

ACC

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MINUTES OF CONFERENCE—

DIRECTOR OF I.S.R. RAILWAYS

MAR.-APR. 1944

MEMORANDUM:161/5
14 April 44

CONFERENCE - 12 April 1944 - (1030 hrs) - Col Fitch,
Maj. Walker with Gen di Raimondo & (Interpreter from Gen's off.)

Discussed request of Gen di Raimondo's letter (C/11047/T.4 dtd 30 March 44 and our reference ACC Tn/30A/18 dtd 9 April 44) for authority to repeal special decrees of February 1942 by which freight rates on certain commodities of foodstuffs etc. were arbitrarily reduced. Result was statement by Gen di Raimondo that request for 100% increase would be reviewed, the request for repeal of special reductions would not be pressed, but that if the 100% increase were granted, the special reductions would remain applicable to the new base rate.

Gen di Raimondo expects to submit additional data in next couple days demonstrating the relatively negligible effect of transportation charges on the current prices of foodstuffs and essential civilian supplies.

Gen di Raimondo stated that Capt. DiBella had been instructed that only the Capo di Compartimento of Palermo and Ministry of Communications had authority to act in matter of procurement of materials and supplies for repairs to Sicilian Railways.

Col. Fitch outlined plan now under consideration by which, [in lieu of the present authorisation form plan) local requests by civilians for movement of goods on basic trains would be made to local station-master, who in turn would submit weekly (or otherwise periodically as might be desired) the accumulation of requests to their respective Capo di Compartimenti whereat the requests would be reviewed jointly with an officer of ACC and decision made. Notice of the decision then to go back to the station-master, along with car labels covering movements approved. Movements local to one compartimento would be handled by the organization in the compartimento, without referring the matter to Naples. Inter-Compartiment Movements will be arranged through Naples. Gen di Raimondo concurred in the principles of the plan as outlined. He answered an enquiry saying that there were warehouses (magazine merci) at most railway stations suitable for temporary storage of goods while awaiting wagons, after movement authorized. He could give no estimate on the approximate time that would be required in transmitting wagon labels from compartimenti HQ to the respective stations. He inquired whether the labels might not be issued in block to station-masters, and the labels used on proper authority only, using a system of numbering the labels as a means of check on the station-master, after the fashion of the system of checking on station-masters as to tickets issued to their respective stations. Col. Fitch did not agree.

10616
Maj. Walker.

5370

MEMORANDUM:

SUBJECT : Conference with Gen. di Raimondo, 21 March 44.

1. At this conference, discussions on control of passenger traffic were resumed.

Col. Fitch said he had visited the Central Station on 18 March and that the conditions were most unsatisfactory. The Naples - Bari passenger train was quite overcrowded, far more than the authorized number of passengers were riding. The crowds in the station were unruly, and no one seemed to be attempting to control the crowds. Moreover, numerous persons had entered the coaches while the train was still in the yard, and so the passengers who had bought tickets in accordance with regulations were unable to find places. He told the General that he was most unsatisfied with the efforts of the Carabinieri and the employees of the I.S.R. to handle the crowd, who just stood about doing nothing.

Gen. di Raimondo said that there was confusion as to whose responsibility the policing of Naples Central Station, since the Regional Order removing restrictions on travel had been published. Up to that date American M.P.s. had controlled the movements of passengers and only these with permits were allowed to board the train. Now that this was not the case anymore, he wanted to know whether the Italian Authorities were responsible.

Col. Fitch said he understood that this was the case.

Gen. di Raimondo said there were numerous cases of Italian Rail officials having been interfered with by Allied soldiers while performing their duties and removing illicit passengers from the military trains, in some cases they had been kicked and threatened. This resulted in the Italian employees being afraid to enforce the regulations.

Col. Fitch said that such occurrences were unfortunate, and disgraceful, but it would nevertheless be the responsibility of the I.S.R. and the Carabinieri to control the trains and stations. He assured the General that he would see to it that the Italian employees would not be interfered with, if the General would provide sufficient control at the departure of the Bari train on Saturday next. He said that he believed that the problem as a whole was far bigger than merely controlling the Naples Station, but this letter would at least be a start in the right direction.

