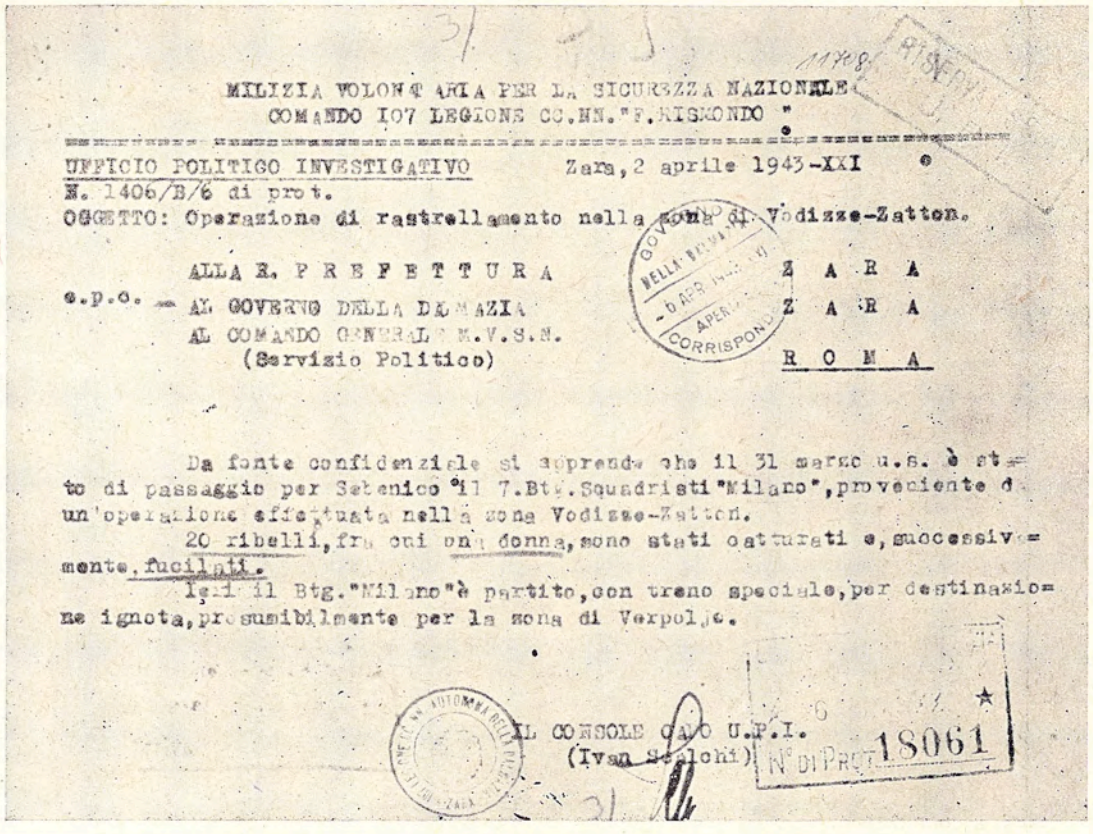


MILIZIA VOLONTARIA PER LA SICUREZZA NAZIONALE
COMANDO 107 LEGIONE CC.NN. "F. RISMONDO"

UFFICIO POLITICO INVESTIGATIVO — Zara, 2 aprile 1943-XXI

N. 1406/B/6 di prot.

OGGETTO: Operazione di rastrellamento nella zona di Vodizze-Zatton.

ALLA R. PREFETTURA — Z A R A
e.p.c. — AL GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA — Z A R A
AL COMANDO GENERALE M.V.S.N. (Servizio Politico) — R O M A

Da fonte confidenziale si apprende che il 31 marzo u.s. è stato di passaggio per Sebenico il 7.Btg. Squadristi "Milano", proveniente da un'operazione effettuata nella zona Vodizze-Zatton.

20 ribelli, fra cui una donna, sono stati catturati e, successivamente, fucilati.

Ieri il Btg. "Milano" è partito, con treno speciale, per destinazione ignota, presumibilmente per la zona di Verpolje.

IL CONSOLE CAPO U.P.I.
(Ivan Sedloni)

N° DI PROT. 18061

Twenty NOVJ fighters among whom is one woman, captured and shot.

VI. MASS INTERNMENT OF CIVIL POPULATION UNDER INHUMAN CONDITIONS — ITALIAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

In the series of criminal measures taken by the Italians against the civil population of the occupied provinces of Yugoslavia, there was also a mass internment in concentration camps under hard and inhuman conditions.

A great number of "undesirable" elements was interned individually, but on the occasion of „Rastrellamenti" prisoners were gathered in masses with the aim of depopulating and devastating entire regions. Behind Italian military forces there came special troops, whose task was to gather all living population — women, children and the old — and take them to concentration camps. Forcibly wrenched from their hearths, these unfortunate victims were heaped up in unhealthy and crowded places, and exposed to humiliation, torture and hunger on the part of camp authorities. The consequences of such a treatment were mass cases of disease and death. The Italian system of concentration camps and the regime introduced in them brought about such results that their allies, the Germans, could indeed envy them. The percentage of death cases was for example about 34% at the island of Rab camp.

www.diecifebbraio.info

COPIA

P. M. 10, li 5 marzo 1942-A.XX°

COMANDO DELLA 2ª ARMATA

P.I.

-Ufficio Affari Civili-

N.di prot.2468/AC. Segreto.-

OGGETTO: Provvedimenti contro famigliari di ribelli. -

ALL' ECC. IL GOVERNATORE DELLA DALMAZIA - Z A R A
ALL' ECC. L' ALTO COMMISSARIO - LUBIANA
ALL' ECC. IL PREFETTO DEL CARNARO - FIUME

La necessità improrogabile di rendere normale la vita nelle provincie annesse al Regno d'Italia, impone l'adozione di mezzi particolarmente severi.

A mio avviso occorrerebbe perciò - laddove si sono dimostrati vani i tentativi di pacificazione - colpire il male nelle radici e nelle propaggini, con provvedimenti aventi ripercussioni sugli animi dei fuggiaschi e sulla vita materiale dei congiunti rimasti in posto.

Gioverebbe quindi procedere all'internamento in Italia delle famiglie più in vista che abbiano qualche loro membro fra i ribelli o maschi validi assenti senza chiari motivi, nonché di altre - anche se di ceto modesto - strettamente imparentate a capi ed esponenti dei rivoltosi.

Per le restanti famiglie, che abbiano legame di parentela coi fuggiaschi, si dovrebbe procedere alla riduzione dei generi di viveri tesserati - con totale soppressione dei generi non di prima necessità - e stabilire il principio che, per alcuna ragione, possa agli stessi essere consentita la concessione di salvacondotti o lasciapassare o di altri documenti necessari alla circolazione. (Questo perché ritengo inattuabile praticamente l'internamento di tutte le famiglie in parola).

Penso che, con tali misure coercitive di eccezione, si potrebbe influire decisamente sull'animo di taluni dei rivoltosi e contenere altresì l'aumento dei fuggiaschi o dei loro favoreggiatori.

Nell'intento di concordare con Voi l'attuazione di provvedimenti del genere, gradirei conoscere in merito il Vostro pensiero.

IL GENERALE COMANDANTE
f.to Mario ROATTA

General Mario Roatta, commander of the II army, communicates to the Governor of Dalmatia, the High Commissary of Ljubljana and the Prefect of the province of Quarnero, that it is necessary to apply specially severe measures in order to "normalize" the situation in new provinces. He proposes therefore that the families of the persons who have joined the "rebels" or are absent without justifiable reason should be interned in Italy and that rationed food and passes should be refused to them.

www.diecifebbraio.info

Enormous are the sacrifices payed by our people because of this Italian crime. Fields of graves around the concentration camps are not the only proof of it. Even after their return from concentration camps, our people died and are still dying from the consequences of sufferings and diseases caught in camps. Entire villages are still uninhabited, as the population taken away has not yet come back.

THE ORDERS FOR MASS EXTERMINATION OF YUGOSLAV POPULATION CAME FROM THE HIGHEST AUTHORITIES OF THE ITALIAN STATE AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

Roatta's "Circolare 3 C", issued on March 1, 1942, also had a decisive significance for the execution of this war crime. This circular letter prescribed war rules for the struggle against the Army of National Liberation of Yugoslavia (NOVJ) and foresaw internment as a regular means of struggle against the peoples of Yugoslavia. Internment was to be preventive or repressive. It affected individual persons, families, particular sections of town and village population, as well as the population of entire villages and regions.

The aim of these measures was explained in Roatta's circular letter Nr. 2468/AC which he sent a week later to the chiefs of the civil administration in "annexed" territories. Part of it runs as follows:

"...The urgent need of normalizing the life in the provinces annexed to the Kingdom of Italy imposes the application of especially severe measures.

"In my opinion, in the regions where the attempts at pacification have failed, we ought to strike the root and trunk of the evil, and that by means of measures which will have their effect on the moral of those who have run away and on the material life of their families at home.

"It would be suitable to intern in Italy the more notable families, whose members are among the insurgents, or whose male members capable of bearing arms are absent without any valid justification, as well as other families — even those from poorer sections — relatives of the leaders and exponents of the insurgents.

"Other families, relatives of persons who have deserted into the forests, should have their food ration reduced... The rule should be that such persons cannot obtain certificates, passes or other documents necessary for travelling. (This is because I think it practically impossible to intern all the families in question)".

We are not acquainted with the answer of the chiefs of civil administration to Roatta. Judging by the activities of which we shall speak later on and the more and more severe measures taken subsequently by Roatta, there is no doubt that there was complete unity of views among them.

After the conference held at Gorizia in July 1942, which was also attended by Mussolini and the Chief of the General Head-Quarters of the Italian Army, besides Roatta and his army corps commanders, the question of taking away and interning

www.diecifebbraio.info

the population came into a new, sharper phase. We have quoted the protocol of that conference in another place. General Robotti, Commander of the XI Army Corps, communicated to his divisional commanders the words of the Duce and the decisions of that conference in the following manner:

"... For that reason we have decided to transfer gradually all the male population to the island of Rab. It does not matter at all if on examination they give the impression of being harmless people. Remember that for numberless reasons these elements can also turn our enemies. Therefore complete displacement ...

"... Do not confine yourselves solely to internment. I would not object to interning all Slovenes and replacing them with Italians (the families of wounded and killed Italians). In other words all should be done to make our political and race boundaries coincide".

The real object the Italians aimed at was quite clearly and openly set forth here: complete extermination of the Yugoslav population, the real political and economic purpose of which was to rob us of our land and colonize it with Italians.

Thereafter Italian military activity became more dreadful and horrible. Behind the advancing Italian detachments there came a mass seizure and taking away not only of men but also of women, children, the sick and the old, who happened to find themselves in the path of advance of the Italian Army. All this was carried out without any mercy or compassion.

Another proof of this method of extermination, applied by order of the Italian Prime Minister, is Roatta's order for preparation of an offensive in the region of the Velebit, which had to be launched in the second half of September 1942. This order was forwarded to the Commander of the XI Army Corps on August 20, 1942, No. 17185; and has been quoted in greater detail in another place:

„... In order to clear the said zone as soon as possible the order of July 15, of this year shall be completely applied.

„Especially the folowing items:

a) In the central and internal part of the zone in question ... villages shall be destroyed and population displaced.

b) The population from the peripheral parts of the same zone... shall be removed excepting the places where our or Croatian garrisons will be established and maintained."

Roatta's orders, Nos. 550 and 800 of January 11 and 16, 1943, relating to the great IV offensive against the NOVJ, were written in the same spirit. He odered all capable men found in the zone of operations to be shot and all other males over 15 years of age to be interned, regardless of their race, creed, profession and function. According to these orders and their supplement of January 17, No. 880, the mopping up action had to be carried out "methodically, advancing 5 kilometres a day in depth so that every scrap of land should be most carefuly searched."

www.diecifebbraio.info

THE ITALIAN INVADER INTENDED TO INTERN 30.000 YUGOSLAV CITIZENS IN THE FIRST MASS MOPPING-UP ACTION IN SLOVENIA

We shall give several characteristic examples of the application of general orders and instructions for mass internment of the population. The examples quoted here are based on original documents from the Italian civil and military authorities, as were those already quoted.

