

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

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28 May 1945
SUSA Sub-Section

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

SUBJECT: General Survey Report Covering Areas From
Susa to Moncenisio and to Claviers

1. On 28 May 1945, this office completed the General Survey of the above named areas. Said survey was made at the request of the Commanding Officer, Italian Frontier Control Detachment, and the information found below was obtained from personal observations and from various Italian officials and agencies.

I FORMER GUARD SYSTEM

A. The SUSA Company of the Regia Guardia di Finanza (R.G. di F.) before the war consisted of the following groups:

1. Susa Command - On which depended the following groups:

a. Brigade of Ferrera Cenisio - which extended from Punta Rocciamelone to Monte Lamet (13 km).

b. Brigade of Molaretto-which extended from Mont Lamet to Punta Guisalet (11 km) with the fixed post No. 5.

c. Brigade of Susa - to Rocca d'Ambin (8km) with a summer detachment at Colle Clapier.

d. Brigade of Exilles - from Rocca d'Ambin to Point Sommeiller (10 km).

2. Bardonecchia Command - On which depended the following groups:

a. Brigade of Bardonecchia - which extended from Pointe Sommeiller to the summit of Gran Bagna (26 km) with a detachment at Modane.

b. Brigade of Melezet - from the summit of Gran Bagna to Pointe Charra (25 km).

c. Brigade of Oulx - from Pointe Charra to Pointe Chal-

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anche Ronda (14 km).

e. Brigade of Claviers - from Pointe Chalanche to the summit Saurel (7 km).

B. Distribution of Personnel in the Groups

1. Susa Command	-	1 Captain
Susa Post	-	1 Lieutenant
a. Brigade of Molaretto	-	2 N.C.O.s-11 guards
b. Brigade of Ferrera Cenasio	-	1 N.C.O.-5 guards
c. Brigade of Susa	-	3 N.C.O.s 9 guards
d. Brigade of Exilles	-	1 N.C.O. 5 guards
2. Bardonecchia Command	-	1 Lieutenant
a. Brigade of Bardonecchia	-	6 N.C.O.s 4 guards
b. Brigade Melezet	-	1 N.C.O. 5 guards
c. Brigade of Oulx	-	1 N.C.O. 5 guards
d. Brigade of Claviers	-	2 N.C.O.s 7 guards
e. Brigade of Bousson	-	3 N.C.O.s 13 guards

C. Important Topographical Characteristics Along the Line of Each Group

1. Brigade of Ferrera Cenasio - The zone is composed of valleys formed by the torrents Lamet, Fraita, and Claret. This division of waters follows the line of the frontier and includes the following peaks: Rocciamelone, Marmottère, Tre denti, Roccia Michel, and Lamet.

2. Brigade of Molaretto - The zone includes the valleys of the streams: Cleni, Barba, Bar, Giaset, Alassa, Coma Rossa, Comba

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Bergnia, Cenishia, Roncia, and Court. The principal mountains along the line of the frontier are: Mont. Clairi, Roccia Carlina, and Mont Malament. The Colle of Moncenisio is the great valley that connects Italy, by Turin and Susa, with France by Lanslebourg. The other hills of easy passage are those of Little Moncenisio, Sollieres, Belle Combes, and La Beccia.

3. Brigade of Susa - The zone is composed by the depressions among the peaks where the following streams are found: Tiracule, Aria, Agnello, and Clarea. The network of waters takes in Punta della Vecchia, Rochers Penibles, Denti d'Ambin, Gran Coasso, and Rocca d'Ambin. The only valley that lends itself to transit is that by Colle Clapier, which connects Susa with Bramans in the valley of L'Arc.

4. Brigade of Exilles - The zone includes the depression of the stream Galambra. The principal mountains of the watershed are Le Nible and Point Sommeiller. The only easily crossed valley is that by Col d'Ambin, which links Exilles and Val Galambra with the valley of d'Ambin.

5. Brigade of Bardonecchia - The zone is composed of the valleys of the stream Bardonecchia and its tributaries: Rochemolles, Frejus, and Rho. The most important peaks are: Gros Peyron, la Pierre Menue, Gardiola, and Point Bagna. The transitable hills are: Etiache, Felouse, Frejus, and Rho which links the valley of Dora Riparia (Italy) with that of l'Arc (France). In the region is the railway tunnel of Frejus which links Bardonecchia with Modane.