It was agreed that instructions would be given to both the Carabinieri and employees of I.S.R. to try and control the crowds in Naples Central Station next Saturday, 25 March, and that Transportation Sub-Commission would send an officer to co-operate with the Italian Authorities.

2. Gen di Raimondo said that a meeting had been held on 20 March in Salerno, with representatives of the Compartment, the Police heads in these areas, the representative of the Ministry of Communications, the Director General of Public Safety and the Commander of the Carabinieri, to determine what steps could be taken to maintain order. It was agreed that insufficient Carabinieri were available and therefore a special Railway Police will have to be recruited and trained to take the place of the former Fascist Railway Militia. Of course it would take some time to get this organized, but in the meantime steps will be taken to maintain order with the personnel available.

Col. Fitch said it was a sound idea, and that good results should be

forthcoming, but that a start must be made immediately.

Gen di Raimondo said that it might be possible to police the regularly

quite overcrowded, far more than the authorized number of passengers. The crowds in the station were unruly, and no one seemed to be attempting to control the crowds. Moreover, numerous persons had entered the coaches while the train was still in the yard, and so the passengers who had bought tickets in accordance with regulations were unable to find places. He told the General that he was most unsatisfied with the efforts of the Carabinieri and the employees of the I.S.R. to handle the crowd, who just stood about doing nothing.

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Col. Fitch said it was a sound idea, and that good results should be forthcoming, but that a start must be made immediately.

Gen di Raimondo said that it might be possible to police the regularly scheduled passenger stops, it was difficult to police all the operational stops being made at present along the route. In his opinion, he said, such stops are unnecessary.

5369

3. Col. Fitch said that as from 16 March, the Sicilian Railways would revert to Italian Civilian Operation, under the supervision of the Sub-Commission of ACC. He stressed that close co-ordination between the Sicily Compartment and the Ministry was necessary, and that the Compartment Officials must channel through the Ministry all matters to ACC.

- 2 -

4. Col. Fitch asked if Capt. Debellia, who has been in Sicily arranging for repairs to the Sicilian lines was empowered by the Ministry to act on its behalf and make contracts and expenditures to the sum of 500,000,000 lire, as the Captain had told the Tn. representative in Palermo.

Gen. di Raimondo said he was not acting in any official capacity, and that he (the General) had met Capt. Dibellia only once, and had merely told him that the Italian Government would spend what sums are considered necessary to repair the network in Sicily. Any commitments made by Capt. Dibellia could not be considered binding by the Ministry, since the Capt. is not a member of it. The General agreed to give Col. Fitch a letter to this effect.

5. Ing. Morandi, called in by Gen. di Raimondo was asked to prepare a record of the actual basic trains run, for comparison with the schedules on paper.

6. It was agreed to hold a further meeting on Saturday 25 March, at 1030 hours.

5308

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Conference with Gen. Di Raimondo, March 13, 1944.

- This was the meeting originally scheduled for March 11, but postponed for unavoidable reasons.
- The points contained in Col. Fitch's letter of Feb 18 Feb were the basis for discussion.
- It was agreed that it is impossible and impractical to institute a permit system.
- With reference to Para 5 (i) of of the letter, General di Raimondo agreed that a press and radio propaganda campaign to impress the public of the necessity for limiting rail travel to the barest essential minimum should be considered; and said he would contact the Ministry of the Interior on the subject.

Col. Fitch asked how this fact could be brought home to every class of the community, since the papers only reach the urban population, and many people do not have radios.

The use of posters was suggested, but Gen. Di Raimondo said there is a shortage of paper. He further stated that the Mayors and Carabinieri or small communes could be of help to bring the facts before the public.
- Col Fitch asked if any statement had been yet made to the press.

General di Raimondo said that the regulations for the use of the Naples Bari trains had been put in the daily paper in Naples. He said he feared that without a mere press and radio propaganda would not improve the situation very much.

Col. Fitch said the situation is so serious that everything will help, and that the press and radio campaigns are something that can be done immediately.
- Col Fitch emphasised that the situation needed immediate measures, and that it is the responsibility of the Italian Government take the necessary steps to keep order at the stations, and to keep the mob off the trains. Otherwose, he said, the Allies would have no other alternative than to stop running any civilian trains at all, and use the resulting available transportation for instituting service food supplies. He stated that he did not wish to have to stop all civilian trains, but these disgraceful scenes at railway station cease.

