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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Italy/Austria

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SUBJECT Italian Methods in the South Tirol

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SUPPLEMENT

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SOURCE

1. The South Tirol Volkspartei (SVP) is reported to be collecting evidence of the continued suppressive methods of the Italians in the South Tirol with a view to mobilizing world opinion and enlisting the aid of friendly governments.
2. In this connection a comprehensive and general report on developments in the South Tirol since the signing of the Paris Agreement was compiled on 10 January by Dr. Ebner of the SVP. The following are among the main points made by Dr. Ebner:
 - (a) The failure of the Italians a) even to consider, much less to accept the SVP proposals for an interim regime pending the granting of the promised autonomy, and b) to take any steps toward the reunion of the "Bozener Unterland" with the Province of Bolzano as envisaged in the Paris Agreement.
 - (b) The arbitrary dismissal by the Italians of Walter Ammon, Vice-Prefect of Bolzano who was the only South Tirolese representatives among the high administrative officials in the South Tirol.
 - (c) The failure of the Italians a) to appoint South Tirolese for the posts of mayor and secretary in those communes with a German-speaking majority and b) to give the South Tirolese a greater voice in the local administration. Even when there are vacancies, Italians from Central and Southern Italy are given preference over South Tirolese with the result that ninety per cent of the local officials are Italians and many of them former Fascists.
 - (d) The tyrannical methods of the local Italian police and particularly the intimidation and persecution of the local population by arbitrary arrests, house searches, refusal of trade licenses, passes, etc., summary dismissals on such grounds as "membership in the SVP" or "anti-Italian sentiments."
3. Dr. Ebner's charges against the Italians are substantiated by the recital of numerous individual cases among which are the following:

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- 2 -

- (a) A letter addressed to the SVP by the local branch of the Association for Returned Prisoners of War revealing that the Italian State Railways have turned down the applications for work of some 200 South Tirolese because of police reports describing the applicants as having "Austrian sentiments", being "friends of Austria" or "anti-Italian".
- (b) A letter addressed by a South Tirolese member of the Italian Christian Democratic Party to a Trentino Deputy, indicating that the Italian Authorities are financing the minority opposition groups and newspapers in the South Tirol.

4. Other complaints heard against the Italians in the South Tirol include the following:

- (a) The unchecked immigration of Italians from Central and Southern Italy to South Tirol. In the course of one day 6,000 of such immigrants are alleged to have received permits to reside in Bolzano, despite the acute housing shortage.
- (b) The Italian financing of weekly newspapers, disguised as South Tirolese papers, which attack the SVP and particularly its delegates to Paris.
- (c) The Italian refusal to settle the optants' question, while granting nationality papers to a number of very doubtful Germans (including Herr Smendt and Dr. Aichner) who have assisted the Italian Authorities against the South Tirolese.
- (d) The behavior of the Italian Authorities in the so-called "Kaltern incident" when the South Tirolese Deputy Mayor of a village with a preponderantly German-speaking majority was dismissed and six local youths were arrested and detained for weeks without trial, for removing an Italian flag. Previously the Deputy Mayor had warned the Italian Mayor that it would be an unnecessary provocation to display the flag, while the youths before removing it asked the Italian Mayor to hang out a South Tirolese flag alongside it.
- (e) The complete disregard of the interests of the local population in the latest projects for the exploitation of local electrical power. In some cases dams are allegedly to be built which will necessitate the destruction of whole villages, without consulting the local population.

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