

## BANCA DI ROMA

### 1. General considerations

The documentation relating to Jewish assets currently held in the historic archive of the Banca di Roma<sup>1</sup> mainly allows the events marking the period of the Repubblica Sociale Italiana (8 September 1943 – 25 April 1945) to be reconstructed. There is no trace of matters relating to the previous period (1938-1943), while in the years immediately following liberation only some cases of restitution of sequestered assets can be partially reconstructed following law suits between Jewish clients and the Banco di Roma: the cases of Elda Ravà of Venice, Lidia Errera and Arturo and Luisa Perugia of Florence.

There is then a file dating from 1950 on the reinstatement of Jewish employees dismissed as a result of the rdl of 17 November 1938.

The question of sequestering the moveable assets of Jews, as occurred in the bank's local branches in the provinces of central-north Italy, emerges from the Banco di Roma papers and especially from an examination of the copious correspondence between the Head Office and the individual branches.

It is firstly necessary to make a distinction between sequestrations of Jewish assets made by the German authorities and those carried out in consequence of the directives on the property of Jewish citizens issued first by the Heads of Province following police order No. 5 of December 1943, then made law by the new Mussolini government with its decree of 4 January 1944. Due to the excessive

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<sup>1</sup> The historic archive of the Banca di Roma, which holds the bank's various archives along with those of the Cassa di Risparmio di Roma, the Banco di S. Spirito and the Monte di Pietà (the last two have largely been dispersed), is in Rome at Piazza del Monte di Pietà 33, and is accessible only by appointment from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday to Friday. The documentation has recently been inventoried and computerised. This report refers mainly to elements in the Banco di Roma archives.

For the *Banco di Roma* collection see the *Ufficio Legale* series, b. 13, fasc. 65 "Beni di nominativi di razza ebraica" and the *Ufficio del personale* series, b. 4, fasc. 15 "Ebrei. Ripristino delle anzianità". The first file is fairly large and contains: legal directives issued by the **RSI** relating to the Jewish question; circulars from the Fascist Confederation of Banks and Insurance Companies and internal bank circulars on the same subject; correspondence between the bank's Head Office and some branches on the various procedures to follow with clients "belonging to the Jewish race"; copy of the reports with which some branches sent the property deposited by Jewish citizens to their province of residence. No documentation was found on the outcome of these reports.

The second file contains statements, reckonings and correspondence relating to the repeal of the racial provisions regarding employees of the bank (9 staff members) following l. 220/1950, on the basis of which the wages owing to those employees dismissed as a result of rdl 1728/1938, and subsequently reinstated in accordance with rdl 25/1944, issued by the government of the south, were paid and their position with the social security fund regularised.

For the *Cassa di risparmio di Roma* collection, see the *Ordinanze della Divisione finanziaria del Governo militare alleato* (1944-1945) series, b. 2, fasc. 24 "Confisca beni ebraici". The file contains a list of 51 holders of safe-deposit boxes, that "it is presumed belong to the Jewish race", moved from the Piazza del Monte branch of the Cassa to the Head Office. See also:

b. 2, fasc 27. "Banca d'Italia, Beni di ingiustificata provenienza, Blocco crediti stranieri, Confisca beni ebraici, Beni appartenenti alle cessate organizzazioni del PNF". The file contains correspondence between the Head Office of the Cassa and the Prefecture of Rome regarding communication of the names mentioned in the previous file. On 18 January 1944 the manager of the Piazza del Monte branch sent the Head Office the list of Jewish holders of safe-deposit boxes that had been stopped. On 10 February 1944 the Head Office informed all branches and agencies that the opening of safe-deposit boxes registered to Jews was not under any circumstances allowed without the specific authorisation of the Prefecture. Furthermore, on the basis of the decree of 4 January 1944, it ordered that safe-deposit boxes be reported to the Prefecture.

b. 2, fasc 32. "Apertura cassette di sicurezza". This contains correspondence with the financial division of the Allied Military Government and lists the safe-deposit boxes with the names of their holders and relative addresses. As shown by the lists attached to the letters of 28 June and 10 July 1944, some Jewish names appeared among the clients of the Piazza del Monte branch of the Cassa di Risparmio di Roma who had asked for their safe-deposit boxes to be opened and for withdrawal of the deposits held in custody.

fragmentation of the documentation it is not possible to precisely determine the real overall sum of the assets stopped, confiscated and then sequestered from Jewish clients of the Banco di Roma.