5. Gen. Di Raimondo said that the Region 3 order, authorizing civilians to travel if they were doing so in order to obtain food, had made the position much worse, since it would be only necessary for a person apprehended on a train without a permit to say that he was going to let food supplies.

S. Gen. ID. Remember further said that he had given the matter much thought, but that he was unable to find any solution; and would welcome any ideas which LEO might make, or measures to deal with this serious situation. He said he would confer with the other members of the Government, and would try ~~and~~ to develop some plan.

10. Col. Titchener is to examine the Chinese text of the subject of Control of Imports, and is suggested the subject of Importation of the first and second meetings, and to provide a final combination of the two subjects.

Guarantee of Raymond said he would do so.

11. It was agreed to hold a taskplan meeting on 15 March.

25.

MEMORANDUM.

SUBJECT: Conference with General di Raimondo, March 8

1. The position of the control of Private lines was further discussed. General di Raimondo explained the workings of the Inspectorate, and the question of financial subsidies from the Government to the private lines, and the control exercised by the government.

2. Col. Fitch emphasized that ACC could only deal through Government channels, in this the Ministry of Communications in its control or interests that ACC might have in Private lines.

Gen. di Raimondo agreed that this must be the case.

3. On the matter of Control of Passenger traffic on civilian trains, it was agreed that the latter is a pressing one, and that a solution must be found at once.

4. Gen. di Raimondo again stated that in his opinion an increase of civilian passenger service was needed, and would go a long way in relieving the situation.

Col. Fitch explained that any increase at present is out of the question, and this cannot be considered a basis for a solution. He asked the General to examine this sub-commission's letter of 19 Feb, 1944, ~~app~~ ^{on the subject of control of passenger traffic}, and to give his opinions on the proposals contained therein.

Gen. di Raimondo agreed to do this.

5. It was decided to hold a further meeting on March 11.

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Col. Fitch explained that any increase at present is out of the question, and this cannot be considered a basis for a solution. He asked the General to examine this Sub-commission's letter of 19 Feb, 1944, ~~Appendix~~ on the subject of control of Passenger traffic, and to give his opinions on the proposals contained therein.

Gen. Di Raimondo agreed to do this.

5. It was decided to hold a further meeting on March 11.

5305

11/11
ACC. INFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Di Raimondo, Under Secretary for Communications, Royal Italian Government.

DATE: 6 March 1944.

PLACES: Int. Tn. Subcom. 70 Nov. & Dec. 1943. 1000.

PERSONNEL: Colonel A.J. Fitch }
Major W.S. Walker }
Int. Tn. Subcom. }
Int. Tn. R.R. W. S. Fitch }
General Di Raimondo }
ISR.

1. This meeting was called by Colonel Fitch to discuss outstanding points relative to operation of the Italian railways.

2. The agenda consisted of the following items:
Item 1. Control of passenger traffic on civilian lines.
Item 2. Control of private railways.
Item 3. Authorization forms.
Item 4. Position regarding Sicilian railways.

3. Item 1. The matter of control of passenger traffic was postponed, since General Di Raimondo said he had not received Col. Fitch's letter on that subject, dated Feb. 10. A copy was given to the General who undertook to study it, and be prepared to discuss it at the next meeting.

4. Item 2. Col. Fitch asked what measure of control is exercised by the ISR over the private railway companies.
General Di Raimondo explained that the network of private lines is divided into Ispektorati, which parallel the Compartimenti of the State Railways. The head of the Ispektorato is a state employee, and has the same functions as the head of the Compartimento. Liaison is maintained by the two organizations, and both report to the Direzione Generale at the Ministry. Coordinated movements between the ISR and the private lines are arranged by the Compartimento in conjunction with the Ispektorato. All financial affairs of the private railways are supervised by the Ispektorato, which exercises a strict control over the accounts of the private companies. All allotments of subsidies from the State are computed by the Ispektorato.

Col. Fitch asked what machinery existed for the maintenance of liaison between the Ispektorato and the Compartimento.

Gen. Di Raimondo explained that no special organization exists for liaison, but that the two offices work side by side, and maintain contact with one another.