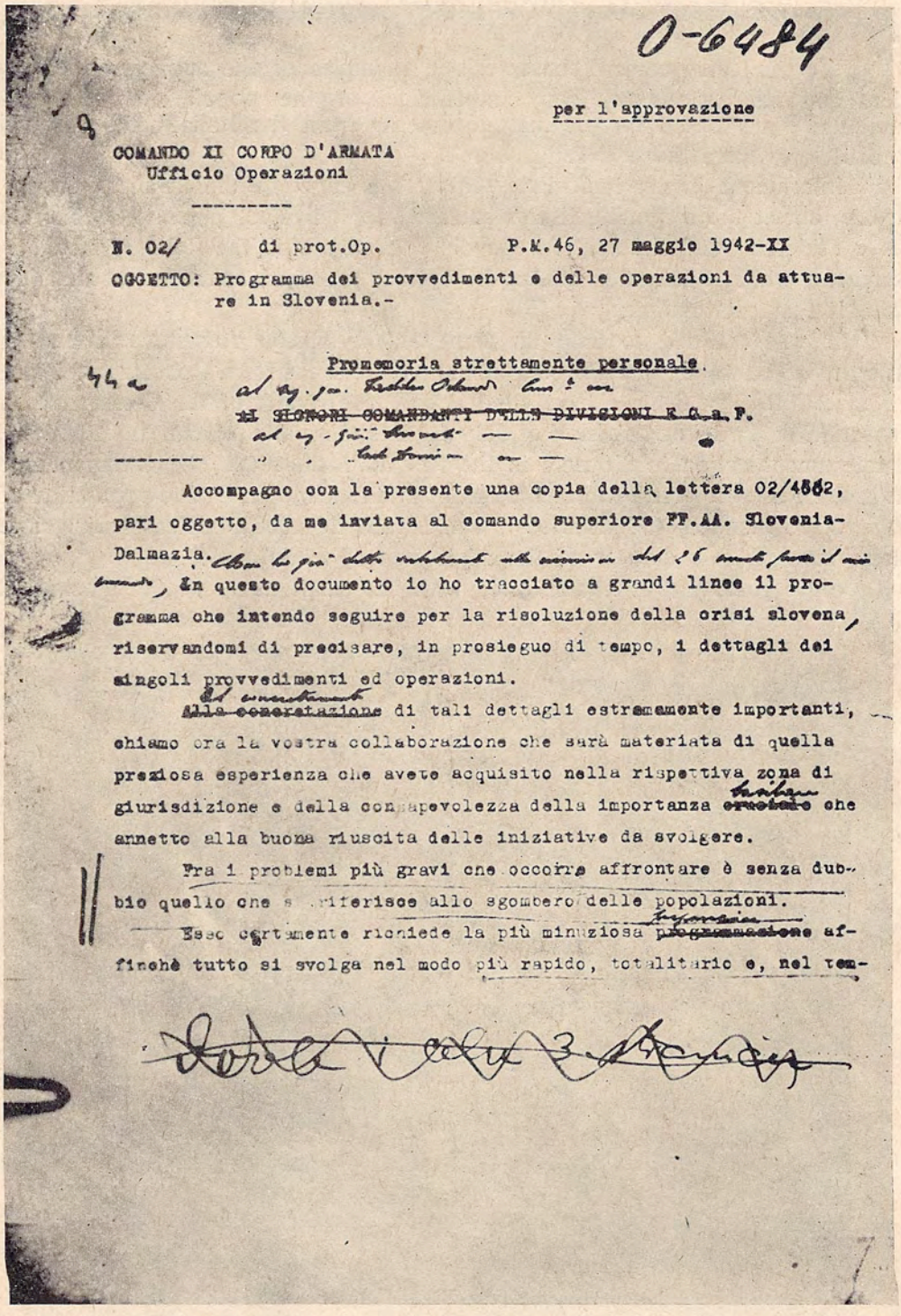
Internment began immediately after the entry of the invaders' troops into Slovenia, but at the beginning it was confined to individual persons, whom the Italians considered "undesirable". Already in February 1942 the Italians started a mass internment, which culminated in August of that year and continued at that level up to the Italian capitulation.

It was planned to mop up some 20.000—30.000 Yugoslav citizens in the first wave of internment in Slovenia alone, as is evident from Robotti's memorandum on May 27, 1942, which we have cited above. The report of the Commander of the "Granatieri di Sardegna" division of July 4, 1942, No. 4866 reveals the dimensions of the internment action in Slovenia in the first half of 1942. The commander states that in June of that year, on the occasion of internment of the male population of Ljubljana, 2.858 people were interned, which, added to 3.000 people formerly interned, makes "more than a quarter of the adult men of Ljubljana".

Since Robotti was not satisfied with the small number of Yugoslav citizens

Police raid in Ljubljana

www.diecifebbraio.info



O-6484

per l'approvazione

COMANDO XI CORPO D'ARMATA
Ufficio Operazioni

N. 02/ di prot.Op. P.M.46, 27 maggio 1942-XX

OGGETTO: Programma dei provvedimenti e delle operazioni da attuare in Slovenia.-

Promemoria strettamente personale.

~~AI SIGNORI COMANDANTI DELLE DIVISIONI E C.a.F.~~

Accompagno con la presente una copia della lettera 02/4562, pari oggetto, da me inviata al comando superiore FF.AA. Slovenia-Dalmazia. In questo documento io ho tracciato a grandi linee il programma che intendo seguire per la risoluzione della crisi slovena, riservandomi di precisare, in prosieguo di tempo, i dettagli dei singoli provvedimenti ed operazioni.

~~Alla concretazione~~ Ed concretamente di tali dettagli estremamente importanti, chiamo ora la vostra collaborazione che sarà materiata di quella preziosa esperienza che avete acquisito nella rispettiva zona di giurisdizione e della consapevolezza della importanza ~~cruciale~~ basilare che annetto alla buona riuscita delle iniziative da svolgere.

Fra i problemi più gravi che occorre affrontare è senza dubbio quello che si riferisce allo sgombero delle popolazioni.

Esso certamente richiede la più minuziosa ~~programmazione~~ preparazione affinchè tutto si svolga nel modo più rapido, totalitario e, nel tem-

The first and third page of a memorandum of Genarl Mario Robotti, Commander of the XI Army Corps, to his subordinate commanders, on the projected internment of the population of Slovenia. He anticipates the internment of 20—30.000 people.

www.diecifebbraio.info

0-6484

croata assicurata);

2°)- sgombrare tutta la regione ad oriente del vecchio confine per una fascia di 3 - 4 km. In tale zona interdire ogni circolazione (tranne che sulle ferrovie e sulle strade di grande comunicazione) e aprire senz'altro il fuoco contro chiunque;

3°)- internare ~~nella~~ tutta la gente che è necessario ai fini di sicurezza ed operativi. E cioè: sgomberi completi di zone e sgomberi di determinate località e categorie di persone in altre zone. ~~Largo~~ Ritengo, come largo dato di orientamento ~~nella~~ circa la popolazione da sgomberare; che essa possa aumentare a 20 + 30 mila persone. Questa cifra potrà subire le varianti del caso;

4°)- ricordarsi che tutto ciò che riguarda sgomberi dev'essere oggetto di nostra esclusiva iniziativa. Quindi, richiedere, se è opportuna, la collaborazione delle autorità civili, ~~[illegible]~~ ~~che sarà preventivamente assicurato dalle autorità superiori~~;

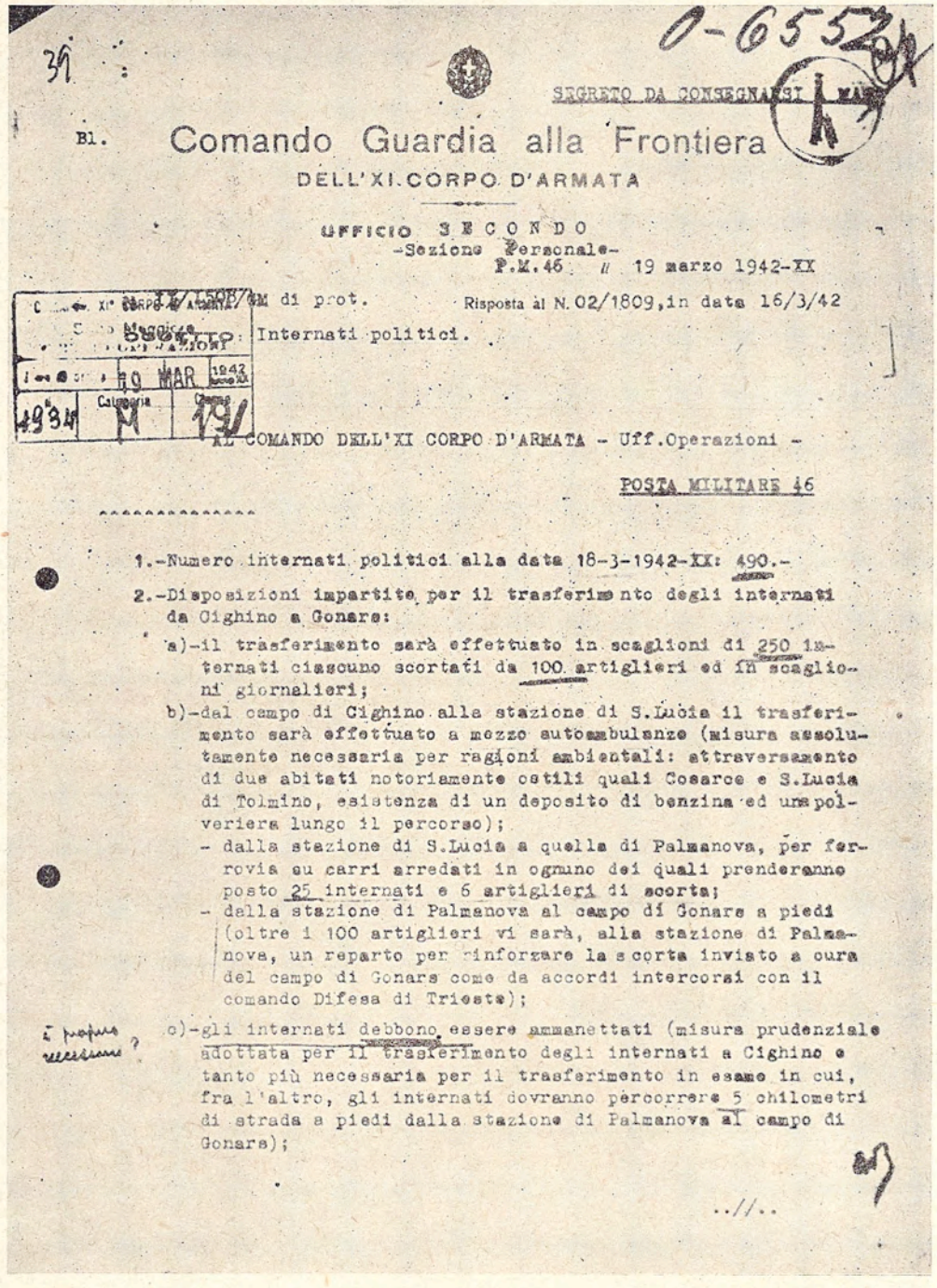
5°)- ricordarsi che ~~la migliore situazione si ha quando il nemico è messo~~ lo scopo di aggiungere in questo punto che ~~[illegible]~~ è quello di mettere il nemico in condizioni di non poter più offenderci. Da qui, l'importanza ~~degli ostaggi~~ della ~~applicazione delle fucilazioni~~ [illegible] che ~~ciò sarà~~ [illegible] necessarie....

Si tenga inoltre presente quanto dissi nella riunione di stamane e cioè che le forze di polizia (CC.RR., R.G.di Finanza, Milizia Confinaria, agenti di pubblica sicurezza, anche in borghese) passeranno alle dipendenze della autorità militare.

In attesa delle precisazioni che verranno concretate, dopo il ritorno in sede dell'Alto Commissario, potrete intanto, come vi ho già ordinato stamane, chiedere all'autorità civile precisazioni circa il numero, la dislocazione ed il particolare impiego del suddetto personale onde prevederne la possibilità di impiego.

./.

www.diecifebbraio.info



0-6552

SEGRETO DA CONSEGNARSI

Bl. Comando Guardia alla Frontiera
DELL'XI CORPO D'ARMATA

UFFICIO SECONDO
-Sezione Personale-
P.M.46 // 19 marzo 1942-XX

XI° CORPO D'ARMATA - 2ª SEZIONE - OPERAZIONI - SEGRETERIA - Prot. N. 4934 - 19 MAR 1942 - Categoria M - Classe 179

N. 02/1500 di prot. Risposta al N. 02/1809, in data 16/3/42

OGGETTO: Internati politici.

