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COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
ITALIAN FRONTIER CONTROL DETACHMENT
ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
APO 512 U.S. ARMY

25 May 1945
Turin Section

SUBJECT: THE Ousting of Italian Guards by the French at Moncenisio

TO: Commanding Officer, Italian Frontier Control Det.

1. Attached herewith is a report from Special Agent Eliopulos of the SUSA sub-section concerning an incident on the night of 23 May 1945. Subject; The Ousting of the Italian Guard by the French near Moncenisio.

2. This office is fully aware of the seriousness of the situation and will endeavor to obtain any additional information possible concerning attempts to belittle Allied control in the region on the part of the French military authorities.

3. For your information and necessary action.

NICHOLAS A. NATSIOS
SAIC, Turin Section
CIC, IFCD

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25 May 1945
SUSA Sub-section

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE:

SUBJECT: The Ousting of Italian Guards by the French Near
Moncenisio

1. At 1830 hours, 23 May 1945, this office was informed by a confidential informant that at 1630 hours, same date, a French captain who was accompanied by two French soldiers appeared at the Italian guard post at OSPIZIO, which is located approximately three kilometers south-east from Moncenisio (frontier) and ordered the Italian guards on duty, who number ten, to leave that post immediately as the French had arrived and they were now in command.

2. The Italian guard refused to leave without first receiving proper orders from their superior officers, When the Italians made no move to leave, removed the Italian flag which was flying over the building in which they lived and worked, and stated that they would return in the evening to take command.

3. At 1900 hours, same date, Major MUTI, second in command of the partisans appeared at this office and retold the story in (1.) and (2.) above, and turned over to this Agent the written statement of the happenings, which are attached to this memo as Exhibits (A) and (B). The Major appeared to very upset and not being able to locate any A.M.G. officer to advise him what to do he more or less asked this Agent for advise. He also stated that he had three to four hundred partisans ready to move to the frontier so that they could defend their Post from the French.

4. Major Muti was advised by this Agent to put another flag and wait until the French returned as they had promised. When and if they did return they were to be told that they, the Italians, were there on specific orders from the Allied Military Government and until they had received orders to move they would remain at their Post. They were further advised that if the French insisted on taking over after being told about A.M.G., and wanting to use force to remove the Italians, they were then to leave without any incident whatsoever with the French and were to go to their other Post which is Post No 17 and located on the frontier, and they were to notify the Americans who have the road-block there.

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2 (1a) In the summary of information, dated 16 May 1945, from Lt. E.W. Luthy, CAO SUSA, this office obtained information that the French established road blocks seven miles from the frontier (1939 boundary) at Moncenisio. In this zone was sent a group among whom were the Prefect of St. Jean de Maurienne, a Free French priest, and the son of the mayor of Lanslebourg. Their purpose was to prepare the region for the occupation of the territory by French civilians. Italians were refused entry to the region without a written authorization given by the Sécurité Militaire of Susa. The Sécurité Militaire has authorized crossings despite the closure of the frontier. The new boundary is in contradiction to the AFHQ directive governing travel control between France and Italy dated 28 April 1945.

3. (1 b) The French authorities are issuing laissez-passers and frontiers to Italian civilians who must enter the seven mile French occupied zone; The CIC Italian Control Office at SUSA was informed by Capt. BAKER, AMG officer, that as a result of verbal propaganda by the French that the territory would remain under French control, Italians are being forced to apply to the French authorities for authorization to travel into the zone in question.

4. (1 c) The French Sécurité Militaire is exercising independent travel control by issuing laissez-passers without consulting CIC, Susa and in direct violation to this AMG authority vested to AMG by AFHQ directive dated 28 April 1945.

5. (1 c) War criminals of Italian nationality are being arrested in Italian territory by the French and are being transported to France for trial in French tribunals. On 3 May 1945, FAVRO Riccardo, Italian, was arrested in BUSSOLENO, SUSA on charges that he had denounced French partisans to the Fascist Police in the Haute de Savoie region. Subject was taken to Nice, France where he is awaiting trial in the French tribunals.