The sequestrations of moveable assets (balances of current accounts and securities, valuables, objects contained in safe-deposit boxes) made by the SS took place in the branches of Bologna, Florence, Fiume (Rijeka), Milan and Trieste between March and October 1944.

TABLE 1. *Sequestrations made by the German authorities (March-October 1944)*

*date*

29-30 September  
and 2 October 1944

11-12 July 1944

11-12 July 1944

1 July 1944

17 March 1944

22 March 1944

18 March 1944

*place*

Bologna

Florence

Florence

Fiume

Milan

Milan

Trieste

*type*

35 safe-deposit boxes

Current accounts

Safe-deposit boxes

Current accounts

Sealed deposit

Safe-deposit boxes

Current accounts

*total value*

No value removed

L.80,537.40

Miscellaneous shares

L. 600 in B.B. (bonds), miscellaneous jewellery

L. 2,654

L. 50,000

Miscellaneous photographic material

L. 56,550 plus 1 trunk on sealed deposit with a declared value of L.200,000

*names*

various

Ernesto and Valentina Calò, Errera, Arturo Perugia, Isacco and Adolfo Uzielli

Ernesto and Valentina Calò, Nunes Vais, Luisa Perugia, Sonnino

Eisler, Weiss, Werzler, Roman Lorenzetti

Duegas

Melauri, Gotzl, Ara

The sequestrations made by the Italian authorities following the confiscation decrees issued by the Heads of Province took place in the branches of Grosseto, Parma, Turin and Verona.

In Venice 79 confiscation decrees were issued for the same number of Jewish names (see table in the Venice Branch section) but it is not clear whether these confiscations were actually followed by the relative sequestrations.

The case of Piacenza was quite singular where, following police order No. 5 of 5 December 1943, all the assets of the heirs of Ferdinand Pesaro relating to the Maglificio Pesaro and to Emilio Pesaro were sequestered and their management handed over to a sequestrator. The confiscation decrees regarding Umberto Muggia (15 March 1944) and Maria Foà (24 May 1944) are also documented, along with the subsequent transfer to the Milan branch of these and other Jewish sums, apart from the balances of the Pesaro heirs already entrusted to the sequestrator (21 August 1944). Finally, the safe-deposit boxes of Eloisa Finzi and Umberto Muggia were forcibly opened and the valuables in them sent to the Milan branch, where they remained in bond to the EGELI (9 January 1945).

TABLE 2. *Sequestrations following the confiscation decrees issued by the Heads of Province date*

8 February 1944

17 May 1944

(Confiscation decree of 26.1.1944)

3 February 1944

10 May

25 July

10 August 1944

29 December 1944

(Confiscation decree of 5 July 1944)

*place*

Grosseto

Grosseto

Parma

Turin

Verona

*type*

Current accounts

Safe-deposit box

Current accounts

15 safe-deposit boxes (11 of which found empty) objects and miscellaneous shares, policies and 1 coin

3 safe-deposit boxes

*total value*

L. 84,417.85

empty

L. 26,459.20

unspecifiable value

Empty

*depositing corporation or body*

Deposit registered to the Management of Sequestered Property Corporation at the Grosseto branch of the Banca d'Italia

Deposit registered to the head of the Parma Revenue Office, President of the Provisional Committee for the Management of Jewish Goods at the Cassa di Risparmio