AL COMANDO DELL'XI CORPO D'ARMATA - Uff.Operazioni -

POSTA MILITARE 46

1.-Numero internati politici alla data 18-3-1942-XX: 490.-

2.-Disposizioni impartite per il trasferimento degli internati da Cighino a Gonars:

a)-il trasferimento sarà effettuato in scaglioni di 250 internati ciascuno scortati da 100 artiglieri ed in scaglioni giornalieri;

b)-dal campo di Cighino alla stazione di S.Lucia il trasferimento sarà effettuato a mezzo autoambulanze (misura assolutamente necessaria per ragioni ambientali: attraversamento di due abitati notoriamente ostili quali Cosarce e S.Lucia di Tolmino, esistenza di un deposito di benzina ed una polveriera lungo il percorso);
- dalla stazione di S.Lucia a quella di Palmanova, per ferrovia su carri arredati in ognuno dei quali prenderanno posto 25 internati e 6 artiglieri di scorta;
- dalla stazione di Palmanova al campo di Gonars a piedi (oltre i 100 artiglieri vi sarà, alla stazione di Palmanova, un reparto per rinforzare la scorta inviato a cura del campo di Gonars come da accordi intercorsi con il comando Difesa di Trieste);

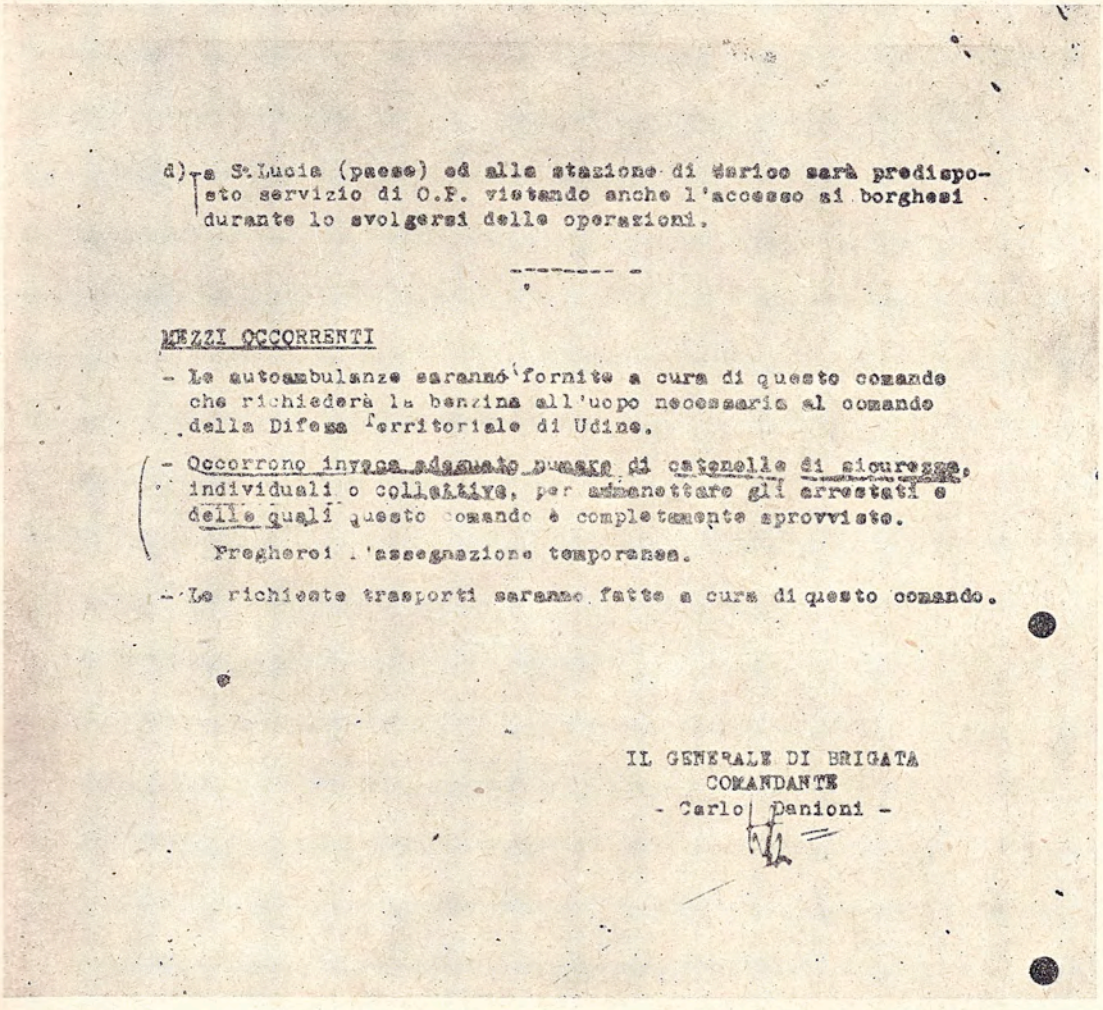
è proprio necessario?

c)-gli internati debbono essere ammanettati (misura prudenziale adottata per il trasferimento degli internati a Cighino e tanto più necessaria per il trasferimento in esame in cui, fra l'altro, gli internati dovranno percorrere 5 chilometri di strada a piedi dalla stazione di Palmanova al campo di Gonars);

../..

General Carlo Danioni, Commander of the G.A.F. (frontier guards) of the XI Army Corps, communicates to the Commander of the IX Army Corps the measures taken for the transport of interned Slovenes to concentration camps. He demands the necessary number of chains to be placed at his disposal, as the prisoners had to be tied with them during the transportation.

www.diecifebbraio.info



d) a S.Lucia (paese) ed alla stazione di Gorizia sarà predisposto servizio di O.P. vietando anche l'accesso ai borghesi durante lo svolgersi delle operazioni.

MEZZI OCCORRENTI

- Le autoambulanze saranno fornite a cura di questo comando che richiederà la benzina all'uopo necessaria al comando della Difesa Territoriale di Udine.

- Occorrono invece adeguato numero di catenelle di sicurezza, individuali o collettive, per ammanettare gli arrestati e delle quali questo comando è completamente sprovvisto.

Pregherei l'assegnazione temporanea.

- Le richieste trasporti saranno fatte a cura di questo comando.

IL GENERALE DI BRIGATA
COMANDANTE
- Carlo Panioni -

transferred to concentration camps at a rate of 200 a day, he met Grazioli, High Commissioner of the Ljubljana province on July 29, 1942, and strongly insisted on this number being increased. (Protocol of the meeting).

All this took place before the conference at Gorizia, which was attended by Mussolini and at which it was decided to mop up completely some parts of Slovenia. A new wave of internment came after this conference. We find proof of it in a report of the Command of the V Detachment of the G.A.F. (frontier guards). This report reveals that in the zone where the „mopping-up" action was carried out under the command of General Fabbri, the following places were completely cleared: Dobac, Kožljek, Stražišče, Bezuljak, Seličak, Topol and Brezje, (altogether 282 families with 1539 members); in addition: Bloška Polica, Bločice, Sv. Ana, Klane, Gorene, Jezero, Laze and Otok, (96 families with 548 members); further: Stari Trg, Podlož, Lež, Skrilje, Dame, Podcerkev, Knežja, Njiva, Markovac, Vrhnika, Nadlesk, Pudob, Viševk, Bajer, Igavas, Kozarišče, Snežnik, Podgora, Vrh, Babna Polica, Buživica, Hrib, Babino Polje, — 860 families with 4.360 members.

According to incomplete evidence, 67.230 of our citizens were driven to Italian concentration camps from the part of Slovenia occupied by the Italians, out of a total population of less than 360.000 people.

www.diecifebbraio.info

RISERVATO PERSONALE

COMANDO DELLA DIVISIONE DI FTR. "GRANATIERI DI SARDEGNA" (21ª)
Ufficio del Capo di S.M.
Sezione "I"

n. 4866/1/FA di prot. P.M.81, 4 luglio 1942 - XX

OGGETTO : Rastrellamento di Lubiana (27 giugno-1° luglio).-

Allegati : 2

All'Ecc.il Com.te dell'XI C.A. P.M.46
Alla R.Procura Mil.del Re Imp. Lubiana

e, per conoscenza :

All'Ecc.l'Alto Commissario Lubiana
Alla R.Questura di Lubiana
Al comando gruppo CC.RR. di Lubiana

****

Allego il prospetto statistico riepilogativo delle operazioni di rastrellamento compiute in Lubiana nei giorni decorsi e l'elenco degli elementi particolarmente pericolosi sinora individuati.

A chiarimento dei dati rappresento :

La città di Lubiana conta circa 80.000 abitanti; di questi la metà sono donne. Dei 40.000 maschi sono state prese in considerazione le classi da 15 al 50 anni, cioè 34 classi, trascurandone altrettante, nonchè tutti coloro che per la loro specifica vocazione o per altri motivi si dovevano ritenere estranei alle misure di polizia (preti - frati - infermi - pazzi - ecc.).

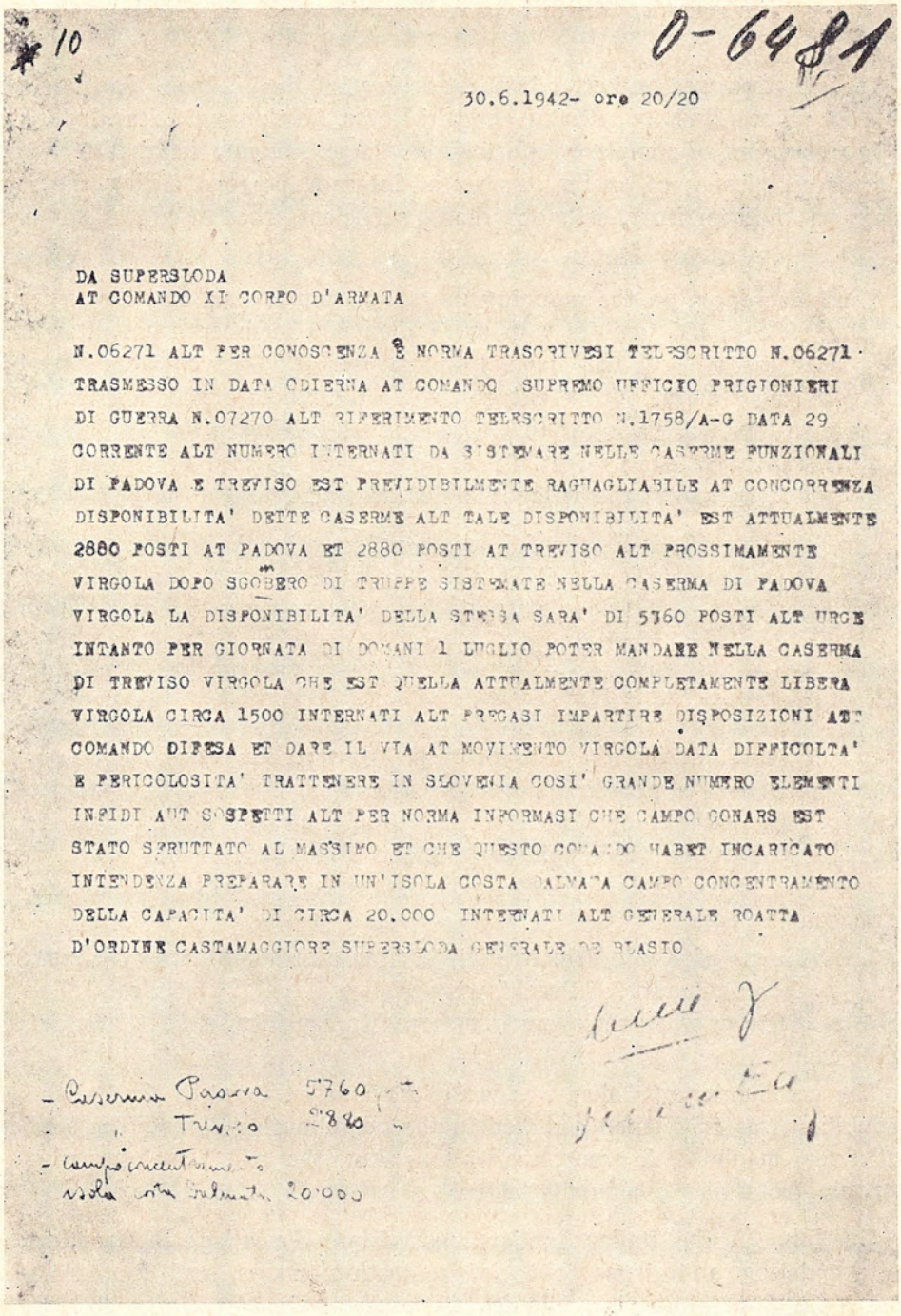
Passando al vaglio oltre 20.000 maschi si può affermare che si sono esaminati uno per uno, nello spazio di pochi giorni, quasi tutti gli uomini che possono avere una importanza sotto l'aspetto politico o militare.

Con l'arresto di 2.858 individui e con quello avvenuto nel periodo precedente di altri 3.000 individui, si è tolto dalla circolazione oltre il quarto degli uomini validi di

./..