6. (1d) Persons who have been given laissez-passers by the French and who were in need of transportation were accommodated by being transported in French military vehicles. On 17 May 1945, Mme CHABOD Jeanne and BOLDI Gino arrived in Susa on French military vehicle having crossed from GRENOBLE France on their way to Turin. They were consequently apprehended by CIC Agents Eliopoulos and Jackson and their laissez-passers withdrawn. (see exhibit A) Subjects were placed in the custody of Maj. Hamilton (Br.) at his request and are awaiting final disposition in Turin.

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**SUBJECT: The Custing Of Italian Guards by the French Near
Moncenisio (cont'd)**

AGENT'S NOTE: It is the opinion of the office that the situation concerning the Franco-Italian frontier is growing tenses and tenses every day, and the Italians are getting ready to defend the pre 1939 Franco-Italian frontier, and unless a final decision is made in the very near future concerning said frontier clashes between the French and Italians will undoubtedly take place. Said clashes will probably involve the Americans also, since the French claim that the Americans should not be concerned with the frontier as it is a matter for the French and Italians to decide whether or not the frontier be changed and moved back further into Italy.

This office's sole interest in the frontier is making certain that it is closed and sealed as ordered by A.F.H.Q., but this office, as of yet, will not ascertain as to whether the frontier is completely sealed until the French Military Vehicles can be controlled at the frontier by the American road blocks.

**LOUIS ELIOPULOS
Special Agent, CIC**

**Inclosures:
Exhibits A and B**

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COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
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APO 512 U.S. ARMY

25 May 1945
Turin Section

SUBJECT: Assault of Partisan Commander By French Soldiers

to: Commanding Officer, IFCD

1. Attached herewith is a report received from Sig. GONNELLA, Partisan chief of the 41st ALTA VAL SUSA Partisan Division. The report and its translation is attached.
2. This is a report of an incident which occurred near Esille on the road to SUSA.
3. For your information.

NICHOLAS A. NATSIOS
SAIC, Turin Section
CIC, IFCD

1. Enclosures--
 - a. Original and translation of incident near SUSA

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C. L. N.

C. V. L.

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41 Division Alta Val Susa DACCON

Comand

Ulzio May 22 1945

N° 315 proto.

SUBJECT: Aggression from the French Military Soldiers against the Comander of the Division.

TO THE COMANDER OF THE FRENCH UNIT

ESILLE

and to whom it may concern:

FRENCH REGT. COMAND

2 BN. 99 REGT. FRENCH COMAND

C. M. R. F.

CHIOMONTE

ULZIO

TORINO

The 21 May at 7 o'clock in the evening while travelling in our car to ESILLE with the partisan Mario Riccardi and the scout Aurelia Panizzera, towards Ulzio, we were stopped in front of the French road block by the soldiers of the 159 REGT.

Thinking they just wanted a lift in the car, which already happened during our journey to Susa Esille, we stopped to pick them up.

I descended from the car, and the French made the partisan who was accompanying me descend also. As soon as Mr. Riccardi got out of the car they assailed me and began fighting without any reason and knocked me to the ground. Mr. Riccardi tried to help me, but he was being beaten by four soldiers and other five or six that came out of the cantonment. One of them pointed his revolver at Mr. Riccardi.

At that moment an American jeep arrived, and so the French calmed down and in this way we were ^{able} to save ourselves against ten of these French soldiers who attacked us without reason.

As I got up they told me to keep still and to continue on my journey, and they also told me that they didn't care a bit for the partisans and thier officers. I asked a French Corporal that happened to pass, the reason of this assault and one of his soldiers answered that thier order was to do that. I asked the names of those who struck me, but the coporal told me to go to the Captain. I went to see him but he only made me wait without recieving me, so I continued my voyage to Ulzio also because I was hurt. The Americans after having given First Aid to me continued on thier way to Susa.

My relations with the French have always been very good, and I have tried to help the French troops especially the first days they came through Italy.

