

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

ACC 10000 1146/193 RSC/707 SICILIAN REGION - REPORTS
Jan. - Aug. 1945

REGION - REPORTS

Aug. 1945

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 224
LABOR SUB-COMMISSION

TEL : Ext. 204

29 August 1945

SUBJECT: Labor Disturbance and Unrest in Sicily.

MEMORANDUM

1. On 25 August a general strike commenced in Sicily. The more mountainous and poorer districts of Caltanissetta and Agrigento were the main seats of disturbance but agitation quickly spread throughout the whole of the Island. Farm workers, office and manual workers are involved and the main reasons for complaint appear to be:

- (a) Lack of satisfactory policy on profit-sharing for the autumn harvest;
- (b) Lack of organizations or institutions for controlling prices and collecting and distributing necessities;
- (c) Failure to establish cooperative stores;
- (d) Delay and lethargy in the initiation of public work schemes and the reactivation of mines;
- (e) Failure to grant a liberation bonus.

2. The agricultural workers involved are mainly concerned with (a) above and in particular insist that the Gallo Decree 311 of 19 October 1944 should be implemented in order to apply to profit division of the autumn crop as between land owners and workers. This Decree, published in the Official Gazette of 18 November 1944, was applicable to autumn crops for 1943/1944 and to the main crop for 1944/1945. Where the landlord provides only the bare ground, products and profits were, under the Decree, to be shared in the ratio one-fifth to landlord, four-fifths to tenant or sharecropper. When in addition to providing ground the landlord agreed to share cultivation expenses, then profits were to be allocated two-fifths to landlords and three-fifths to tenant. The Decree specifically en-titled share tenants to seek revision of their contracts of tenancy insofar as they related to profit, and a district commissary was to be appointed by the local Prefect to arbitrate in disputes.

3. Sicilian agricultural workers are now demanding immediate extension of this Decree to cover this autumn's crops and they ask also for revision of their individual tenancy agreements to provide them with 60% of the profit. ~~and~~ The land owners are unwilling to enter into agreement or even discussion; they do not recognize the existence of workers' organizations and they wish to deal with any individual question between each share tenant and within the individu-

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2. The agricultural workers involved are mainly concerned with (a) above and in particular insist that the Gullio Decree 311 of 13 October 1944 should be implemented in order to apply to profit division of the autumn crop as between land owners and workers. This Decree, published in the Official Gazette of 18 November 1944, was applicable to autumn crops for 1942/1944 and to the main crop for 1944/1945. Where the landlord provides only the bare ground, products and profits were, under the Decree, to be shared in the ratio one-fifth to landlord, four-fifths to tenant or subcropper. When in addition to providing ground the landlord agreed to share cultivation expenses, then profits were to be allocated two-fifths to landlord and three-fifths to tenant. The Decree specifically entitled share tenants to seek revision of their contracts of tenancy insofar as they related to profit, and a district commissary was to be appointed by the local Prefect to arbitrate in disputes.

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4. The Regional Labor Office had arranged for a conference between agricultural workers and the union of land owners to be held on 8 August, but the conference was postponed until 13 August. On this date the land owners refused to participate or discuss, and discontent and agitation on the part of the workers increased until it terminated in the strike of 20 August.

5. It is reported that in Galtanissetta large crowds demonstrated before the Prefect, that the police were reinforced, and that they blocked the city preventing strikers from entering or leaving. The demonstrators with support of Communist, Socialist and Demo-Christian parties, sent telegrams to the President of the Council Parri, and to numerous other Ministers, and the support of the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro was recruited. The Confederazione interviewed the Italian Minister of Agriculture and following this discussion a representative of the Confederazione left for Sicily.

6. The acuteness of the agricultural problem has, to some extent, overshadowed the other sources of discontent referred to in Para 1 above. It is reported that on 25 August an agreement was reached to grant a liberation bonus to all Sicilian workers and this will therefore remove one ground of discontent. It is apparent, however, that as unemployment is extensive and the cost of living is high on the Island, there will be continued hardship and incentive to agitation and discontent unless the Italian Government makes serious efforts to inaugurate public works schemes, reactivation of industry and cooperative stores, or some other means of collecting and distributing the necessities of life at a reasonable price.