Taddeo Orlando, Commander of the "Granatieri di Sardegna" division, informs General Mario Robotti, Commander of the XI Army Corps, that 2.858 people were recently interned in Ljubljana, which, together with 3.000 people formerly interned, makes more than a quarter of the adult and able male population of Ljubljana.

www.diecifebbraio.info



10

0-6481

30.6.1942- ore 20/20

DA SUPERSLODA
AT COMANDO XI CORPO D'ARMATA

N.06271 ALT PER CONOSCENZA E NORMA TRASCRIVESI TELESCRITTO N.06271 · TRASMESSO IN DATA ODIERNA AT COMANDO SUPREMO UFFICIO PRIGIONIERI DI GUERRA N.07270 ALT RIFERIMENTO TELESCRITTO N.1758/A-G DATA 29 CORRENTE ALT NUMERO INTERNATI DA SISTEMARE NELLE CASERME FUNZIONALI DI PADOVA E TREVISO EST PREVIDIBILMENTE RAGUAGLIABILE AT CONCORRENZA DISPONIBILITA' DETTE CASERME ALT TALE DISPONIBILITA' EST ATTUALMENTE 2880 POSTI AT PADOVA ET 2880 POSTI AT TREVISO ALT PROSSIMAMENTE VIRGOLA DOPO SGOMBERO DI TRUPPE SISTEMATE NELLA CASERMA DI PADOVA VIRGOLA LA DISPONIBILITA' DELLA STESSA SARA' DI 5760 POSTI ALT URGE INTANTO PER GIORNATA DI DOMANI 1 LUGLIO POTER MANDARE NELLA CASERMA DI TREVISO VIRGOLA CHE EST QUELLA ATTUALMENTE COMPLETAMENTE LIBERA VIRGOLA CIRCA 1500 INTERNATI ALT PREGASI IMPARTIRE DISPOSIZIONI AT COMANDO DIFESA ET DARE IL VIA AT MOVIMENTO VIRGOLA DATA DIFFICOLTA' E PERICOLOSITA' TRATTENERE IN SLOVENIA COSI' GRANDE NUMERO ELEMENTI INFIDI AUT SOSPETTI ALT PER NORMA INFORMASI CHE CAMPO CONARS EST STATO SFRUTTATO AL MASSIMO ET CHE QUESTO COMANDO HABET INCARICATO INTENDENZA PREPARARE IN UN'ISOLA COSTA DALMATA CAMPO CONCENTRAMENTO DELLA CAPACITA' DI CIRCA 20.000 INTERNATI ALT GENERALE ROATTA D'ORDINE CASTAMAGGIORE SUPERSLODA GENERALE DE BLASIO

- Caserme Padova 5760 p.
- " Treviso 2880 "
- campo concentramento nella costa Dalmata 20.000

General de Blasio, chief of staff of the Supersloda (the II Army), informs the Commander of the XI Army Corps of the number of interned people, who might be immediately or in the shortest possible time sent to concentration camps in Italy. He states that he had taken measures for the erection of a concentration camp in some isolated Dalmatian island, capable of receiving 20.000 people, apart from 5.760 places at Padova and 2.880 at Treviso.

www.diecifebbraio.info

ENTIRE PLACES WERE COMPLETELY DEVASTATED IN THE CROATIAN LITTORAL, GORSKI KOTAR, LIKA AND KORDUN

The situation was no better in the territory of the V Army Corps (the Croat Littoral, the hinterland of Rijeka, Gorski Kotar, Kordun and Lika). Indeed we are not yet in possession of complete reports from the commands on that territory, but the evidence we dispose of on the number of interned persons during the mopping up action on that territory, is more than a sufficient proof of crimes committed by the Italians.

Thus the report on the mopping up of Podhum reveals that the entire population of that village, 185 families with more than 800 members, was interned. Only two days later the villages of Vrana, Ponikve and Podkilavci were burnt down together with some neighbouring villages, while the whole population was driven to concentration camps. In his letter to Guido Buffarini, Minister of the Interior, dated August 20, 1942, the Rijeka Prefect, Testa, boasted of having destroyed »all rebel bases«, by which he meant the villages of his province.

On February 18, 1942, the following villages in the nearest proximity of Rijeka were burnt down: Tomatići, Spinčići, Srdeći, Trinaestići, Belići, Čikovići, Dražice and Markovići. — 1.500 people from these villages were interned on that day. Twelve days later — on March 2 and 3, —another and greater number of villages was burnt down, among which there were: Brnelići, Milaši, Zoretići, Kukuljane. About one thousand Yugoslav citizens were driven to concentration camps in Italy.

In July 1942, during the Rog offensive, the Italian division »Re« executed mass internment of the population of the district of Čabar and committed many other crimes. The villages of Vode, Smrečje, Mali Lug and Hrib, belonging to the community of Gerovo, were completely pillaged and then burnt down, while the population, male and female, old and young, healthy and sick, was driven to concentration camps.

The villages of Kozji Vrh, Kraljci, Lamtari, Bazan, Milanov Vrh and Runci, belonging to the community of Prezid, were pillaged and burnt down. The population of these villages was previously transferred to Prezid whence it was sent to concentration camps.

The community of Čabar was most ferociously treated by the Italian soldiery. The population was frightened and fled to the neighbouring forest. The soldiers carried out a real manhunt. A great number was shot, the rest was interned — about 1.100 people from that community alone.

On July 21, the Italian soldiers rushed into the village of Crni Lazi, seized all the population and drove it to concentration camps, and looted and burnt the houses. In 8 neighbouring villages all houses were also burnt and the population interned — some 600 people. The villages of Žagari, Okrivlje, Požarnica, Kamenski Hrib, Podstena and Mandli, belonging to the comunity of Plešce, were plundered and burnt down, and 600 people were taken to concentration camps.

These are only some examples of the sufferings of the villages of the Čabar district. Some 4.500 people — almost half of the district, were interned from this area which before the war numbered about 10.000 inhabitants.

www.diecifebbraio.info

NOT ONLY THE ARMY BUT ALSO ITALIAN CIVIL AUTHORITIES IN DALMATIA DROVE THE POPULATION TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS

A completely identical system of struggle against our people and of crimes committed against our population in the form of mass internment, was also applied on the territory of the VI and XVIII army corps (Dalmatia and Herzegovina). The treatment of the population was the same as that in the provinces mentioned above: imprisonment of the people immediately after the occupation, increase of activity in the first half of 1942 and finally the beginning of mass internment in the Summer of that year, and the uninterrupted continuation of this activity up to the capitulation of Italy.

Italian soldiers carrying out "Rastrellamento": masses of the people are being driven to concentration camps.

But the number of interned persons was not small even in the first phase, which lasted until June 1942. The Governor of Dalmatia inquired as to the number of Dalmatians interned in Italy and was answered by Zerbino, Prefect of Split (№ 7258 Gab. P. S. of May 15, 1942), Scassellati, Prefect of Kotor (№ 2.277 of May 25, 1942) and the Zadar Police Chief (№ 03001 of May 25, 1942), that 2.048 people were interned and sent to concentration camps in Italy from November 1, 1941, to May 15, 1942. If we add to this the number of arrested people in Dalmatia itself, which is considerably greater, as well as the number of people interned up to November 1941, the total amount would show a considerable percentage of the population of these two provinces.

www.diecifebbraio.info

But the worst begun only in June 1942. This is best revealed by the order of the Governor of Dalmatia of June 7, 1942, which we have mentioned already. He ordered a new concentration camp to be erected for the internment of the people, who were to serve at the same time as hostages. His decision of June 13, 1942, № 0625 shows that at first he intended to erect that camp in the island of Vir. But it became evident that such a camp would be insufficient, and he there fore chose the island of Molat instead. The camp erected in that island could receive — and received — 3.500 prisoners.

Simultaneously with the erection of this camp he ordered all the people to be arrested that came into consideration for internment. An order of the Prefect of Split, Zerbino, № 1847, of June 28, 1942, reveals the instructions given by Bastianini to his subordinate prefects. This order was sent to all police institutions and the carabinieri commands and runs as follows:

> »... *Having in view the size and difficulties of these operations, it is necessary that they should develop gradually and be accompanied by measures of precaution... so that no member of partisan families should escape...*«

The steamship »Ammiraglio Viotti« was ordered to sail from place to place, take the arrested people and transfer them to the island of Molat. From numerous Italian documents on these transports we shall mention those relating to persons carried away from three small maritime communities only within 16 days: 65 people were transported on July 13 from Šibenik, 52 people from Zaton on July 14, 54 people from Tjesno, Betina and Murter on July 16, 240 people from Prvić on July 18, 98 people from Zlarin and Krapanj on July 23, 197 people from Vodice on July 29, 13 people from Tribunje, 256 people from Šibenik etc. In a letter to Mussolini, Bastianini wrote with pride:

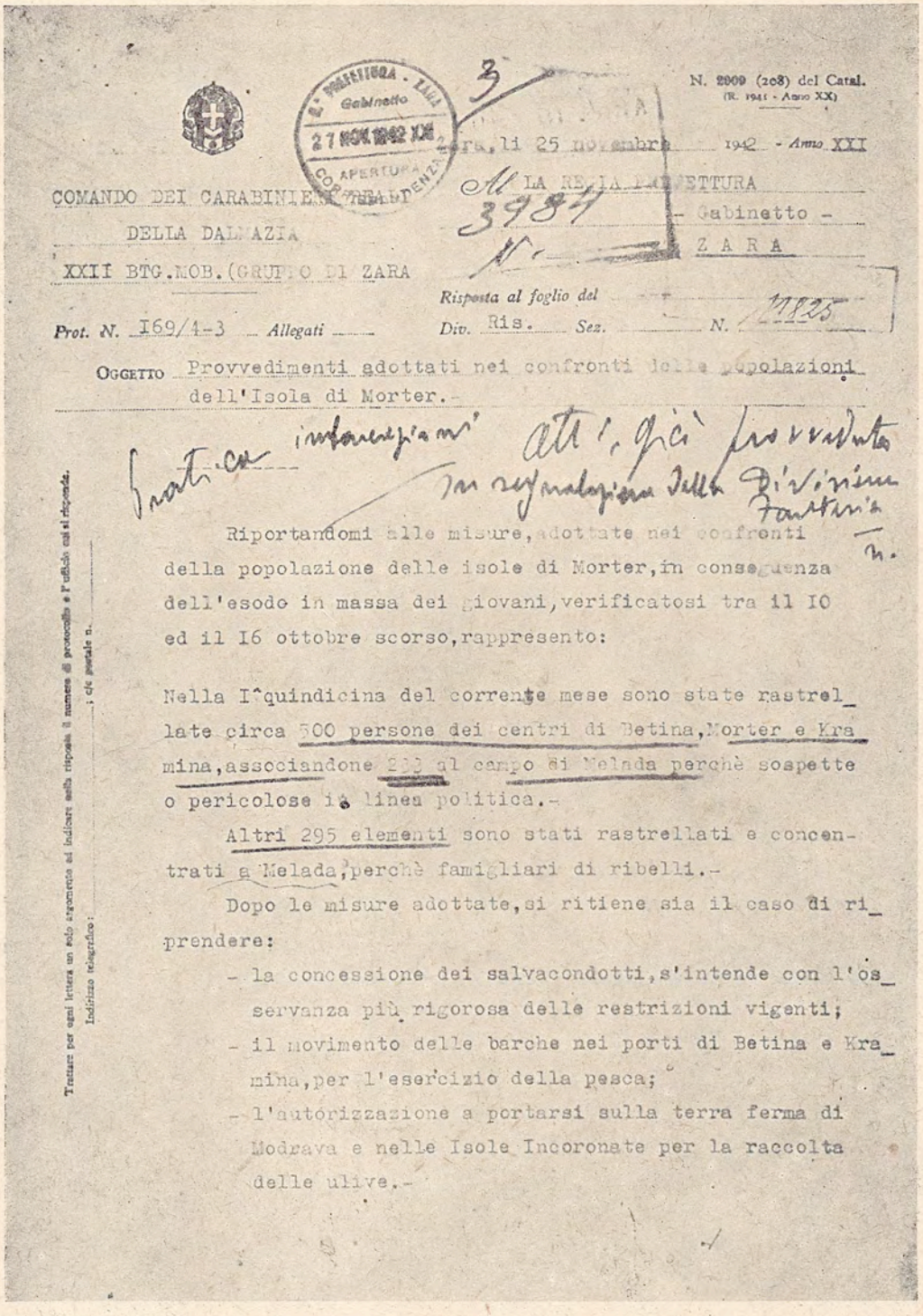
> *i did all in my power to facilitate the task (i. e. the task of the Italian army in Dalmatia) by arresting all the families of the rebels...« (telegram of July 19, 1942).*

The report of the Secretary of the Fascist party at Šibenik, of November 15, 1942, № 2490/1 reveals that some 426 people from Skradin were interned in those days. In the same month 166 people from Primošten village, 70 from Biograd-on-Sea and 530 from Betina were interned and so on. We could cite numerous similar examples.

But this was only the beginning. Mass arrests and internments were continued up to the breakdown of Italy. The prisoners were only temporarily kept in Dalmatian concentration camps, so long as they were not transferred to some concentration camp in Italy, except those who were left as hostages to be shot in smaller or larger groups.

The mopping-up actions and internment of the population were carried out regularly, in great number and with the assistance of the army, the fascist militia, carabinieri and police forces. A report of the carabinieri commander, Colonel Butti, of December 15, 1942, № 116/2, on the activity of the carabinieri of Dalmatia in the period July — September 1942, shows that some 2.073 people were interned during that time only by the carabinieri units, of which there were 436 men, 943 women and 694 children. Entire villages were ravaged and there was nobody to gather the crop. General Carlo Viale, commander of the »Zara«

www.diecifebbraio.info



N. 2009 (208) del Catal.
(R. 1941 - Anno XX)

Zara, li 25 novembre 1942 - Anno XXI

COMANDO DEI CARABINIERI REALI
DELLA DALMAZIA
XXII BTG.MOB.(GRUPPO DI ZARA

Al LA REGIA PREFETTURA
- Gabinetto -
ZARA

Risposta al foglio del

Prot. N. I69/4-3 Allegati Div. Ris. Sez. N. 11825

OGGETTO Provvedimenti adottati nei confronti delle popolazioni dell'Isola di Morter.-

Pratica intercezioni

Atti già provveduto in segnalazione della Divisione Fanteria n.

