

LEGISLATURA VI — DISEGNI DI LEGGE E RELAZIONI - DOCUMENTI

NO. 382

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Palermo, Italy - November 21, 1944

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SUBJECT: Meeting of Mafia Leaders with General Giuseppe Castellano and formation of group favoring autonomy.

SECRET

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON

SIR:

I have the honor to report that on November 18, 1944 General Giuseppe Castellano, together with Mafia leaders including Calogero Vizzini conferred with Virgilio Nasi, head of the well-known Nasi family in Trapani and asked him to take over the leadership of a Mafia-backed movement for Sicilian autonomy which will have the cooperation of the FDOS and the Legge Agricoltura.

This movement has not yet matured to the point where a full report can be made and the following information is based on such data as have come to hand, but it is reliable.

General Castellano, who is a Sicilian, took command of the re-activated Aosta Division in the beginning of October and since that time has been very active in studying the Sicilian problem and looking for a solution. He has developed close contacts with the Mafia leaders and has met them on frequent occasions.

As reported in my despatch No. 375 dated November 13, 1944, prominent members of the Mafia met in Palermo and one of the results of this conference was the decision to ask Virgilio Nasi of Trapani to head up this movement with the ultimate intention of his becoming High Commissioner. The Nasi family have been well known in the Province of Trapani for at least two generations and are highly respected by all classes. It is understood that Nasi is a Labor Democrat but he has played little part in the political upheavals on the island throughout the past year.

During the next few weeks an active campaign will get underway to gain more adherents to the movement. The FDOS, which as already reported is very strong, will, of course, cooperate and I believe it quite likely that many of the followers of Finocchiaro-Aprile, who is losing popularity and the confidence of the people, will join with the Nasi followers. Their platform has not

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