1383

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

APO 334

LABOR SUB-COMMISSION

KUH/TMM

TEL : Ext. 304

23 August 1945

SUBJECT: Labor Disturbance and Unrest in Sicily.

MEMORANDUM

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- 2 -

4. The Regional Labor Office had arranged for a conference between agricultural workers and the union of land owners to be held on 9 August, but the conference was postponed until 13 August. On this date the land owners refused to participate or discuss, and discontent and agitation on the part of the workers increased until it terminated in the strike of 15 August.

5. It is reported that in Caltanissetta large crowds demonstrated before the Prefect, that the police were reinforced, and that they blocked the city preventing strikers from entering or leaving. The demonstrators with support of Communist, Socialist and Demo-Christian parties, sent telegrams to the President of the Council Parri, and to numerous other Ministers, and the support of the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro was recruited. The Confederazione interviewed the Italian Minister of Agriculture and following this discussion a representative of the Confederazione left for Sicily.

6. The acuteness of the agricultural problem has, to some extent, overshadowed the other sources of discontent referred to in Para 1 above. It is reported that on 15 August an agreement was reached to grant a liberation bonus to all Sicilian workers and, this will therefore remove one ground of discontent. It is apparent, however, that as unemployment is extensive and the cost of living is high on the Island, there will be continued hardship and incentive to agitation and discontent unless the Italian Government makes serious efforts to inaugurate public works schemes, reactivation of industry and cooperative stores, or some other means of collecting and distributing the necessities of life at a reasonable price.

1535

27 Aug. 1945

Dott. Baldelli of CGIL stated that the Confederation had been notified on Sat. 25th of agitation in Sicily, especially the mountainous and poorer districts of Enna and Caltanissetta. Landowners had agreed to the application of the Cullo Decree, Order 311, to Summer products such as wheat, barley, etc. These terms were accepted all round, but now that the new harvests are coming on : nuts, lemons, etc. the landowners no longer wish to apply Decree 311.

Sig. Aldisio of CGIL came to Rome to speak with the Minister of Agriculture, and following discussion, has left for Sicily. The CGIL naturally back the peasants' claims, and ask for the application of the Decree, what makes the situation more serious is the fact that landowners refuse to discuss matters with peasant's representatives.

1534

Guillo Decree 311 19 Oct 1944

published 'Vagatha U/pinala' No 83 18 Nov 1944

- I In contracts of share tenancy, share cropping, & half share tenancy where landlord provides only the bare ground products & profits will be shared in ratio $\frac{1}{5}$ to landlord $\frac{4}{5}$ to tenant or share cropper.
Cultivation expenses to be divided equally: profits shares $\frac{2}{5}$ landlord, $\frac{3}{5}$ tenant.
- II Above shares will be varied where landlord contributes towards cultivation expenses or where land is specially improved. Share tenant to receive not less than half profit.
- III Share tenant entitled to ask for revision of contract as to profits
- IV A District Commission appointed by Refect can arbitrate.
- V Appeal v District Commission goes to Regional Commission — & as last resort to Supreme Court of Cassation.
- VI This Decree applies ~~as~~ from beginning of crop year 1944/45 & to fall crops for 1943/44.
Decree will operate until publication of regulations following Commission established by Art 6 of R.D. No 146 of 3 June 1944.
- X Decree becomes operative as from date of publication.

1533

Translation Latorraca

/ja

From "GIORNALE DEL MATTINO"
28 August 1945

GENERAL STRIKE AT CALTANISSETTA
AGAINST CAROVITA

A General strike is on in Caltanissetta in sign of protest against carovita. At a meeting held by the Labour Chamber it has been decided to support the farmers requests as well as to unify all requests of all categories of workers. A big crowd of farmers, office and manual workers crossed the city streets towards the Prefettura where a commission was received by the Prefect. He read the order of day voted by the adherent associations at the Labour Chamber. In such order of the workers ask for the following;

- 1) establishment of popular commissions for the control of prices, gathering and distributing institutes;
- 2) establishment of cooperative stores;
- 3) immediate initiation of public work, reactivation of mines and granting of Liberation Bonus.

Moreover they ask for the immediate payment of Liberation Bonus to all office workers. At last, farmers ask for the integral application of the Gullo Decree for summer and autumn products as well as a granting of a premium in kind.