Riportandomi alle misure, adottate nei confronti della popolazione delle isole di Morter, in conseguenza dell'esodo in massa dei giovani, verificatosi tra il IO ed il I6 ottobre scorso, rappresento:

Nella I^a quindicina del corrente mese sono state rastrellate circa 500 persone dei centri di Betina, Morter e Kramina, associandone 233 al campo di Melada perchè sospette o pericolose in linea politica.-

Altri 295 elementi sono stati rastrellati e concentrati a Melada, perchè famigliari di ribelli.-

Dopo le misure adottate, si ritiene sia il caso di riprendere:

- la concessione dei salvacondotti, s'intende con l'osservanza più rigorosa delle restrizioni vigenti;
- il movimento delle barche nei porti di Betina e Kramina, per l'esercizio della pesca;
- l'autorizzazione a portarsi sulla terra ferma di Modrava e nelle Isole Incoronate per la raccolta delle ulive.-

Trattare per ogni lettera un solo argomento ed indicare nella risposta il numero di protocollo e l'ufficio cui si risponde.
Indirizzo telegrafico: ; c/c postale n.

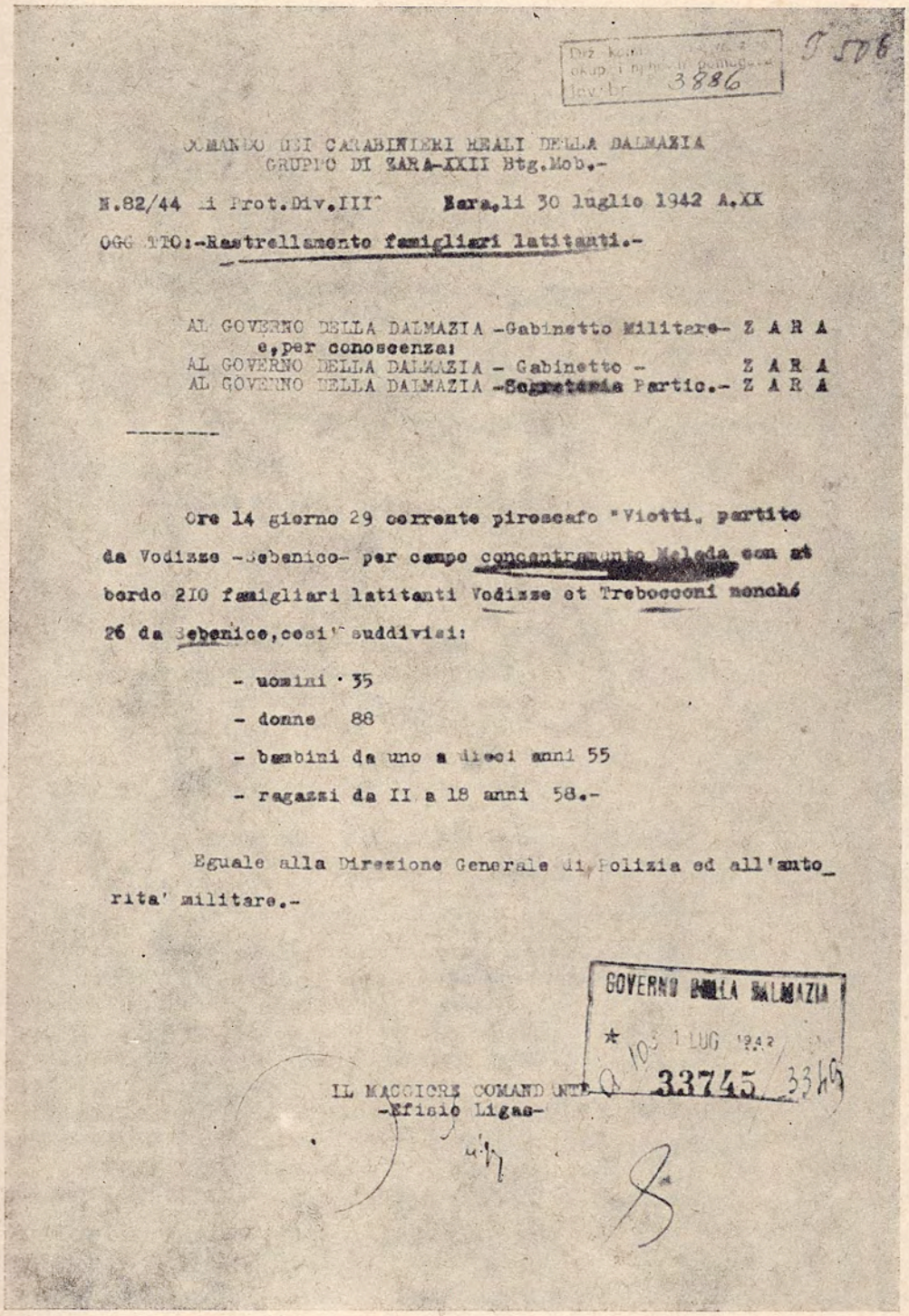
The Carabinieri Command of Zadar informs the Prefect of Zadar that 500 people from three small communities in Dalmatia (Betina, Murter and Kramina) were imprisoned in the first half of November, 233 of whom were sent to the Molat concentration camp as suspect and dangerous politically. Besides 295 more people relatives of the "rebels", were arrested and sent to Molat.

www.diecifebbraio.info

Da notare che, stante l'attuata sospensione della distribuzione dei viveri, molte famiglie si sono ridotte nella completa indigenza, ed il protrarsi dei provvedimenti adottati potrebbe influire gravemente sulle condizioni sanitarie della popolazione predetta.-

IL MAGGIORE COMANDANTE
- Efisio Ligas -

www.diecifebbraio.info



COMANDO DEI CARABINIERI REALI DELLA DALMAZIA
GRUPPO DI ZARA-XXII Btg.Mob.-

N.82/44 di Prot.Div.III° Zara,li 30 luglio 1942 A.XX

OGGETTO:-Rastrellamento famigliari latitanti.-

AL GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA -Gabinetto Militare- Z A R A
e,per conoscenza:
AL GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA - Gabinetto - Z A R A
AL GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA -Segretaria Partic.- Z A R A

Ore 14 giorno 29 corrente piroscafo "Viotti, partito da Vodizze -Sebenico- per campo concentramento Meleda con at bordo 210 famigliari latitanti Vodizze et Trebocconi nonchè 26 da Sebenico,così suddivisi:

- uomini · 35
- donne 88
- bambini da uno a dieci anni 55
- ragazzi da 11 a 18 anni 58.-

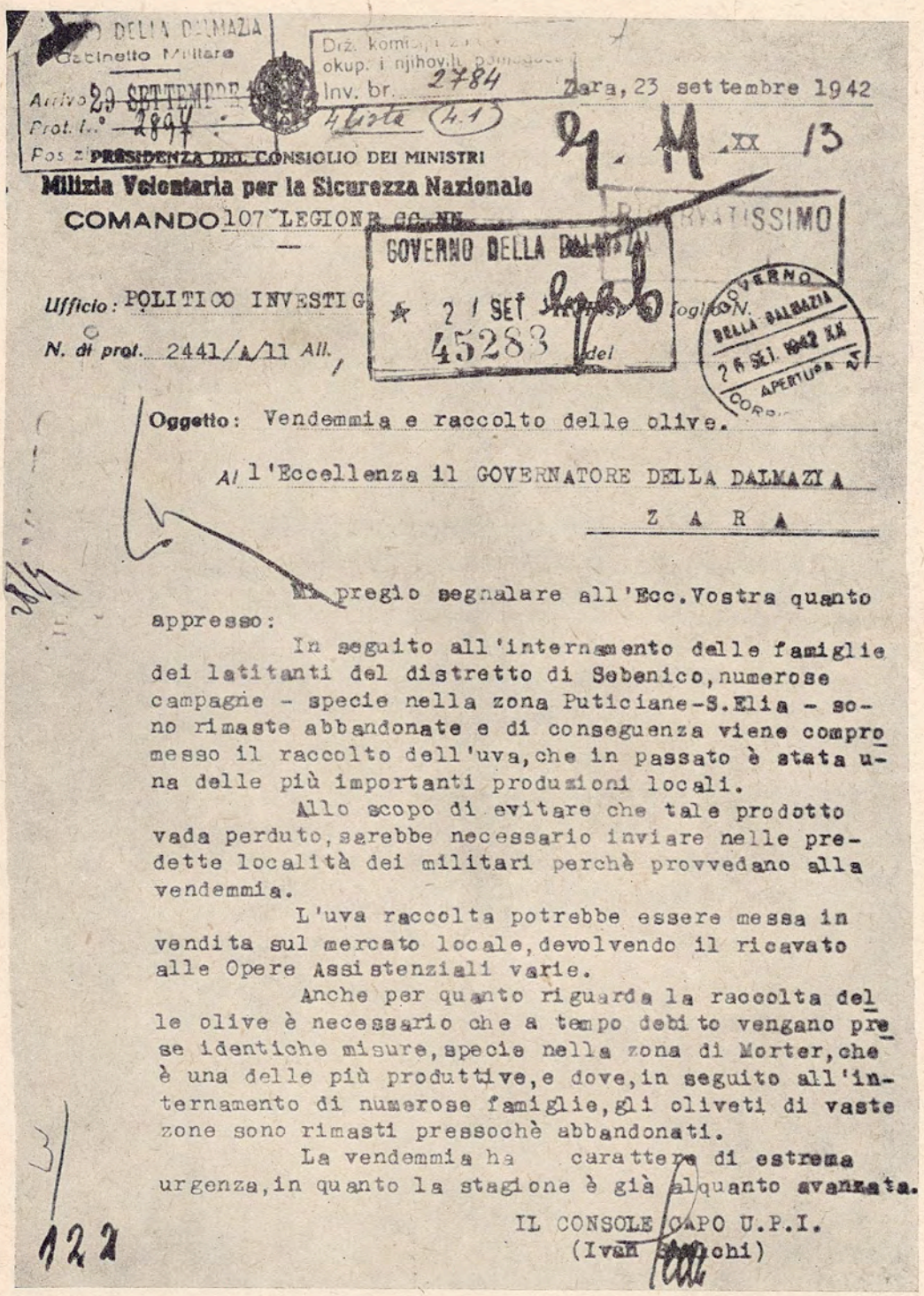
Eguale alla Direzione Generale di Polizia ed all'autorita' militare.-

GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA
1 LUG 1942
33745

IL MAGGIORE COMANDANTE
-Efisio Ligas-

The Carabinieri Command of Zadar informs the Governor of Dalmatia that 35 men, 88 women, 55 children of 1—10 years of age and 58 boys and girls of 11—18 years of age from Šibenik, Tribunja and Vodice were sent to the Molat concentration camp on July 19, 1942.

www.diecifebbraio.info



...O DELLA DALMAZIA
Gabinetto Militare
Arrivo 29 SETTEMBRE
Prot. n.° 2897
Pos. z.

Drž. komisija ... okup. i njihovih pomagaca
Inv. br. 2784
4 lista (4.1)

Zara, 23 settembre 1942

9. 11 XX 13

PRESIDENZA DEL CONSIGLIO DEI MINISTRI
Milizia Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale
COMANDO 107 LEGIONE CC.NN.

RISERVATISSIMO

GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA
21 SET 1942
45283

GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA
26 SET. 1942 XX
APERTURA

Ufficio: POLITICO INVESTIG.
N. di prot. 2441/A/11 All.

Oggetto: Vendemmia e raccolto delle olive.

Al l'Eccellenza il GOVERNATORE DELLA DALMAZIA
Z A R A

Mi pregio segnalare all'Ecc.Vostra quanto appresso:

In seguito all'internamento delle famiglie dei latitanti del distretto di Sebenico, numerose campagne - specie nella zona Puticiane-S.Elia - sono rimaste abbandonate e di conseguenza viene compromesso il raccolto dell'uva, che in passato è stata una delle più importanti produzioni locali.

Allo scopo di evitare che tale prodotto vada perduto, sarebbe necessario inviare nelle predette località dei militari perchè provvedano alla vendemmia.

L'uva raccolta potrebbe essere messa in vendita sul mercato locale, devolvendo il ricavato alle Opere Assistenziali varie.

Anche per quanto riguarda la raccolta delle olive è necessario che a tempo debito vengano prese identiche misure, specie nella zona di Morter, che è una delle più produttive, e dove, in seguito all'internamento di numerose famiglie, gli oliveti di vaste zone sono rimasti pressochè abbandonati.