6. Brigade of Melezet - The zone includes the basin of Rio de la Valle Stretta. The important peaks are: Mont Tabor, Pointe Valmeiner Rocca Gran Tempesta, Roccia Bianca di Thures, Guglia Rossa, Cima della Serena, Guglia del Mezzodi, and Pointe Charra. Easy transitable valleys are: Colle di Valle Stretta, Colle di Thures, Colle della Scala, and Col des Acles.

7. Brigade of Oulx - The territory is composed by certain minor basins that lead to Dora Riparia. The most important hills in the watershed are: Point Clotesse, and Chalanche Ronda. The crossing valleys are those of l'Arc and Desertes which connect the valleys of Bardonecchia in Italian territory and la Claires in French territory.

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8. Brigade of Claviers - The zone is composed of the valleys formed by Piccola Dora and other minor valleys. The most important mountains along the line are: Point Rochers Charmiers, Gran Chauluet, Monte la Plane, Mont Gimont, and Sommet Saurel. The Col of Menginevro crossed by first class roads, links Cesana and Claviers with Briancon (France). The other less important hills are those of trois Freres Mineurs, Lause, and the Alpet.

9. Brigade of Bousson - The territory takes in the basins of the streams of Thuress and Ripa. The most important peaks are: Monte Terra Nera, Merciatore, Punta Ronciere, and Grand Queyron. The valleys that are transitable are by the Col Bousson, Col Chabaud, Col de Thuress, Col de Fioniere, and Col Mayt which links the zone of Bousson Argentiera (Italy) with that of Aiguilles and Abries (France)

NOTE: Attached to this memo will be map showing the locations of the previous guards posts.

II PRESENT GUARD SYSTEM

a. As of yet, the present guard system has not been organized, and the guards who were originally supposed to mount the former guard posts at and near the frontier have yet to make their appearance in this region.

III POPULATION IN THE FRONTIER REGION

a. The number of persons holding frontaliers previous to our arrival was not available to this office since all records for this region are kept at the Questura's office in Turin. Consequently this office could not determine approximately the number of persons who would have to be issued frontaliers in the near future.

b. Before the war around Piccolo Moncenisio, which was open only during the summer months, about sixty persons had a "Tessera di Frontiera" (frontalier). At Gran Moncenisio, which was closed during the winter previous to the arrival of the Allies, there was an average of two thousand persons crossing daily. Entry at Gran Moncenisio was made only by use of passport.

c. The population of towns near the frontier are as follows:

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Villar Pellice	-----	1,582
Bobbio Pellice		1,193
Torre Pellice		4,853
Luserna S. Giovanni		7,523
S. Germain Chisone		2,998
Pinasca		3,255
Perrero		2,153
Perosa Argentina		5,049
Prali		829
Massello		649
Fenestrelle		2,184
Cesana		2,042
Sestriere		870
Ulzio		2754
Pragelato		999
Bardonecchia		3,007
Exille		1,130
Salabertano		780

SUSA SECTOR

Chiomonte	-----	1,362
Gravere		618
Meana		1,087
Giaglione		927
Venalzio		915
Novalesa		928
Ferrera Cenisio		834
Mompaliero		1,089
Usseglio		862
Balme		260
Lemie		1,245
Alade Stura		690
Grescavallo		846
Chialamberto		927
Cantora		812
Viu		3,435
Cere		1,814
Lanzo		4,484
Cirie		10,255
Mathi		3,470
Balangero		2,316
Germagnano		1,123
Trave		796
Fiano		2,476
Nole		4,111
Coazzolo		2,251
Mezzeenile		1,767

d. As of yet, there are no Police agencies that are functioning in frontier region. The CC.RR. are reorganizing and will not make their appearance for some time to come. The R.C. di F. are likewise reorganizing and although there is a small detachment in Susa it is not functioning since they are awaiting the arrival of additional guards so they can resume their guard duties in and around the frontier region. The Public Security police agency has been dissolved, although this office has been approached several times with proposals for reinstatement of several of the former members.

e. The following Allied installations are located in the frontier region:

a) At Susa is located the 2nd Battalion Headquarters, 133rd

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Infantry Regiment, 34th Division.

- b) At Cesana is located the CP of Co. E, 2nd Battalion, less 42 men and 1 officer who are the road block at Claviers.
- c) At "La Scala" is located Co. F, 2nd Battalion, less 8 men and 1 officer who are at the road block at Moncenisio.
- d) At Ulzio is located Co. G, 2nd Battalion.
- e) At Bussoleno is located Co. H, 2nd Battalion.
- f) The Battalion CP sends out a patrol every six hours to each of the Company CP's and the assigned strength of the Battalion is eight hundred and fifty three officers and men.