Sealed deposits at the branch of the Banco di Roma, available to the EGELI

The highly confidential circular sent by the Head Office of the Banco di Roma to all managers of branches in central and north Italy not yet liberated by the Allies (Bergamo, Bologna, Bolzano, Cremona, Cuneo, Fiume [Rijeka], Genoa, Imperia, Milan, Padua, Parma, Piacenza, Savona, Turin,

Trieste, Udine, Venice, Verona and Voghera) is dated 17 October 1944. It gave precise instructions on the “sequestration and removal of securities, valuables and cash belonging to Jewish names by the German military authorities”. The openly declared purpose of the Banco di Roma direction was “to exonerate our bank from any responsibility, given the particular delicacy of the matter”. The rules that were to be followed if the German authorities should present themselves in the bank offices to appropriate valuables belonging to Jewish clients were to:

- in any case ask for the written order of the military authority that ordered the sequestration;
- delay the start of the operations of enforced performance, citing technical reasons, so as to be able to quickly inform the Prefecture, the EGELI and the Inspectorate for the Defence of Savings and the Provision of Credit at the local Banca d'Italia, in case these bodies should think it opportune to intervene with the German authorities;
- allow the operations to go ahead after opening and office hours so as not to cause panic among the public;
- have the operations witnessed, possibly by the bank's trusted notary and also its solicitor, for any difficulties that could arise, writing a special report based on the enclosed example. Even in the absence of the notary, it is necessary to write a similar report, also to be signed by the representative of the German authorities;
- ensure that, if the representative of the German military authority refuses to declare himself in the report and to sign it, mention of this is made in the report itself;
- ensure that the objects found in the safe-deposit boxes and not removed by the German armed forces are put back into sealed packets and taken into custody with the same restrictions that existed previously.

The response from the Trieste branch, dated 15 November 1944, stands out from those of the various other branches. It stated that “the aforesaid circular cannot be applied in the Adriatic Coast in that here only the Supreme Commander of the SS and the police can give rules on anything regarding the assets of Jewish names, safe-deposit boxes included”. The documentation does not allow the application of this circular to be ascertained, because no sequestrations of Jewish goods were made by the German command nor the Italian authorities after October 1944.

Regarding the transfer of assets to other banks, a failed attempt to transfer assets from the Credito Italiano to the Padua branch of the Banco di Roma is noteworthy. In June 1944, the Procurator of the Jew Dora Celestina Matarazzo, née Zuccari, asked the Credito Italiano for permission to transfer the balances of all her current accounts with the relative mortgages on these to the Padua branch of the Banco di Roma. But the Credito Italiano did not authorise the transfer, citing the regulations in

force regarding the stop on assets belonging to Jewish names and the Head Office of the Banco di Roma referred to that decision without making any further attempts.

Some transfers of previously confiscated Jewish assets between the branches of the Banco di Roma also appear among the documentation examined. The Ministry of Finance decided that shares, cash and jewellery of Jewish ownership that had been sequestered, confiscated or stopped should be concentrated in the Milan Head Offices or branches of banks operating in the provinces of Sondrio, Bergamo, Como, Varese, Pavia, Cremona, Mantua, Forlì, Ancona, Florence, Pistoia, Pisa, Lucca, Apuania, Arezzo, Brescia, Parma, Piacenza, Modena, Reggio Emilia, Bologna, Siena and Livorno. The purpose of the new measure is clear: all Jewish owned assets, confiscated or not by the Heads of Province, were to be concentrated in the Milan headquarters and placed in bond to the EGELI in order to save them from the Allied advance. The transfer north of Jewish goods, a complicated and risky operation, was made to the Milan headquarters from the branches of Bologna (30 September 1944) and Piacenza (21 August 1944), and to the Verona headquarters from the branches of Venice (11, 15 and 21 December 1944, 31 January, 12 February, 9, 22 and 27 March and 19 April 1945) and Padua (26 October 1944).

