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HEADQUARTERS
COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512

5 January 1945.

SUBJECT: Italo-Swiss Frontier Communications.

TO : G-2(CI-iii) Section, AFHQ, APO 512, US Army.

1. Aosta section.

a. There is a direct road, double carriage width, hard-surfaced, running from Aosta to the St. Bernard Pass. This section is only open from May until October. It is 34 kilometers from Aosta to the Pass.

b. The road from Aosta to Como is a year-round road, hard-surfaced and adequately wide. The distance from Aosta to Como is 264 kilometers.

c. It must be remembered that, though certain roads are available in this section, the bulk of outlying frontier posts cannot be reached by either mobile transport or telephone. This may be considered a truism for the whole frontier with the exception of the Como region. Thus the need for additional communication equipment is apparent.

2. Domodossalla section.

a. The road leading from Domodossalla to Iselle (the frontier crossing point) is 18 kilometers in length, and a hard-surfaced road. This road is closed during the winter months.

b. During the winter, passengers are entrained through the Simplon tunnel that runs from Domodossalla to Briga, Switzerland.

c. The distance from Domodossalla to Como is 101 kilometers by road. This is a hard-surfaced, year-open highway.

d. Another road leads from Domodossalla to San Giacomo, but since there is no connecting road on the other side, the importance of this pass can be somewhat minimized.

3. Ciasso section.

a. The city of Ciasso itself, the main railroad crossing to Switzerland is an international customs post situated in Swiss territory.

b. Pont de Ciasso, is the road crossing control point situated just outside of Ciasso in Italian territory and 7 kilometers from Como.

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c. This area is honeycombed with roads, and lateral communication is of no problem whatsoever in this area. All possible frontier escape routes are connected by road with Como, with the exception of lake frontage on Lake Como.

4. Chiavenna section.

a. The road from Chiavenna to the frontier crossing point at Splugen is 39 kilometers in length with a number of hairpin bends. This road is snowblocked from October to May.

b. The road from Chiavenna to Como passing by Lake Como is a large well-surfaced road, open to year-round traffic. The distance from Chiavenna to Como is 54 kilometers.

5. Tirano section.

a. Tirano is right on the frontier, and commands the road crossing into the Bernina pass. This pass, however, is snow-blocked during the winter months.

b. The road from Tirano to Como, joins the Chiavenna-Como road directly south of Chiavenna and follows Lake Como into Como. The distance between Tirano and Como is 128 kilometers.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Lateral communication between the branch offices and headquarters will be possible both by road and by telephone.

a. Communication between one branch office and another, or between a branch office and the isolated guard posts, will practically be impossible unless this section supplements the local means of communication and transportation.

b. Though it is understood that the responsibility for supply and transportation needed by the Italians is fundamentally an Italian problem, it is envisaged that this section will have to render some assistance. Any such assistance would be tendered with hesitancy, but in order to accomplish the desired operational results, such aid might become mandatory.

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