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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
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DIVISION OF RECORDS
ANTITRUST DIVISION

Attention: Ewing C. Sadler, Esquire

Re: Transportation Facilities of
Northern Italy

Dear Mr. Sadler:

On your assignment sheet for the week of April 19, I noticed that you are completing a report on the transportation facilities in and out of Northern Italy.

I would like to call your attention to a Memorandum for Mr. Britt of the Chicago office written by Victor Kramer on October 13, 1942, in which Mr. Kramer quotes Messrs. Emsch and Rode as saying:

All shipments from Germany to Italy, including those destined for Africa, must go by one of four routes: the Mediterranean; the Simplon tunnel; the St. Gothard tunnel; and the Brenner Pass. All traffic using the St. Gothard tunnel must pass through the town of Offenburg, ten miles southeast of Strassburg, in Western Germany.

At various times I have asked several of my own informants to comment on that paragraph. Here are some of my notes:

By "Mediterranean" they must mean the Adriatic ... from Vienna via Semmering and Graz by the Tauernbahn (Tauern railroad) to Trieste. Shipments to Rommel in North Africa might go through the St. Gothard tunnel to Genoa, possibly via Offenburg but also via Friedrichshafen and Zurich. The Brenner Pass is 13,000 metres long, with very heavy grades, a slow haul, necessitating a heavy consumption of coal. There are no important highways.



index

One of my informants stated: "The Brenner line extends about 70 miles from Innsbruck to Bozen and is extremely vulnerable, with about 30 bridges, the destruction of any one of which would block the entire line."

Against this, of course, there is Mr. Layng's caveat that bridges are very difficult to destroy. The Brenner bridges would prove particularly difficult since they are deep in the mountain passes, with the weather changing from hour to hour, now clear, now cloudy.

Here are some further notes on the Brennerbahn which you may find useful: My informant was Dr. George Keinath, formerly of Siemens and Halske of Berlin.

The Brennerbahn

Lugano
The Brennerbahn has long served as a main line from Berlin to Rome via Halle, Nuernberg, Munich, Rosenheim, Innsbruck, Brenner, Verona, Bologna and Florence. There were variations between Halle and Nuernberg; some trains went via Leipzig and Saxony, others farther west. The only difficult terrain inside Germany is near Rothenkirchen in Thueringen, with heavy grade ~~and~~ and (if memory serves) a number of bridges. Beginning at Rosenheim (not going via Salzburg which is the road to Vienna), the tracks run through long narrow valleys, cloudy with mist and fog, down to Brixen ("Bressanone" in Italian). From there on the valleys widen more and more.

Electrification of the Berlin-Rome Line

Bavaria led the way in the electrification of Germany's railways, making a beginning before the last war. Only a few lines are electrified in Northern Germany, south from Saalfeld on the Baltic, etc. For one reason, there is more available electric energy in Bavaria than in Prussia. Fully electrified is the line Munich-Rosenheim-Salzburg-Vienna, and from Rosenheim to the Brenner Pass, and through Northern Italy as far south as Rome. Italy has and had no coal, but abundant

hydraulic power, particularly in the North where all the main railway lines are electrified.

Vulnerability of Electric Railway Lines

With all or most of the trackage electrified, there will be very few steam locomotives to substitute for the electric locomotives should any appreciable percentage of the power generators be put out of service. This applies to Italy proper, however, rather than the Brenner Pass, for Germany could rush steam locomotives to the Brennerbahn.

There are always a number of transformer stations along electric railway lines, stepping the voltage down to something like 6,000 or 15,000 volts. However, to cut one of these means very little. The wires can be reconnected, and traffic continues, perhaps not so efficiently but after a fashion. No amount of irreparable damage has been done. Even with all the power stations destroyed, traffic can be moved with steam locomotives, and the number of steam locomotives needed will not seriously drain the Axis steam locomotive park.

Traffic over the Brenner Pass

Though confessing that he had no positive information, Dr. Keinath stated that, in his opinion, little if any coal was moving via the Brenner Pass to Italy. Coal would go via Switzerland which is the shorter route for the better coal. No bituminous coal would be sent via the Brenner. The heat value of a carload would be less than half that of good coal. The Brenner is probably being used for troops, munitions, etc., which cannot pass through Switzerland. This traffic might very well keep the Brenner busy.

Brenner Bottlenecks

Dr. Keinath pointed to the railroad yards at Munich as the Brenner bottleneck, not only the Ost-Bahnhof

where the Brenner traffic collects, but also the Hauptbahnhof between Munich and Pasing through which all traffic must pass. In Munich there are no hills to obstruct low altitude bombing, and the targets are square miles of crowded railroad yards.

In Laim, which is nearer Munich than Pasing, there is a delicate control system for all the signals and switches controlling the freight yards. Accidents are a common occurrence, collisions and telescoping, whenever this control system gets out of order. In Laim there is a large railway repair shop.

The Ost-Bahnhof is important because all traffic routed either to Vienna or Rome must pass through the yards. There are very few facilities for by-passing Munich; and so with Munich traffic tied up, the whole of the traffic from Eastern and Northern Germany to Italy must be held up.

Next would be the railroad yards at Rosenheim, the last big yards inside the pre-war Reich-- though Kufstein may also be of some minor importance.

If at the same time the Tauernbahn (which serves Trieste) could be disrupted, Italian-based troop movements would be seriously inconvenienced.

So much for the Brennerbahn. As you probably know, the Italian Government in July 1942 announced the electrification of the Turin-Venice line, and the double-tracking of the Bologna-Verona, Verona-Savona and Savona-Menton lines.

I am hoping that these notes (which I have never yet found occasion to use) may help you in the writing of your report.

Very truly yours,

SAMUEL S. ISSEKS
Special Assistant to the Attorney General

By



CHARLES C. BALDWIN
Expert

cc: Messrs. Isseks and Levi
Charles Layng, Chicago