An exchange of opinions on the sale of confiscated assets is documented between the Head Office, the Bergamo branch and the Venice branch regarding the proposal to sell some securities belonging to Vittorio Gino Ravà, confiscated by decree of 17 April 1944 of the Venice Prefecture [...]. This proposal had arisen out of the need to pay off Ravà's outstanding debt of about L.46,000, underwritten with various industrial securities by more than L.1,000,000. Up until December 1944, the Head Office did not authorise the Bergamo branch to proceed with the operation, expressing doubts about the legitimacy of the sale of assets whose confiscation was not officially sanctioned. When confirmation arrived that the assets in question had been confiscated as normal with a decree from the Head of Province of Venice, the correspondence on file breaks off.

The restitutions documented in the papers of the Banco di Roma concern just two cases relating to:

- Lidia Errera, to whom the payment of L.30,375 was recognised as settlement and compensation for the sum of L.60,750 at the time deposited in a current account at the Florence branch of the Banco di Roma and removed by the German military command on 12 July 1944, along with payment of L.5,000 to the solicitor Finzi for legal fees (25 July 1946);

- Elda Ravà, to whom L.15,000 was paid on 12 April 1946 as compensation for the compulsory sale of guaranteed securities by the exchange agents of the Venice stock exchange to pay off a debt of L.47,073.45 contracted by Ravà with the Banco di Roma. The compulsory sale was made in December 1943, despite the debt being underwritten by securities with a total value of L.56,650.20. The proceeds of the sale of Ravà's securities were much higher (L.138,000) than the

settlement of the debt (L.47,073.45). The difference of L.91,326.55, after payment of the excess and capitalisation of the debit and credit interest, was reduced to a balance of L.33,606.60. On 7 April 1944 the Head of Venice Province issued a confiscation decree for Ravà's assets, ordering their sequestration and custody at the Venice branch under special bond to the Ministry of Finance and the EGELI. After the War, the sum contained in Elda Ravà's current account and returned by the Venice branch to the legitimate owner amounted to L.42,179.90.

The outcome of the lawsuit brought by Arturo and Luisa Perugia against the Florence branch of the Banco di Roma went against the Jewish couple. Robbed of a sum of L.18,376.45 and all the jewellery contained in a safe-deposit box, valued at around L.3,000,000, by SS sequestration on 11 and 12 July 1944, the Perugias, after various episodes, saw their request for compensation in cash officially turned down by the Banco di Roma (15 July 1947). The outcome of the legal proceedings brought by Luisa Perugia against the former Commissioner of Jewish affairs in Florence, accused of having authorised the forced opening of the previously mentioned safe-deposit box, is not known.

## **2. The situation in the various provinces through the correspondence between the Banco di Roma Head Office and its branches**

### *Ancona*

The documentation relating to the Ancona branch does not show whether or to what extent the confiscation of assets belonging to Jews took place.

The Head of Ancona Province gave notice of the laws regulating the sequestration and management of property and moveable assets belonging to Jews in the pages of the *Corriere Adriatico* on 2 December 1943. The first point established that "property and moveable assets belonging to people of Jewish race of both sexes are subject to sequestration". Such assets were then divided into four categories (farmhouses, city houses, commercial companies, moveable assets) and a sequestrator appointed for the management of each.

The sequestrator for moveable assets, Francesco Svegliati, was charged with placing an immediate stop on any existing assets at banks, institutes or with individuals formerly placed under sequestration. According to the decree of 1 December 1943, the sequestrator of moveable assets was to have put a stop (art. 7) on assets already sequestered (art. 1).

On 19 January 1944 the Ancona branch sent the Head Office a draft list of names of "Jewish race" holding deposits at the Senigallia branch. It contained information on the savings passbooks, securities held in guarantee and securities held for safekeeping with balances and relative dates of

the “last operations” of four clients (Felice Morpurgo, Remo Morpurgo, Ottolenghi Morpurgo, née Elda, and Rodolfo Sacerdoti).

