmerio of the Italian State Railways, to investigate and report on the labor unrest in that area and the threatened strike of Railway Workers. The position was discussed with officials of the Italian State Railways and representatives of the workers. The Labor Sub-Commission representative returned to Rome on 22 July 1945.

2. It is understood that Dott. La Malfa, Italian Minister of Transport, arranged to refer the matter to the Council of Ministers for discussion at the meeting to be held at 17.30 hours on Monday 23 July 1945.

A. A. BRADY

Director

Labor Sub-Commission

Copy to:
Executive Commissioner
Transportation S/C

6105

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

AFO 394
LABOR SUB-COMMISSION

RFS/sb

REF : LSC/~~22~~222

23 July 1945

SUBJECT: Threatened strike of ISR Workers in Bari Area.

TO : Labor Sub-Commission

1. On 20 July 1945 I proceeded to Bari accompanied by Ing. Palmerio of the Italian State Railways to confer with the workers in that compartment on the subject of increased wages. Workers had given notice of the strike for 19 July but had agreed to continue work pending discussion of their demands with Dr. palmerio and me. On 21 July we met with the head of the ISR for the compartment and with the representatives of the workers. The workers have been agitating for wage increase for some months and had presented demands to ISR headquarters. Ten days before the meeting there had been a three hour strike of workers in Foggia. During the meeting it became apparent that the workers were highly agitated and with considerable justice. Railway workers are receiving only one-third to one-half the wages received by private industry workers and these private industry workers include those working for civilian contractors actually doing work on the railroad. We, therefore, have the position of a railway worker in Foggia receiving 5800 lire per month while the worker of the private contractor doing the same work on the same railroad receives 400 lire per day. It is recognized that railway workers enjoy certain advantages including permanent employment and pension rights, but the discrepancy in wages is nevertheless far too great.

2. Ing. Palmerio agreed that the demands of the railway workers for a monthly increase in all grades of 4000 lire per month were not unreasonably high. The ISR have been repeatedly advised of the situation and, in turn, had requested increases for the railway workers, but have been able to get no action from the Italian Ministry of Finance.

3. It is believed that the situation is critical, that the workers are entitled to an increase and that work stoppage will result if no increase is granted in the immediate future. The workers realize that military personnel will probably take over limited operation of the railways in event of a strike and that the workers' position would not be improved by a strike, but they have become so agitated over their low rates of pay that the situation is getting beyond control of the workers own union representative.

6104

4. It is recommended that the Italian Government be urged to grant an immediate anticipation of 3000 lire per month to all railway workers in the compartimento pending an overall adjustment of governmental salaries in Italian Government territory.

Ralph R. Small
RALPH R. SMALL
Major, C. A. C.

6103

URGENT.

Subject:- Labour Unrest of Railwaymen
in Bari Compartimento.

Military Army Service,
O.M.F.
Tel. Pirebon Ext. 9350.
Outside Line: 243126.

To :- G-4 (Mov & En),
A.P.H.

Tn. 4/7/66/42.

22nd July 1945.

Copy to:- D.D.En, A.P.H.
Director General, I.S.R.
Director, Labour Sub-Commission, A.C.
(who will please arrange for copies of
Joint Report to be forwarded as stated
in para.5).