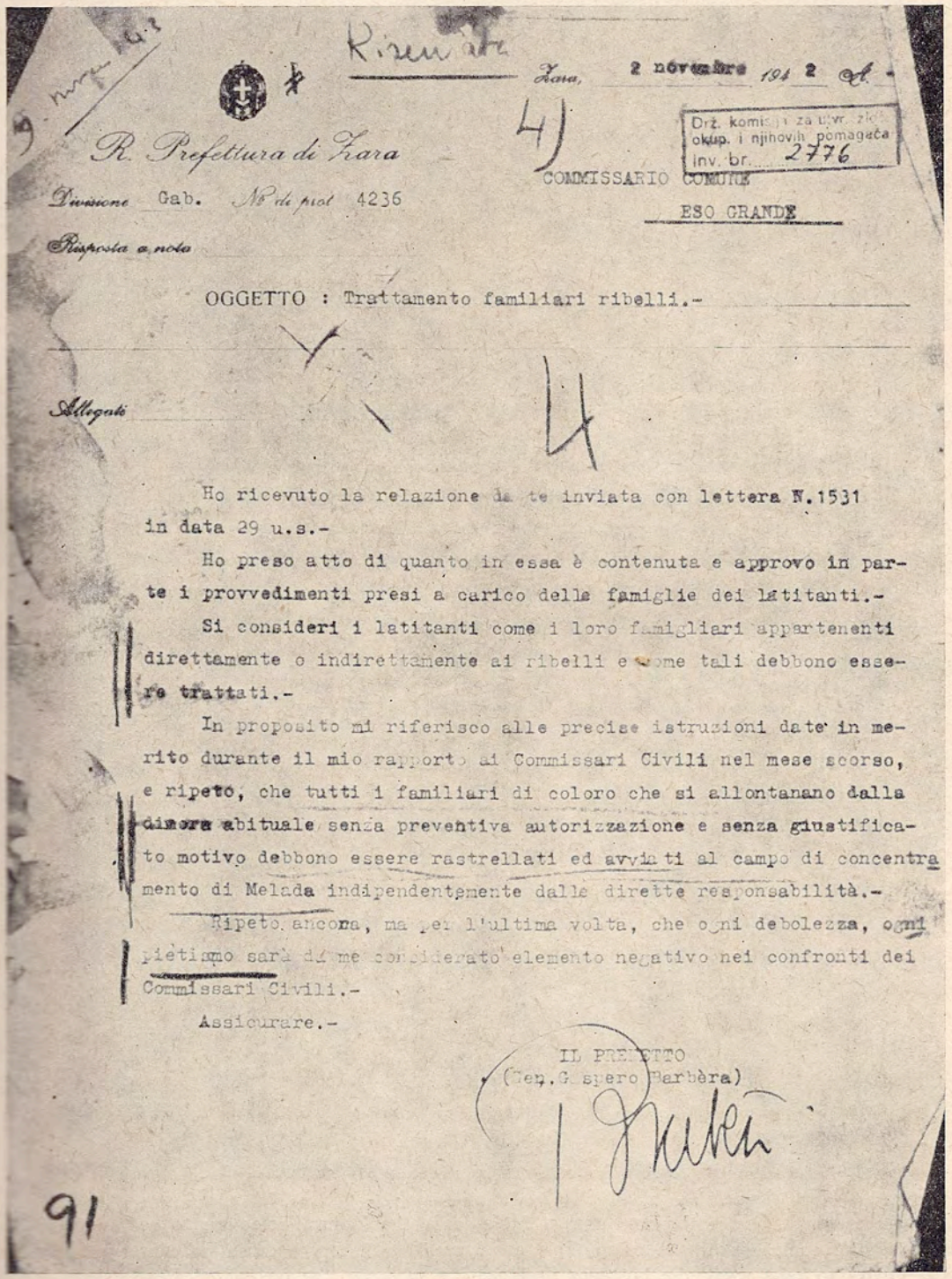
La vendemmia ha carattere di estrema urgenza, in quanto la stagione è già alquanto avanzata.

IL CONSOLE CAPO U.P.I.
(Ivan Scalchi)

122

Ivan Scalchi, chief of the fascist intelligence service at Zadar, informs the Governor of Dalmatia that there were, owing to the internment of the population, vast regions in the district of Šibenik from which the harvest was not gathered.

www.diecifebbraio.info



R. Prefettura di Zara

Zara, 2 novembre 1942

Divisione Gab. N° di prot. 4236

Risposta a nota

COMMISSARIO COMUNE
ESO GRANDE

Drž. komisija za utvr. zlo. okup. i njihovih pomagača inv. br. 2776

OGGETTO : Trattamento familiari ribelli.-

Allegati

Ho ricevuto la relazione da te inviata con lettera N.1531 in data 29 u.s.-

Ho preso atto di quanto in essa è contenuta e approvo in parte i provvedimenti presi a carico delle famiglie dei latitanti.-

Si consideri i latitanti come i loro famigliari appartenenti direttamente o indirettamente ai ribelli e come tali debbono essere trattati.-

In proposito mi riferisco alle precise istruzioni date in merito durante il mio rapporto ai Commissari Civili nel mese scorso, e ripeto, che tutti i familiari di coloro che si allontanano dalla dimora abituale senza preventiva autorizzazione e senza giustificato motivo debbono essere rastrellati ed avviati al campo di concentramento di Melada indipendentemente dalle dirette responsabilità.-

Ripeto ancora, ma per l'ultima volta, che ogni debolezza, ogni pietismo sarà da me considerato elemento negativo nei confronti dei Commissari Civili.-

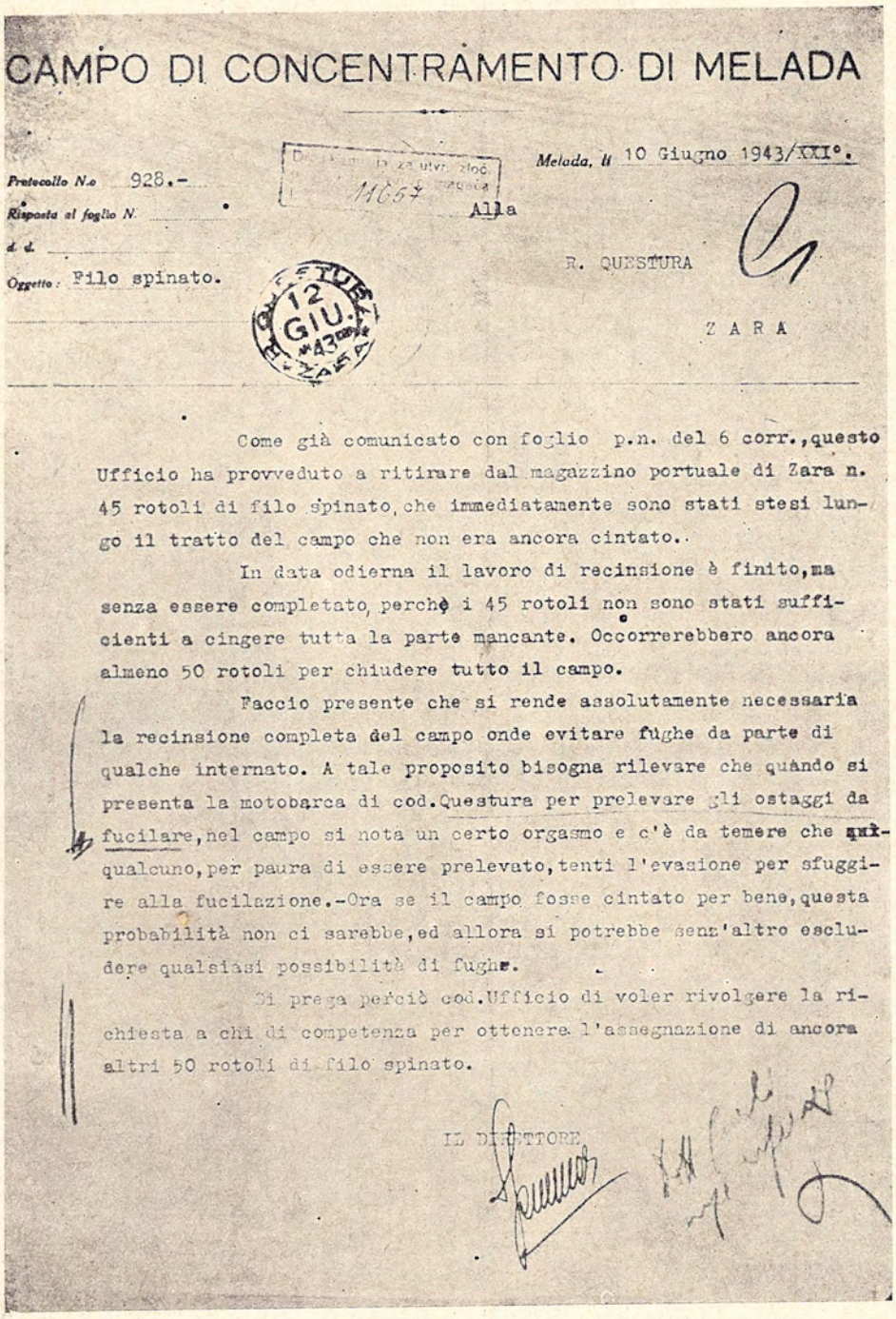
Assicurare.-

IL PREFETTO
(Gen. Gaspero Barbèra)

91

General Gaspero Barbera, Prefect of Zadar, orders the commissary of the community of Veli Iž that „all relatives of those who leave their places of permanent abode without previous permission and a justified reason, irrespective of their personal responsibility, should be sent to the Molat concentration camp".

www.diecifebbraio.info



CAMPO DI CONCENTRAMENTO DI MELADA

Protocollo N.o 928.-
Risposta al foglio N. ...
d. d. ...
Oggetto: Filo spinato.

Melada, li 10 Giugno 1943/XXI°.

Alla

R. QUESTURA

Z A R A

Come già comunicato con foglio p.n. del 6 corr., questo Ufficio ha provveduto a ritirare dal magazzino portuale di Zara n. 45 rotoli di filo spinato, che immediatamente sono stati stesi lungo il tratto del campo che non era ancora cintato..

In data odierna il lavoro di recinsione è finito, ma senza essere completato, perchè i 45 rotoli non sono stati sufficienti a cingere tutta la parte mancante. Occorrerebbero ancora almeno 50 rotoli per chiudere tutto il campo.

Faccio presente che si rende assolutamente necessaria la recinsione completa del campo onde evitare fughe da parte di qualche internato. A tale proposito bisogna rilevare che quando si presenta la motobarca di cod. Questura per prelevare gli ostaggi da fucilare, nel campo si nota un certo orgasmo e c'è da temere che qualcuno, per paura di essere prelevato, tenti l'evasione per sfuggire alla fucilazione.-Ora se il campo fosse cintato per bene, questa probabilità non ci sarebbe, ed allora si potrebbe senz'altro escludere qualsiasi possibilità di fughe.

Si prega perciò cod. Ufficio di voler rivolgere la richiesta a chi di competenza per ottenere l'assegnazione di ancora altri 50 rotoli di filo spinato.

IL DIRETTORE

Commander of the concentration camp at Molat asks the Zadar Prefecture to send him barbed wire for the enclosure of the camp. This enclosure is necessary because "whenever the questure boat comes to take away the hostages designed for shooting, the feeling of dread causes confusion and it is to be feared that someone, fearing to be taken away, might try to escape in order to avoid being shot".

www.diecifebbraio.info

division, informed the Governor of Dalmatia in his report of November 19, № 01/2005, that owing to the internment of the people there were not enough workers to gather grapes and olives in the region of Putičani — Sv. Ilija and Murter, and proposed the necessary measures to be taken, promising to protect the harvest by bis men.

The above quoted report of Colonel Butti shows: that the number of women and children interned by the carabinieri was much greater than that of adult men. There are also reports containing more precise evidence of the age of interned children. The report of the same colonel of July 23, 1942, 82/42 reveals that out of 98 people taken to Molat on July 23, there were only 12 adult men (including the old) while all others were women and children, among whom there were 15 children of 1—10 years of age. His report of July 30, 1942, № 82/42 shows: that out of 236 people taken to Molat on the previous day there were only 35 men above 18 years of age, the rest were women and children, among whom there were 55 children of 1—10 years of age. The Fraschette-Alatri concentration camp is an illustration of the inhuman treatment of innocent children. In that camp there were 489 children under 8 years of age, and 860 from 8—10 years of age. 17 children from 3—13 years of age were without parents and relations.

GENERAL PIRZIO BIROLI, GOVERNOR OF MONTENEGRO, WAS THE FIRST TO BEGIN MASS INTERNMENT OF THE POPULATION

Contrary to their policy in other regions occupied by the II Army, the Italian authorities in Montenegro did not wait until the year 1942 to begin mass internment.

Soon after the break-out of the great people's insurrection in 1941, the Governor of Montenegro, Pirzio Biroli, began a mass internment of »undesirable« elements, by which, together with other criminal means — mopping up actions, shooting of hostages etc. — he expected to bring about the results desired. His rage was so much the greater when all these measures proved to be insufficient to crush the resistance of the people. Therefore the new crimes he commited in order to succeed at any price were so much the more horrible.