Col. Fitch suggested that if the ISR were to take over the control of the private lines, the Compartimento would then be able to take over the work of the Ispektorato.

ISR.

1. This meeting was called by General Fitch to discuss outstanding points relative to operation of the Italian railways.

2. The agenda consisted of the following items:

- Item 1. Control of passenger traffic in civilian lines.
- Item 2. Civil Control of private railways.
- Item 3. Authorization of goods.
- Item 4. Position regarding Italian railways.

3. Item 1. The meeting was called by General Fitch to discuss outstanding points relative to operation of the Italian railways. General Di Raimondo said he had not received Col. Fitch's letter on that subject, dated Feb. 10. A copy was given to the General who undertook to study it, and he prepared to discuss it at the next meeting.

4. Item 2. Col. Fitch asked what measure of control is exercised by the ISR over the private railway companies. General di Raimondo explained that the network of private lines is divided into Ispettorati, which paralleled the Compartimenti of the State Railways. The head of the Ispettorato is a state employee, and has the same functions as the head of the Compartimento. Liaison is maintained by the two organizations, and both report to the Direzione Generale at the Ministry. Confidential movements between the ISR and the private lines are arranged by the Compartimento in conjunction with the Ispettorato. All financial affairs of the private railways are supervised by the Ispettorato, which exercises a strict control over the accounts of the private companies. All allotments of subsidies from the State are computed by the Ispettorato.

Col. Fitch asked what machinery existed for the maintenance of liaison between the Ispettorato and the Compartimento.

Gen. Di Raimondo explained that no special organization exists for liaison, but that the two offices work side by side, and maintain contact with one another.

Col. Fitch suggested that if the ISR were to take over the control of the private lines, the Compartimento would then take over the work of the Ispettorato.

Gen. Di Raimondo said that this would not be possible, since the Compartimento would not be competent to deal with the problems of the private lines, and that there would be insufficient personnel.

Col. Fitch said that any control that ACC would exercise over the private lines would have to be through the State Railways, and that if ACC officers were posted at Compartimento HQ, the latter would have to establish a channel of communication to the Ispettorato.

Gen. Di Raimondo said he would post an official of the Ispettorato at each Compartimento HQ. ACC liaison officers would then be able to communicate with him through the Compartimento.

Col. Fitch thought that this would be satisfactory. However, he wished to point out that he did not intend to disturb the arrangements at present in force by the DMRS, but the arrangement as suggested by the General could be made with a view to the eventual handing over of the ISR to civilian administration.

5. Item 3. Col. Fitch said he wished to discuss the matter of Authorization Forms for civilian freight movements.

Gen. Di Raimondo said he would like to point out that the present situation as regards freight transportation was most unsatisfactory, as the basic trains were too few to meet the needs of the civilian population. He enlarged upon the difficulties of maintenance of locomotives, rolling stock, and permanent way. He said that he was anxious that the Railways do their best to aid in the war effort, but that operating conditions were increasingly bad due to lack of supplies etc. The Italian government would be willing to pay for fuel and new equipment, but he did not know whether ACC or DARS were the proper agency for him to approach on this subject.

Col. Fitch said that at present Gen. Di Raimondo must address himself to Gen. Gray, of DARS.

Gen. Di Raimondo said he had written repeatedly, but had not received any definite reply.

Col. Fitch said that the General must bear in mind that this conversation was entirely unofficial, and that the needs of the Military have absolute priority. However, he suggested that the General continue to put forward his case to the DARS, and that if he wished to present a revised list of basic trains which he considered absolutely vital, it could be taken up at the next meeting of the Transportation Sub-committee.

6. Item 4. The present status in Sicily was explained to General di Raimondo. He said that he had not been notified of the existence of the mixed committee set up in Palermo since the DARS had moved forward.

Col. Fitch told him that pending decision on his recommendation that the Sicilian lines be placed under ACC control, all questions relative to Sicily should be sent to this Subcommission.

Col. Fitch asked the General about Privately owned lines in Sicily.

Gen. Di Raimondo said that nearly all the privately owned lines in Sicily are operated by ISR, and that they come under the control of the Compartimento HQ at Palermo.

7. It was decided to hold a further meeting with Gen. Di Raimondo, on Wednesday, March 8, at the General's office.

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