The assurances made by the Prefect did not satisfy the workers.

A public meeting was held and it was decided to continue the strike.

Measures have ^{been} taken to prevent disorders.

1532

Translation Laterraca

/js

SICILIAN AGRICULTURISTS FORCE PEASANTS TO
STRIKE

• • •

+++Peasants ask for application of Gullo decree, revision of half share tenant agreements. At Caltanissetta the police charge strikers. General strike for Liberation Bonus.+++

Farm labourers are in great agitation because agriculturists do not want to apply Gullo decree for autumn products.

The malcontent has grown serious in Caltanissetta where a great popular manifestation has taken place in sign of protest against agriculturists.

The police was re-enforced in order to avoid serious disorders.

The Committee of agitation has sent a protesting telegram to Parri, De Gasperi, Togliatti, Nenni, and C.G.I.L. The telegram declares that the police has blocked the city impeding strikers to go in or out the city. The agitation is supported by the Communist, Socialist, and Demo-Christian parties.

What do the farm labourers want? They want the application of the Gullo decree n.311 concerning the sharing of autumn products as per Palermo agreement for cereal products.

Furthermore they want a revision of the Half Share Tenant agreements in order to obtain the sharing of farm products on the basis of 60%.

The agriculturists do not recognize the existence of syndical organizations and want to settle all questions as if they were individual disputes. In other words they are trying to overcome the isolated farm labourers in order to maintain in a slave regime as in the middle ages.

The situation is tense. If an agreement is not reached within eight days the peasants will apply the Gullo decree.

It has now been announced that sulphur miners, state and parastatal employees have also striked yesterday from 11 to 13 hours. These workers are in agitation to protest against carevita as well as to obtain payment of Liberation Bonus which has been suspended in Sicily without any reason.

IL LAVORO
26 AGOSTO 1945

Il premio di liberazione ai lavoratori siciliani

PALERMO, 25 - Dopo faticose e lunghe trattative è stato raggiunto l'accordo per la concessione del premio di liberazione a tutti i lavoratori siciliani. Il premio sarà corrisposto nella misura e con le modalità previste dal patto del 4 agosto u. s., tra la C.G.I.L. e la Confindustria.

1530

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION
APO 394
LABOR SUB-COMMISSION

Cross Reference Sheet.

File: ISC/207
Subject: Strike agricultural workers in CALTANISSETTA
Date: 29 August
To: LABOR S/C
From: ALCOM PALERMO
Documents Filed: IN CABLES

1529

INTERNAL

Date JUL 17 1945
INTERNAL

To.	Fr.	ECONOMIC SECTION	To.
Vice President		Production Div.	
Brig. Anderson		Supply Div.	
Col. Walton		Agriculture Sub-Comm.	
Col. Denmore		Commerce	
Lt. Col. Moore		Finance	
Mr. Hughes		Food	
Maj. Smith		Industry	
Maj. Clark		Labor	✓
Maj. Tesby		F W & U	
Capt. Atkins		Transportation	
Capt. Williams		Chief Commissioner	
✓ Capt. Highland		Executive Commissioner	
Lt. DiLoreto		Civil Affairs Section	
Lt. Morgan		Establishment Section	
Lt. Arnsberg		Attention:	
Requisition Br.			
Price Control Br.			
Message Center			

For appropriate Action	Note & Return
Remarks/Recommendations	Signature
Dispatch	Investigation & Report
Information	File
Circulation & Return	Note & Return

REMARKS: *[Signature]*

1528

COPY

OFFICE OF A. C. LIAISON OFFICER
SICILY

50 June 1945

SUBJECT: Report of Liaison Officer for June.

EXCERPT

18 JUN 1945

LABOR AND INDUSTRY

Strikes have occupied part of the Liaison Officer's attention during June. A brief one, involving a protest by Palermo's street cleaners on the ground that they had not participated in a distribution of wearing apparel, lasted only two days. At Termini Imerese there was a minor strike involving workers in an olive pressing plant. The only strike of importance is that of the workers in the sulphur mines of Trabonella and other centers, chiefly in the Province of Caltanissetta. Labor Sub-Commission has been kept fully informed of developments. As the month closed the workers continued unwilling to accept the 90 lire wage increase offered them effective June 1st. The workers demand that it be made retroactive to February.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

There has been at least a temporary reversal in the downward trend of bread prices. The sale of unrationed bread by regular bakers, reported last month, was stopped at the end of June in Palermo province by the Prefect's orders; and the price of extra-ration bread, now being sold in the black market, has jumped in Palermo from 50 lire to about 90 lire a kilo. In general, however, food prices may be regarded as declining slightly; although it would seem obvious that a continuation of the process of increasing wages at a rate faster than the quantity of goods is increased will be bound to bring a new increase in the price level.