THE DIVISION COMANDER

FERRUA

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Susa, May 23, 1945

SUBJECT: ITALIAN GARRISON AT MONCENISIO

The Italian detachment Commander of Moncenisio, Sergeant Steo CLARETTO, sent to us at 1830 hours a messenger who told us that at 1630 hours the French Captain who is Commander of the French garrison at Ospizio (Italian territory) ordered the Italian soldiers who stay there to immediately leave the place. In the same time French soldiers took down the Italian flag and took it away.

The Italian partisans, who are not accustomed in being maltreated protested strongly, but did not show any resistance, but we can imagine that if this continues there, serious trouble could happen, and this we repeat, against the will of the Italians who want to avoid it.

Meantime the Italian garrison will stay where it is waiting for orders from Superiours.

Piazza Commander
(aldo Laghi)

Vice Commander
Major MUTI

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DETACHMENT OF MONCENISIO

SUBJECT: Report of the Provocation on Part of the French Troops to the Detachment of Moncenisio

Yesterday, 23 May 1945, about 1830 hours, a French lieutenant of the Chasseurs Francais came to remove us from our station from where I had to go down to station No.5 with my men and all the material. I told him that I could not obey his orders as my orders came only from A.M.G. and Commanding Officer. I was told that if I would not comply with their order they would use forcible means against my men and me. Then I went to the French Command which is down a few meters from Ospizio and found a Captain of the Chasseurs and a chaplain lieutenant. After asking explanations of that strange order; I was told that the order had come from Colonel Vallette D'Ossia, Susa, and that they were executing it. I told them that I could not leave my post unless authorized to do so from A.M.G. and my Commanding Officer. An Officer then told me that Moncenisio is french and only France can dispose of this territory. I got an hour's delay and went immediately to the Frontier where the mentioned Officers had me accompanied by an armed guard. I wanted to telephone from that station to the American Detachment in Susa but found that the wires had been cut. At once I reported our troubles to Susa by the men who had carried up the food. While I was speaking with the French officers some soldiers who were upstairs in our station-house tore the Italian flag down. When that happened I went back to the French Command to protest and after a half hour I got the flag back, with the help of the chaplain lieutenant. I tried to send two armed men as far as the dike to get a phone call through to Susa but when my men went out of Ospizio some French soldiers ordered them not to move and also tried to disarm, them. Several armed soldiers who were openly hostile at us forbided us to leave the station. At 1800 hours a number of armed soldiers accompanied by an Officer ordered us to pack our knapsacks and leave. We were also ordered to leave the material which we could not carry in corner of the room and the French took care of that. They then ordered me to go down to No. 5 Post because I am "An Undesirable Element on the Highlands of Moncenisio". I obtained refuge for my men at the frontier with the American garrison. I was told that they did not allow us to live at Moncenisio because they needed our premises.

At 1830 hours I was accompanied to No.5 Post by two French soldiers and a partisan whom I got with me. I was not allowed to make a list of things that had been consigned to us and we had left at our station. They ordered me to leave the command to one of my soldiers who took care of everything. Half an hour after I had arrived at No 5 near our partisan station, a French officer came and said that I could not remain there and that they were going to send me to Susa on the first truck that passed. No truck arrived before 2230 hours and at that time I came on the truck used to carry food. When I arrived at Susa I went at once to the C.I.C., Villa Michelette, where I made a summary of what had happened to the Agents who were present.

PERSONAL NOTES

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I have noticed the greater and greater hostility of French against us, and they try every way to provoke us. On 22 May 1945, at Antica Porta, two French soldiers originally from Italy, shook hands with us. A Captain of the troops who were going to leave that same night saw the handshaking and approached them angrily saying "Why did you shake hands with those fellows, don't you remember what they done to France in 1940? Turn your back when you see them; don't shake hands with them".

The majority of the French soldiers tells us that the Americans are like Germans; in France they made many vexations; they don't fight and they send the French where there is danger; and the war is not over as they are waiting help from Russia in order to fight against the Americans and British. I heard this horrible propaganda from the French Officers also.

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Sgt.-Major CLARETTA STEU

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