IV COMMUNICATIONS

Telephonic and Telegraphic Lines from Susa to Moncenisio, to Monginevro, and to Bordenecchia.

- 1. Susa - Moncenisio
 - a. Telegraph lines numbers 1, 5, 8, 11, 21, 24, 27, 28, and 43.
 - b. These nine lines are of one wire and go from Turin to Pincrole - Fernstrelle - Susa (telegraph office). From Susa they go to Venalzio - Novalosa - Ferrera Cenischia. From Turin to Ferrera Cenischia the lines are in good condition. From Ferrera to the frontier, about 12 km., they are almost entirely destroyed, and in addition several poles are missing.
 - c. No. 668 circuit (telegraphic) of two wires from Susa to Ospizio is destroyed for a distance of four kilometers.
 - d. Telephone: The Government lines numbers 7003 bis and 7003 make up two circuits.
 - e. One circuit is used by the American road-block at Moncenisio.
 - f. The other circuit is used by the French Headquarters in Susa and goes on to Termignan and St. Jean de Maurienne.
 - g. Two military circuits which run almost entirely along the road: Susa - Moncenisio, line is in good condition until Bar Cenischio. There it is destroyed until it reaches La Fianna de San Nicolas and continues to Ospizio.
 - h. One telephonic (military) circuit, from Susa to Giaglione

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is in good condition and continues to Valle Clara, Col Clapiers, to Grange Buttigleisa.

2. Susa - Ulzio

- a. Telephone: two circuits to Ulzio are used by the French.
- b. Twelve lines leave from Turin to Susa - Ulzio to Bardonecchia.

3. Ulzio - Cesana (towards Monginevro)

- a. Telephone: four circuits (military) of which two circuits are used by the French and continue to Monginevro to Briancon. One circuit is used by the Americans at Cesana.

4. Ulzio - Bardonecchia

- a. There are four circuits from Ulzio to Boulard, which continue to Bardonecchia.

V GOVERNMENT HIGHWAYS TO THE FRENCH FRONTIER

A. Government Route No. 25 to Moncenisio.

1. Leaves Turin to Rivali, Avigliana, Borgone, Eussoleno, and Susa. Then it continues to Moncenisio. It is approximately thirty feet wide and seventy five kilometers long. Ten kilometers past Moncenisio it touches Lanslebourg, and then twenty five kilometers further it reaches Modane.

DETOURS

- a. At 43.7 kilometers, crossing is made over a temporary wooden bridge (ten feet wide).
- b. At 60.1 kilometers, there is a detour due to the existing mines. This temporary route is approximately twenty one feet wide.
- c. At 62.02 kilometers, there exists another detour.
- d. At 75 kilometers, road is completely closed. The bridge which formerly crossed the Roncia is now completely demolished, the detour passes over the crest at the Roncia.

B. Government Route No. 24 to Monginevro

1. Leaving Susa it passes by Gravere, Chiamonte, Exilles,

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Ulzio, Cesana, Clavier, and on to Monginevro, with a total length of 48 kilometers.

DETOURS

- a. The bridge at Exilles at 14 kilometers has been blown up, the traffic using the old route which goes through the residential section.
- b. Iron bridge, Ventosa, also blown up. Crossing now being made on temporary wooden bridge.
- c. Same thing at 27 kilometers.
- d. The bridge over the Dora Riparia, near Ulzio, has also been blown up. Crossing is made by a wooden bridge.
- e. From Cesana to Claviers there are numerous of detours but precise details were not available.

C. Route No. 23 to Sestriere

1. Leaving Turin, through Pinerolo and Col du Sestriere, to Cesana where it joins route No. 24 to Monginevro.
 - a. There is a temporary wooden bridge at 44 kilometers.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

This office wants it to be understood that due to the fact that the CC.RR and R.G.di F. have not as yet assumed their duties at and near the frontier, it is very difficult to conduct a proper survey, thus not being able to give a complete report on just how the situation is or how it should be around the frontier region.

Should the assigned guard personnel make their appearance and assume their duties this office is certain that they can then make a creditable survey and one which can give higher headquarters a clearer picture of just what the situation really is in and around the Susa district to the frontier.

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