EDWARD MORTON
Lt. Col. CE
Liaison Officer

1327

LABOR SUBCOMMISSION
A.C.
Routing Slip

	Initials	Date
Mr. W.H. BRAINE	<i>W.H.</i>	<i>18/7</i>
Mr. SACHS		
Mr. HIRD		
Mr. SCOTT		
Mr. PROCTOR		
Miss. <u>STEVENSON</u> <i>MR</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>20/8</i>
Miss. SANSEVERINO		
Chief Clerk		

REMARKS:

1526

ALLIED COMMISSION
SICILIA REGION HEADQUARTERS
LABOUR DIVISION
APO 394

200. 8.44 +

CPM/SS

File KLA/319.1

1 March 1945

SUBJECT: February Monthly Report - Labour Division

TO : Regional Commissioner, Sicilia Region
H.Q. Allied Commission
(Attn. Labour Sub-Commission)

1. STAFF CHANGES.

Capt. C.F. Mason assigned to Liguria Region with temporary duty Sicilia Region.

2. LABOUR RELATIONS.

Labour relations during the month have remained fairly calm and no serious strikes or disturbances have been reported. There is, however, a certain amount of discontent below the surface at the high cost of living and lack of clothing, and it is felt that sooner or later this discontent will manifest itself in labour disorders.

The threatened strike by State employees was postponed after an issue of pasta was made. The employees hope now pasta is being issued regularly that the black market price will fall and have decided to await developments before calling a stoppage of work.

A strike amongst the lower class cinema attendants of Palermo has been settled and all cinemas are now functioning.

3. WAGES.

Assistance was given to the "Montecatini" firm in analysing the wage structure with a view to an upward revision of salaries.

4. MISCELLANEOUS.

A visit was paid to Sicily by S.E. Paresce the Under Secretary of State for Labour. A meeting was arranged with the Regional Labour Officer when labour problems in the island were discussed.

This Division was requested by the Regional Labour Director to afford assistance in connection with the reactivation of the Ente Nazionale Previdenze, Infortunati.

The scheme mentioned in the last monthly report for

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This Division was requested by the Regional Labour Director to afford assistance in connection with the reactivation of the Ente Nazionale Prevenzione Infortuni.

The scheme mentioned in the last monthly report for the inauguration of evening classes in technical subjects is now in the final stage of planning and it is anticipated that classes will commence in the near future.

Copy to:

Director, Labour Sub-Commission.

C.F. MASON

Capt. R.A.

Regional Labour Officer.

LABOR SUB-COMMISSION
A.C.
Routing Slip

	Initials	Date
Mr. W.H. BRAINE	W.H.	
Colonel SMITH		
Col. BABCOCK		
Capt. DORF	a	6/3/45
Capt. TOPLISS		
Capt. SOLENBERGER		
Mr. SACHS		
Mr. DI FEDE		
Chief Clerk		

ALLIED COMMISSION
SICILIA REGION HEADQUARTERS
LABOUR DIVISION
APO 394

CYM/ga

File HLA/319.1

1 February 1945

SUBJECT: January Monthly Report - Labour Division
TO : Regional Commissioner, Sicilia Region
H.Q. Allied Commission
(Attention, Labour Sub-Commission)

1. STAFF CHANGES.

Nil.

2. LABOUR RELATIONS.

The general labour front has remained fairly settled during the month and no serious disturbances have taken place. There is much discontent amongst State employees and there are reports that a general strike will be called in February. The situation is being watched.

The staff of the Palermo Provincial Labour Office and Colloccamento stopped work on 16 January, but returned to duty after an interview with the Labour Minister Gronchi. Investigations have revealed that certain political influences were behind the stoppage chiefly from the Communist Party who are openly hostile to the Labour Offices.