The Head Office answered on 29 January 1944 giving clearance to send the list in question. However, it also noted that for every subsequent operation the sequestrator was required to provide precise information on the people whose deposits were to be kept under sequestration, given that the race to which clients belonged was not shown on any of the bank’s papers, and that for bearer accounts the sequestration could not take effect unless the corresponding savings passbook was shown by its holder.

When the police order of 1 December 1943 and consequent provisions made by the various Heads of Province were superseded by dlgs of 4 January 1944, the Head Office asked the Ancona branch to agree with the Prefecture on the line of conduct to adopt with the sequestrator (16 February 1944). The last document, dated 15 April 1944, is a report of the deposits and securities of Jewish clients presented by the Ancona branch to the Head of Province. The list summarises 53 positions relating to Jewish citizens resident in Ancona (47), Fabriano (1) and Senigallia (5).

#### *Ascoli Piceno*

A copy of the report presented on 7 March 1944 by the Ascoli Piceno branch to the Head of Province in which the assets belonging to Jewish clients (Guido Cingoli and Ditta Fratelli Fuà of Guido Cingoli) are listed.

#### *Bergamo*

On 9 February 1944 the Bergamo branch advised the Head of Province that Melli Renato was the only Jewish holder of a banking position at the bank.

After some events only partly documented by the correspondence between the Bergamo branch, the Venice branch, the Head Office and the EGELI, on 8 January 1945 the Bergamo branch sent the Head Office a transcription of a letter sent by the EGELI to the Venice branch: “Further to our letter of 26 December No. 29919, we confirm that all securities previously owned by the Jew Gino Vittorio Ravà of Venice, son of the late Giuseppe, have been confiscated as per decree 2225/163 of 7.4.1944 of the Prefecture of Venice [...]. There is therefore no reason for the doubts expressed by your Head Office, and the sale of that part of the confiscated shares sufficient to settle your loan of about L.46,000 may certainly go ahead. We await news of the successful settlement of the item through the Istituto Fondiario di Verona as soon as possible”.

#### *Bologna*

On 1 March 1944 the Bologna branch sent the Head Office the list of Jewish names whose assets it had reported to the Head of Province. New positions were added to the list on 3 May 1944.

On 30 September 1944 the Bologna branch advised the Head Office that it had received an order from a detachment of the German security police (SS) to forcibly open the 35 safe-deposit boxes of Jews, previously reported in accordance with the decree of 4 January 1944. “We have informed both the Banca d’Italia and the Bologna Police Chief of this so that they may intervene to safeguard our delicate situation”. No Italian authority intervened and the forced opening of the safe-deposit boxes began, as shown by the first report (repertorio No. 8670, fascicolo No. 2005) at 3.30 p.m. on 29 September at the Banco di Roma in the presence of the captain of the German SS, Wetjen Reinhold. The operations continued for three days (29-30 September and 2 October) and were also attended by a notary and the bank’s manager and assistant manager, who had the following entered into the report: “faced with an order issued by an authority that has coercive force at its disposal, faced with the failure of the Italian authorities and forces of law to act, despite urgent appeals, also in writing, and faced with the threat of violent actions against people and things, despite protesting against the substantial and formal illegality of the order and its execution, the management was forced to submit to the imposition, reserving the right both of the bank itself – exonerated from all responsibility due to the use of *force majeure* – and of the depositors to any action or opportunity they may wish to take”.

The concluding report sent by the branch to the Head Office on 3 October 1944 notes that “the officer of the German security police command who was present at the operation did not sequester any valuables, as the little found consisted of insignificant things and registered securities. [...] The valuables (securities and documents) found and not removed were taken into deposit by ourselves in open custody, as sealed packets marked with each of the names and remaining under bond in accordance with the provisions of the law”.