According to incomplete evidence obtained up till now, the number of interned people from Montenegro, who were sent to the concentration camps in Montenegro, Albania and Italy, amounts to 26.387. In accordance with our intention of proving Italian crimes by material from Italian sources, we shall quote here a typical statement of Captain Gino Panicucci, commander of the VII Company of the II batallion of the 83 infantry regiment of the »Venezia« division:

> »... *According to the new order we had to intern all male population from 16 to 56 years of age... In September 1941 I was ordered... to arrest the population of the villages of Trebaljev and Sirogoste... Thus in September we arrested 110 people in the first mopping up action, and 30 in the second. From the same villages we arrested 130—140 people in November. About 40 people were arrested in December... In August 1943 my batallion carried out a mopping up action from Kolašin to Majkovac and arrested 300 people on that occasion (men, women and children), who were handed on to the carabinieri...*«

As in Dalmatia, interned persons were also used here as hostages. A great number of them was shot.

www.diecifebbraio.info

BRUTAL AND INHUMAN TREATMENT OF THE POPULATION ON THE PART OF THE ITALIAN ARMY AND CARABINIERI ON THE OCCASION OF ITS INTERNMENT

The behaviour of the Italian army and police at the time of internment was brutal and inhuman. Individual internment was generally executed by night. Soldiers or carabinieri would force their way into a house through the door or a window and take away a person without giving him time to prepare and take the most necessary things. The Commander of the XI Corps expressly ordered his organs to adopt such treatment in order to frighten the other people (A № 02/1935 of March 18, 1942). The proceeding was still more brutal on the occasion of mass internments, which were as a rule carried out simultaneously with the mopping-up action. The soldiers rushed into the houses with pointed rifles and guns and threatened to use them if the house was not emptied in the shortest possible time. The terrified people walked out of their houses without having time to collect even their most essential belongings. All this was the more terrible as it was usually carried out simultaneously with the shooting of „suspected" persons and burning of houses. Firing from their rifles, Italian soldiers drove the terrified population to collecting centres. The weeping and cries of small children were mixed with the shouts of maddened soldiery and their rifle firing. From the gathering places the people had to march to the place of embarkation, which was often one to two days' walk distant. Cooped up in sealed waggons or shut in in the lower parts of a ship, the unfortunate people waited without food and often without water to reach the first temporary camp, where they had to await transport to a permanent concentration camp.

YUGOSLAV PRISONERS WERE PUT IN SOME 200 ITALIAN PRISONER CAMPS

About 200 Italian concentration camps for Yugoslavs are known up till now. They were in Yugoslavia, Albania and Italy. The following were the largest.

In Yugoslavia: Rab, with about 13.000 people, Molat (a transit and hostages camp) with about 3.500; transit camps: Ljubljana with about 5.000, Bakar about 3.000, Plaški about 3.500, Kraljevica about 2.000, Olib about 1.500, Murter about 1.200. Vodice about 1.800, Bar about 2.000, Mamula about 1.000, etc.

In Albania: Kukus about 4.500, Kros about 1.900, German about 700.

In Italy: Gonars about 6.000, Visco about 6.400, Chiesanuova about 4.700, Fraschette about 4.400. Renici about 3.500, Treviso—Monigo about 3.000, Lipari about 2.300, Rijeka about 2.000, Alessandria about 1.400, Padova about 3.000, further Bagno a Ripoli, the islands of Ustica and Ponza, Coropoli, Montalbano, Ariano Irpino, Ferramonti, Acquila, Carbonia, Colfiorito, Isernia, Scipione, Frosinone, Colonia, Pisticci, Tremiti, Fabriano (Ancona), Nereto (Teramo), Alberobello, Piacenza, Lanciano, Busseto, Chieti, Pescara, Casoli, Tallo etc.

The total number of Yugoslavs driven to the Italian concentration camps cannot yet be exactly established, as the State War Crimes Commission has not yet examined the material from the camps in Italy. It is known that the number of prisoners in the camps in Autumn 1942 amounted to 89.488. According to incomplete evidence some 149.638 Yugoslav citizens had passed through the camps. Many

www.diecifebbraio.info

prisoners died, many were taken to work in villages, factories and mines, and many died in hospitals. Others were brought in to take their places. We have relatively exact evidence only for Slovenia: 67.230 persons, of which 50.559 men, 9.691 women, 2.698 old men and 4.282 children. As the population of the part of Slovenia under Italian occupation numbers about 360.000, it means that about 18% of the population were prisoners.

THE REGIME IN THE CAMPS WAS INDEED INHUMAN

The position of imprisoned Yugoslavs was considerably worse than that of the citizens of other states. The latter were placed in healthier climatic regions, in better buildings, allowed to correspond with their families and the Red Cross, to receive packets etc. As a rule, all this was denied to Yugoslavs. They were placed in buildings where the fascists did not dare to place the subjects of other states, completely unhygienic buildings, often in unhealthy regions and always too small to receive the number of prisoners directed to stay there. These buildings were often not yet finished, and the prisoners were obliged to dwell in tents or even under the open sky during the greatest cold before they finished them themselves. The number of the people in rooms was 2—4 times greater than normal for the size of the rooms.

In all cases established up till now, medical service in the camps was miserable and unworthy of a civilized state. The number of beds in the camp hospitals was quite insufficient, so that the sick usually lay together with the healthy. Medicaments were greatly lacking everywhere both in kind and quantity.

Food was quite insufficient. According to the list of rations for interned Yugoslavs the total number of calories amounted to hardly 1.000.

But even these minimal quantities of food were mostly denied to the prisoners:

a) There were camps in which the prescribed list of food rations contained still less calories.

b) Rare were camps in which food was not stolen by camp organs and other abuses made with or without the knowledge of the camp manager. There were frequent cases of abuses made by the managers or commanders of the camp.

The consequence of such feeding became visible very soon: prisoners were exhausted and sick and suffered especially from dysentery, tuberculosis and oedema, and weakened by insufficient food, they died en masse.

The camp organs treated the prisoners roughly, insolently and arbitrarily. It is established that in all camps, the state of which has been examined, the prisoners were beaten.

Collective punishments — confinement to the camp premises for one or more days — were very often applied. Disciplinary punishments of imprisonment were excessively frequent in all camps; the prisoners were also tried at courts for imaginary or exaggerated offences.

The example of the Fraschette-Alatri camp will give us a more concrete and real picture of the criminal regime that reigned in Italian concentration camps:

Director of the camp was Dessantis, commissary of public security (P. S.), Dr. Aurelio Mizzi was physician, Dr. Ferrata was commissary, Rosso was carabinieri commander. The administrative officials were: Giovanni Spampinetti and Volturno. The first director, Comm. Giuseppe Fantussati, had to be removed at the

www.diecifebbraio.info

request of the Italian population because of his ferocious torture of the prisoners and his thefts. Dessantis did not allow the relatives of dead prisoners to accompany them to the grave. Camp prisons were always full. If they stood in groups of more than 4 people, if somebody approached the barrier, if somebody protested because of bad food, the lack of letters and packages, if somebody sang, he was immediately thrown into prison by Dessantis and beaten by Ferrata. They violated young women and girls. The conduct of carabiniere Rosso was particularly repulsive in this respect. After the capitulation of Italy the prisoners were obliged to work at German aerodromes. Dessantis, Ferrata and Spampinetti gave the girl prisoners to the Germans for their soldiers' brothels. Finally these three criminals tried to set the camp on fire and plunder the stores, while they accused the prisoners to the Germans of having clandestinely burnt the camp. About 5 persons died every week because of insufficient food. Dr. Mizzi stole and sold medicaments. He maltreated the sick and sent them to work for the Germans even when feverish and with high temperature. Dr. Cecioni, assistant-physician, said: "Nobody will leave this camp alive". Spampinetti embezzled 250.000 lire, sent to the prisoners by their families; he took two lire for every packet and finally plundered all camp stores.

CONDITIONS WERE STILL WORSE IN THE CAMPS IN YUGOSLAVIA

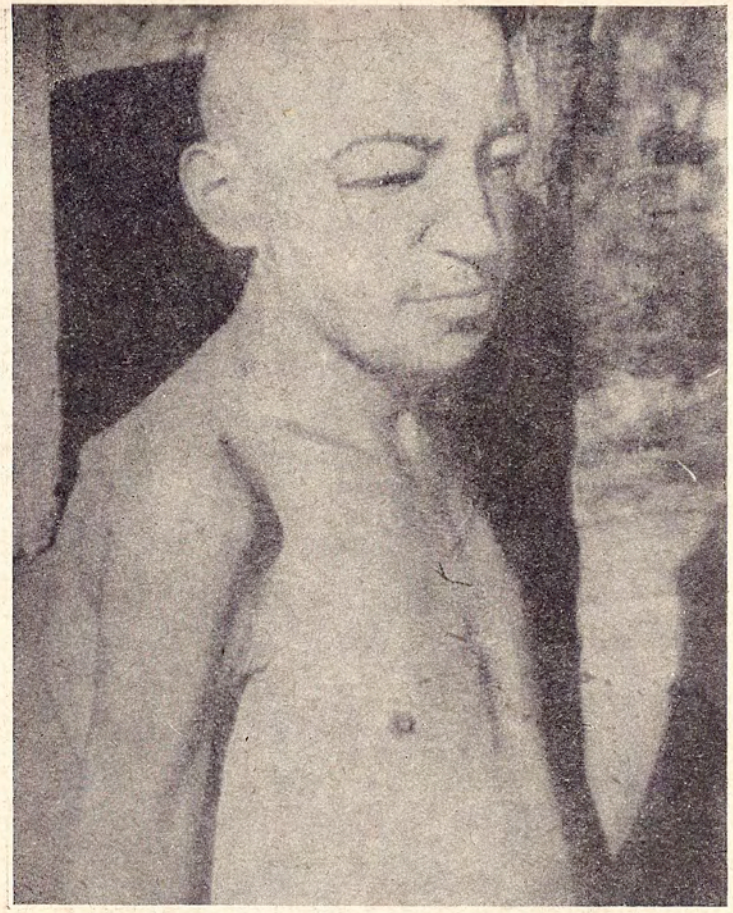
The picture of life drawn above was typical of the camps in Italy. The situation was still worse in the camps in Yugoslavia. We shall take as examples the camps at Rab and Molat.

The camp on the island of Rab commanded by Colonel Cuiuli was dreadful. He was a sadist who made albums of enlarged photos of corpses of men, women and children who had died in his camp of hunger and disease. The camp was placed in the most unhealthy part of the island, on boggy ground close to stinking marches. When the prisoners arrived in July 1942, the erection of barracks had not even begun. — There was only an area of land fenced with wire, where later on tents were placed. Six people were put into one tent, so that they could hardly move. They were given some straw for their beds; up to the Spring of 1943 they slept almost on bare earth. Most of the prisoners were brought to the camp without anything, without underwear or covering, and all the time they spent there they received from the camp authorities neither underwear nor garments. Their own underwear and garments were soon torn to pieces and the unfortunate men had to walk in rags or almost nude during the most severe cold. On October 29, a flood washed away the tents, so that many children were drowned.

The list of food rations was similar to that in other Italian camps — altogether about 1.000 calories a day. But corruption in the camp assumed such dimensions that the prisoners received hardly half of the ration allocated to them. Hunger was terrible. The management of the camp did not allow any supervision of distribution and cooking of the food, so that the officials, from the chief storekeeper to the last guardman, were stealing food. These stolen rations were given to the prisoners in exchange for valuable objects — watches, rings etc.