1. I have to report that railwaymen in the Bari Compartimento handed in a notice to the Capo Compartimento to the effect that a strike would be declared as at 12.01 hours July 19th unless an immediate promise was forthcoming (a) that the Easter Bonus of 1,500 Lire given to the Rome State Officials and (b) that a general increase in salaries would be granted to the railwaymen in the Bari Compartimento.
2. The view in the Ministry of Transport was that these demands could not be met without repercussions throughout Italy, all other State Officials being affected. The Ministry were preparing a telegram explaining reasons for refusal.
3. In these circumstances I considered that some effort should be made to hear the men's grievances rather than a direct refusal, which might have been taken as a rebuff and which would almost inevitably have produced an immediate strike. Therefore, in conjunction with the Director Labour Sub-Commission A.C., arrangements were made for a representative of both the I.S.R. and of the Labour Sub-Commission to visit Bari to meet the men's leaders and to report thereon. Attached is an interim report of Ing. Palmiero of the I.S.R. who has taken a serious view of the situation and reports that a strike has been ordered for midnight Wednesday July 25th unless an immediate amelioration of salary is promised to all railway employees of the Compartimento.
4. In these circumstances I am arranging for troops to go to the Bari Area should need arise, but it must be emphasised that the units available for rail operation can provide an extremely limited service only, which will be quite insufficient to cover all military requirements. It is further pointed out that in view of the rapid demobilisation programme of British and South African personnel and the redeployment of American units, the possibility of coping with any extension of the trouble to other areas will become increasingly difficult. The serious repudiation of a stoppage of rail transport at the present time is no doubt only too fully realised, and it is therefore requested that some immediate action be taken to deal with the situation before matters get out of hand.
5. In view of the extreme urgency of the situation it was deemed inadvisable to await the preparation of a considered report from the representatives at the Bari meeting before bringing the facts to your notice, but they have been asked to submit a copy of their joint report direct to you together with their recommendations.

1. I have to report that railwaymen in the Bari Compartimento handed in a notice to the Capo Compartimento to the effect that a strike would be declared as at 12.01 hours July 19th unless an immediate promise was forthcoming (a) that the Easter Bonus of 1,500 lire given to the Rome state officials and (b) that a general increase in salaries would be granted to the railwaymen in the Bari Compartimento.
2. The view in the Ministry of Transport was that these demands could not be met without repercussions throughout Italy, all other state officials being affected. The Ministry were preparing a telegram explaining reasons for refusal.
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4. In these circumstances I am arranging for troops to go to the Bari Area should need arise, but it must be emphasised that the units available for rail operation can provide an extremely limited service only, which will be quite insufficient to cover all military requirements. It is further pointed out that in view of the rapid demobilisation programme of British and South African personnel and the redeployment of American units, the possibility of coping with any extension of the trouble to other areas will become increasingly difficult. The serious repercussion of a stoppage of rail transport at the present time is no doubt only too fully realised, and it is therefore requested that some immediate action be taken to deal with the situation before matters get out of hand.
5. In view of the extreme urgency of the situation it was deemed inadvisable to await the preparation of a considered report from the representatives at the Bari meeting before bringing the facts to your notice, but they have been asked to submit a copy of their joint report direct to you together with their recommendations.

6102

R. D. Waghorn

(R.D. WAGHORN) Brigadier,
Director, Military Railway Service.

Enclosure.

INTERVIEW REPORT ON VISIT TO GOVERNMENT BARI ON 20 to 21 JULY 1945 BY MR. PALMERIO.

I arrived at Bari at 19.00 hours on 20 July 45 and I called on the Capo Compartimento at once. The head of the local branch of the Union was also present. I explained the purpose of the visit of Major Small and myself to Bari and we arranged for a meeting for the next day at 09.00 hours to be held in the office of the Capo Compartimento.

The meeting started at 09.30 hours on 21 July 45 :

Chairman:

Major Small, Labour Sub-Commission, A.C.

Present:

Ing. Carone, Capo Compartimento.

Ing. Palmerio, I.S.R. Rome.

Dr. Papa, Head of Bari Branch of the

Railway Union,

Section Chiefs of the Union from Bari,

Foggia, Taranto, Brindisi etc.

Dr. Papa was asked to explain the reasons of the unrest among the Railway employees. He explained that the Railway employees are no longer in a position to go on with their work, because the pay is absolutely insufficient to cover their daily needs. He said that he personally tried to keep a friendly atmosphere among the Railway employees, but under the present circumstances he thought that something should be done at once because otherwise a strike could not well be avoided. He pointed out that the corresponding classes of workers in private industry, on account of recent increases, have a far better rate of pay (put into operation as from 18 June 45).

Facts elicited by Ing. Palmerio were as follows:-

An unskilled labourer with wife and two children in industry receives a total daily pay of 333 lire and the corresponding I.S.R. employee at Bari draws monthly 6,500 lire and at Pozzua 5,800 lire.