As the result of a strike by the coal stevedores in the Port of Catania, two ships were diverted to other ports by the Ministry of War Transport. The stevedores complain that the tonnage rate is too low, whilst the MWT maintain that a reasonable living wage could be earned if the men exerted themselves and moved more tonnage per day. Payment of despatch money has been considered and proposals are being submitted to Rome.

3. WAGES.

The Wage Adjustment Agreement between the employees and the management of the Societa' An. Industria Autobus has been approved by the Labour Sub-Commission and the Italian Government.

4. SOCIAL INSURANCE.

Services report that the Social Insurance scheme for employees of the Allied Forces, although in its infancy, is working well and that the Italian Institute is co-operating with the

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4. SOCIAL INSURANCE.

Services report that the Social Insurance scheme for employees of the Allied Forces, although in its infancy, is working well and that the Italian Institute is cooperating satisfactorily.

5. MISCELLANEOUS.

The Regional Labour Office in conjunction with MOE and the Technical Institutes is inaugurating a series of night classes in technical subjects. The scheme, which was submitted to this office, appears to be praiseworthy and should be of assistance to the many unemployed with a view to post war reconstruction in Sicily.

-2-

it is proposed to start the courses in Palermo, and if found to be satisfactory to afford similar facilities in other provinces.

Doctor Rosario Purpura of the Ministry of Labour has now completed the overhauling of the staffs of the Labour Offices. The total reduction of staff is 25 employees from the Regional and Provincial Offices and about 70 from the Uffici di Collocamento. The reductions were made mainly in Palermo, Messina and Syracuse.

W.F. Mason
C.F. MASON
Capt. R.A.
Regional Labour Officer.

1523

Copy to:

Director, Labour Sub-Commission.

Capt. E.A.
Regional Labour Officer.

1523

Copy to:
Director, Labour Sub-Commission.

LABOR SUB-COMMISSION
A.C.
Routing Slip

	Initials	Date
Mr. BRAINE	<i>a</i>	
Colonel SMITH		
Lt.Col. BABCOCK		
Major SCICLUNA		
Capt. DORF		
Capt. TOPLISS		
Capt. SOLENBERGER		
Mr. SACHS		
Mr. DI FEDE		
Mr. CERRITO		
Dr. LA LOGGIA		
Chief Clerk		

1522

LABOR SUE-COMMISSION

A. C.

Routing Slip

	Initials	Date
Colonel SMITH		
Lt.Col. BARCOCK		
Major SCALANA		
Capt. DORT		
Capt. TORLISI		
Capt. SOMMERHAGER		
Mr. SACHS		
Mr. DI FEDR		
Mr. GERRITO		
Dr. LA LOGGIA		
Chief Clerk		

ALLIED COMMISSION
SICILIA REGION HEADQUARTERS
APC 394

File RLA/319.1

2 January 1945

CPH/ES

SUBJECT: December Monthly Report - Labour Division
TO : Regional Commissioner, Sicilia Region
H.Q. Allied Commission
(Attention, Labour Sub-Commission)

1. STAFF CHANGES.

Nil.

2. LABOUR RELATIONS.

During the month of December the Labour front has remained calm and no serious disturbances have been reported.

Port workers of Palermo threatened to strike on 23 December as the result of friction between the stevedores and the Compagnia Portuale. The matter has been temporarily settled but the situation is still very delicate.

The increased cost of Living Decrees has caused an increased volume of work for the Labour Offices. Employers and employees are using these ofices to the maximum to obtain advice on the application of this decree.

An official of the Italian Government is at present in the island inspecting the staffs of the Labour Offices with the view to reducing surplus personnel.

3. WAGES.

An agreement shewing an upward revision of wages for the employees of the Societa An. Industria Autobus has been forwarded to the Labour Sub-Commission for approval. The increases requested are identical to those approved for the Societa Generale Elettrica della Sicilia.

4. SOCIAL INSURANCE.

The long awaited decree authorizing social benefits for civilian employees of the Allied Forces has finally been promulgated by the Italian Government. It was made effective from 1 December 1944. It is hoped that this will be an additional inducement for labour to remain with the Allied Forces.

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Director, Labour Sub-Commission.