Unhygienic rooms, filth, cold and hunger caused general sickness, while general physical exhaustion made it impossible for the constitution to offer any

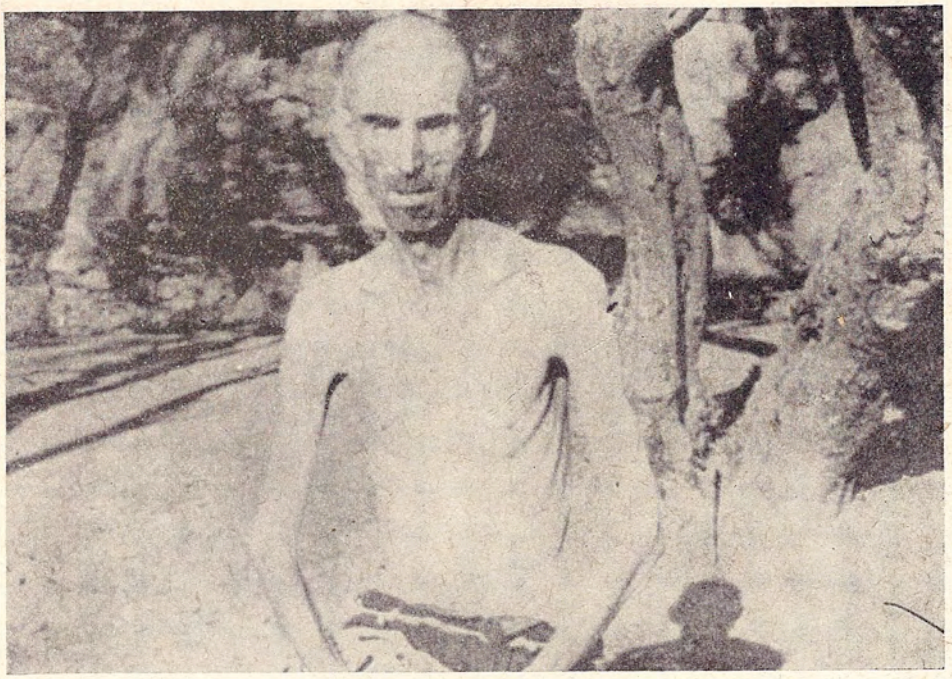
www.diecifebbraio.info



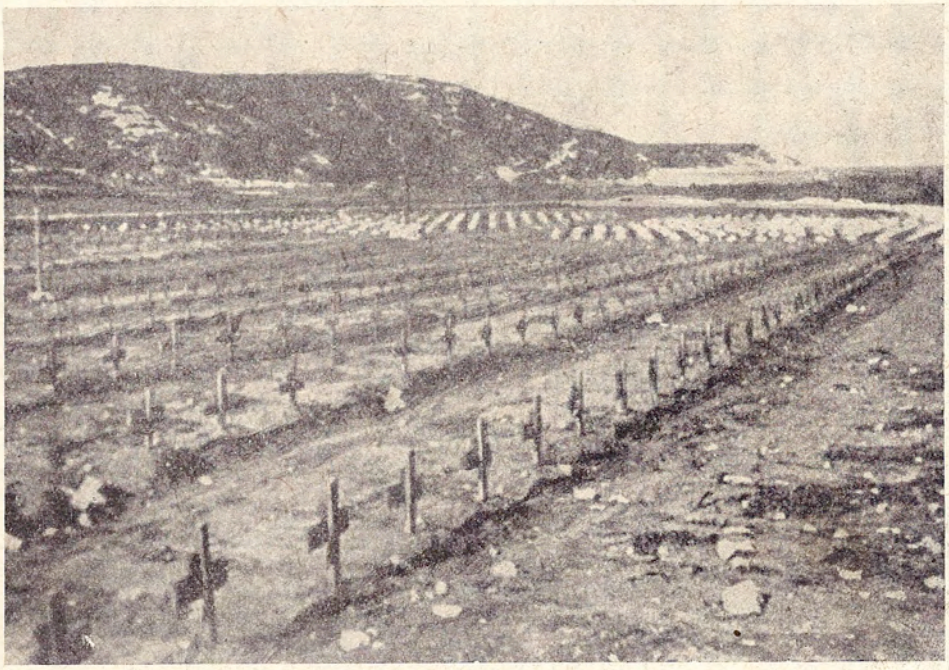
A prisoner at the Rab concentration camp.

Prisoners at Rab. Women and children from Slovenia arriving at Rab camp.

www.diecifebbraio.info



A prisoner at the Rab concentration camp.



Graves of Italian victims at the Rab concentration camp.

www.diecifebbraio.info

resistance to diseases. The prisoners who caught influenza or dysentery were doomed to inevitable death. The cases of tuberculosis were also numerous and a great number of prisoners died as a result.

Up to 1943 there was only an improvized hospital with 100 beds for about 13.000 prisoners in that camp. But the conditions in the hospital were such that the prisoners stayed and died rather in their tents than in the hospital. The sick lay on infected beds from which the corpses of their dead comrades had just been removed.

The conditions of confined women and newborn children were especially difficult. 80% of the babies were born dead because of the sufferings and hunger of their mothers. Even those who were born alive died soon. 3 to 4 and later on 4 to 5 children died every day.

In consequence of all this, the mortality rate in the camp at Rab was enormous, and was no less than that of a German camp of death. From 13.000 prisoners brought to Rab up to November 1942, about 4.400 people died by the Spring of 1943, which makes a death rate of about 34%.

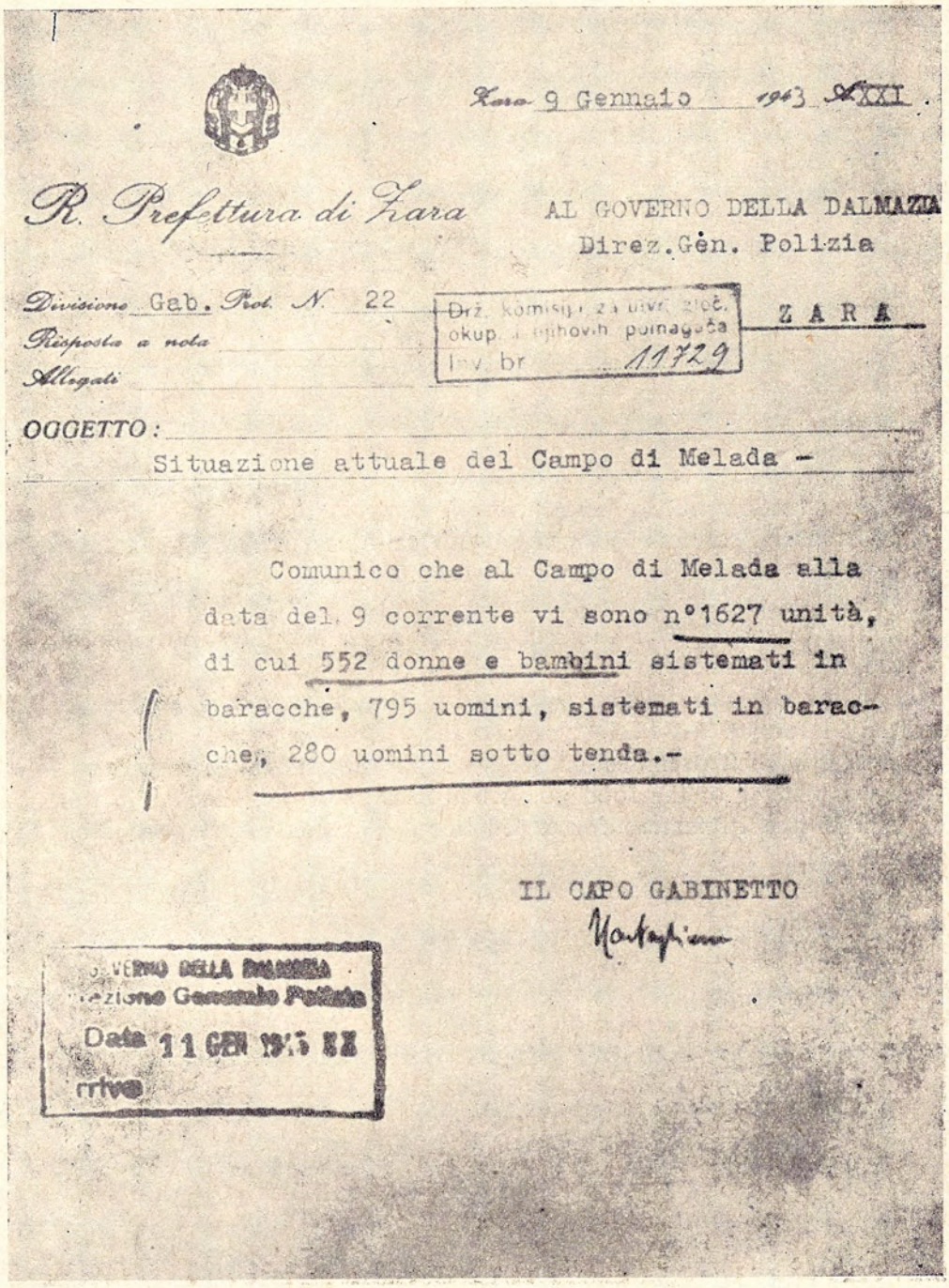
The situation in the concentration camp in the island of Molat was not different from that at Rab. That the death rate was not as high as at Rab was due to the fact that Molat was situated on more healthy ground and it was easier for relatives and friends to send packets, as Molat was not so far from the villages of the prisoners. But the Italian authorities put all sorts of obstacles in the way of this main source of food. This is revealed in a decision regarding an application made by the society „Jadranska Plovidba" to the Prefect of Zadar. The Society informed the Prefecture that they had 430 packets for interned persons at Molat in their premises, and begged that they should be forwarded to them, as there was danger of the food going bad because of long storage in warehouses. An official of the Prefecture forwarded this application with a favourable recommendation, stating that: *"The more food the prisoners obtained from their homes, the less we shall be obliged to give them..."* But in spite of that, Prefect Barbera refused the demand of the „Jadranska Plovidba" and did not allow the packets to be given to the prisoners. (Document of the Prefecture of December 20, 1942, Gab № 5501).

The prisoners were mostly obliged to sleep on bare and muddy ground, as there was no straw. Even small children could not obtain covers in winter. Unfortunate mothers wrapped their babies in skirts and aprons, as they had nothing else.

According to a report of the Zadar Prefecture, № 22 of January 9, 1943, there were 1627 prisoners at the Molat camp at that time, of which 552 women and children and 280 men stayed in tents— in January!

We have already stated that Molat — apart from serving as a transit camp to Italy — was at the same time a camp where relatives of the partisans were imprisoned, who were proclaimed hostages by Bastianini's order of June 7, 1943. They constituted a majority at Molat and this rendered life there particularly difficult. 2—3 times a week a special motor boat would come to take away the victims. Chains with which hostages were tied while being carried away hung overboard. The appearance of that boat spread terror among the unfortunate people, as they did not know whose turn would be next. A dispatch of Carlo Szommer, Commander

www.diecifebbraio.info



Zara 9 Gennaio 1943 XXI.

R. Prefettura di Zara

AL GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA
Direz. Gen. Polizia
ZARA

Divisione Gab. Prot. N. 22
Risposta a nota
Allegati

Drž. komisija za utvr. zlоč. okup. i njihovih pomagača
Inv. br. 11729

OGGETTO: Situazione attuale del Campo di Melada -

Comunico che al Campo di Melada alla data del 9 corrente vi sono n°1627 unità, di cui 552 donne e bambini sistemati in baracche, 795 uomini, sistemati in baracche, 280 uomini sotto tenda.-

IL CAPO GABINETTO
Montagna

GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA
Direzione Generale Polizia
Data 11 GEN 1943 XXI
Arrivo

The concentration camp at Molat near Zadar was a transit camp, from which the prisoners were transferred to concentration camps in Italy. Mostly hostages were kept there. On January 9, 1943 there were 1627 prisoners in the camp; of which 552 were women and children; 795 prisoners lived in barracks and 280 in tents — in January!

www.diecifebbraio.info

of the camp, sent to the Zadar quaestor on June 10, 1943, № 928, asking barbed wire to be supplied, characterizes the situation among the prisoners. The dispatch gives the following reasons for this request:

„Whenever the questure boat comes to take away the hostages designed for shooting, the feeling of dread causes confusion and it is to be feared that there will be attempts to escape . . .'

It is as yet impossible to establish definitely the number of Yugoslav citizens who passed through Italian concentration camps (the figure of 149.638, stated above, is not definite) nor is it possible to give the number of persons who died in the camps. Only the number of dead prisoners from Slovenia is known. Out of 67.230 persons interned, 11.606 died in camps and hospitals, including 7.758 adult men, 1.912 women, 796 old men and 1.140 children, i. e. more than 17%. This number does not include the people who died after returning home, from sufferings endured in the camps and diseases caught there.

But these are not all the victims suffered by our people on account of that crime. After the capitulation of Italy, a great number of our citizens was found in Italian concentration camps. The Italian authorities failed to set them free immediately, as was foreseen by the treaty of armistice with the Allies. The advancing German army found our citizens closed and guarded in many camps; they were kept there and later on sent to forced labour and death camps in Germany. Only an insignificant number of those who were sent to Germany from Italian concentration camps returned. All the rest succumbed to torture, hunger and disease.

VII. »RASTRELLAMENTO«: SLAUGHTER OF NON-COMBATANT CIVIL POPULATION. — SYSTEMATIC TERROR — INTENTIONAL DEVASTATION AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY — PLUNDER — CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY

»Rastrellamento« — action for the extermination of non-combatant population — was a technical term used by Italian staffs and their administration which occured frequently in military orders and reports. It was a word of terror and horror. Mere unverified suspicion that fighting units of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army had passed through a certain locality was enough to expose that locality and all the surrounding districts to total annihilation: to the destruction and burning of houses, plunder of cattle and movable property, and the killing and taking away of the population into slavery. But as a rule »the presence of partisans« and »the action against partisans« served only as a pretext for the extermination of the population.

But the cynicism of the Italian invader went so far that he often did not seek for any justification for his destructiveness and his atrocities. The Italians killed and devastated even where it was quite obvious that there was no connection whatever with their struggle against the Yugoslav National Liberation Army.

The tactics of the Italian Army were not to attack armed units of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army directly, but by devastating the country to deprive the partisans of their sources of supply, and by reprisals to annihilate a peaceful popu-

www.diecifebbraio.info