Contracts between I.S.R. and Civil Contractors now provide for a payment of lire 49.80 per hour, which amounts to about 400 lire a day for 8 hours work.

The discrepancies appeared evident to Ing. Palmerio. Major Small also thought that a better treatment of I.S.R. employees was necessary and he promised that he would do his best in Rome to represent the demands of the I.S.R. employees. The main consideration was that the workers had to go on without interruption because the running of the railways was indispensable from the Allied point of view.

Dr. Papa declared that the I.S.R. employees in the Bari Compartimento were asking for a monthly flat increase of 4,000 lire for all grades. He was willing to wait until Wednesday for a positive reply, otherwise he could

Present:

Ing. Garone, Capo Compartimento.
Ing. Palermo, I.S.R. Rome.
Dr. Papa, Head of Bari Branch of the
Railway Union,
Section Chief of the Union from Bari,
Roggia, Taranto, Brindisi etc.

Dr. Papa was asked to explain the reasons of the unrest among the Railway employees. He explained that the Railway employees are no longer in a position to go on with their work, because the pay is absolutely insufficient to cover their daily needs. He said that he personally tried to keep a friendly atmosphere among the Railway employees, but under the present circumstances he thought that something should be done at once because otherwise a strike could not well be avoided. He pointed out that the corresponding classes of workers in private industry, on account of recent increases, have a far better rate of pay (put into operation as from 15 June 45).

Facts elicited by Ing. Palermo were as follows:-

An unskilled labourer with wife and two children in industry receives a total daily pay of 333 lire and the corresponding I.S.R. employee at Bari draws monthly 6,500 lire and at Reggio 5,800 lire.

Contracts between I.S.R. and Civil Contractors now provide for a payment of lire 49.00 per hour, which amounts to about 1,500 lire a day for 8 hours work.

The discrepancies appeared evident to Ing. Palermo. Major Small also thought that a better treatment of I.S.R. employees was necessary and he promised that he would do his best in Rome to represent the demands of the I.S.R. employees. The main consideration was that the work had to go on without interruption because the running of the railways was indispensable from the Allied point of view.

Dr. Papa declared that the I.S.R. employees in the Bari Compartimento were asking for a monthly flat increase of 4,000 lire for all grades. He was willing to wait until Wednesday for a positive reply, otherwise he could take no responsibility for the operation of the railways after that time.

The meeting ended at 11.15 hours.

6101

NOTE.

In Sig. Palermo's opinion an increase of 3,000 lire per month, perhaps even less, might meet the demands of the Railway employees if given at once. It is realised that whatever increase is given must be given to all I.S.R. employees in Italy, the present ~~flat~~ pay being considered insufficient. He thought there was a case for an immediate temporary grant to meet the existing situation, subject to the whole question of all railwaymen's wages in Italy being brought under review.



R. PREFETTURA DI BARI

Divisione Gab N. di prot. 3036Bari, 18 luglio 1945

Risposta a nota _____

Allegati _____

OGGETTO: Agitazione ferrovieri.=

ILL/NO SIG. COLONNELLO MILLER
LIAISON OFFICER ALLIED COMMISSION
B A R I

Informo V.S.Ill/ma che i ferrovieri di questo Compartimento sono in agitazione perché non è stato ancora loro corrisposto l'anticipo di lire 2.000,= sui miglioramenti economici, né il premio Pasquale di lire 1.500,=, che sarebbero stati invece già corrisposti ai ferrovieri della Capitale.

Essi intendevano mettersi in sciopero fin da ieri 17, cosa che è stata evitata merco l'intervento mio e del Capo Compartimento presso il Sindacato Ferrovieri.

Ho già riferito in merito al Ministero dei Trasporti, sollecitandone i provvedimenti.

Ho ritenuto di comunicare quanto precede alla S.V.Ill/ma per opportuna conoscenza e per eventuale interessamento presso i propri Organi Centrali.

IL PREFETTO
(Luigi ucci)

61.0

Dir. Clin.

Labour Sub-Commission,
A.C. HQ.

This letter might be of interest

to you.

W. H. C. Colman

19/7/45

ALLIED COMMISSION
LIAISON OFFICE
EAB

0 0 2 3