The last document on the matter, dated 10 November 1944, is a letter from the Bologna branch to the Head Office referring to a meeting of bank managers held on 28 September 1944 at the Banca d’Italia. At that meeting the manager of the Banco di Roma branch raised the question of the forced opening of safe-deposit boxes owned by Jews. “In agreement with the manager of the Banca d’Italia, a request was made to the Head of Province to obtain his intervention and in any case the issue of a decree and order that would put us in the desired condition to allow the order made by the German armed forces to go ahead, thus exonerating us from any responsibility for the forced opening of the safe-deposit boxes, both to the individual safe-deposit box holders and the EGELI. The request was not granted, as the Head of Province had washed his hands of the matter. Faced with this situation, we, on our part, thought it necessary to inform the Bologna Police Chief of the

order made by the German authority, to appeal for his intervention and protect us and the interested parties [...]. The record of what took place made by a reliable notary assisted by our solicitor is the best precaution we could have made at the time and, as the enforced performance of the provision made by the German authorities was clearly obvious, we must consider ourselves quite confident before any claim that may be made against us”.

### *Como*

A copy of the report of assets belonging to names of Jewish race presented by the Como branch to the Head of Province on 7 February 1944. The positions of two Jewish clients, Di Capua Emilia and Nahum Emilio, appear.

### *Cuneo*

Six reports presented on 28 January 1944 to the Cuneo branch by the Istituto S. Paolo of Cuneo, as body appointed by the Head of Province for assets belonging to Jewish citizens. These consist of reports of moveable assets (safe-deposit boxes, savings account passbook, deposit account passbook) belonging to Attilio and Sacerdote Ester Segre, Guglielmo Treves, Vittorio Norzi, Attilio Segre and his son Eugenio, Alfredo Segre and Moise Sinigaglia.

A letter sent on 27 October 1944 by the Cuneo branch to the Head Office states that: “the safe-deposit boxes in our establishment registered to names of Jewish race were at the time opened in accordance with a decree of the Prefect Head of Province, in the presence of a representative of the Prefect himself and a representative of the EGELI, noting the complete absence of valuables contained in them”.

### *Florence*

On 6 December 1943 the Head of Province ordered all banks to put a stop on all assets registered to Jews and to send a list of these to the Prefecture, in implementation of police order No. 5 regarding the sequestration of all assets belonging to Jews.

On 9 December 1943 the Florence branch asked the Head Office if it should report the accounts or savings deposits placed as sureties by Jewish names in favour of third parties and whether these “should also be reported, specifying that they were deposited as securities, and in that case whether it is appropriate to also indicate the name and possibly the exposure of the secured Aryan company”. The response from the Head Office on this has not remained.

From 30 December 1943 to 24 June 1944 the Florence branch reported all the assets registered in the names of Jewish people to the Prefecture. There were a total of 96 positions.

On 11 July 1944 two non-commissioned officers of the German SS, accompanied by an Italian mechanic, came to the Florence branch and, without producing any written order, ordered the forced opening of all safe-deposit boxes registered to Jewish names.

Between 11 and 12 July all the safe-deposit boxes were forced and the valuables removed (jewellery and securities), along with the balances of the current accounts registered to the safe-deposit box holders. At the end of the operation, the bank's officials had the SS officers sign a report containing the detail of the valuables and securities removed.

TABLE 3. *Valuables removed from safe-deposit boxes on 11 and 12 July 1944*

<i>registered holders of safe-deposit boxes</i>	<i>box number</i>	<i>valuables found and removed</i>
Bemporad Guglielmo	1632	empty
Calò Ernesto and Valentina	34	miscellaneous securities
Camerini Adolfo	15	empty
Errera Lidia	2704	empty
Ettinger Samuele	565	empty
Mortara Furst Gemma	1015	empty
Nunes Vais Laura	630	L.600 in BB (bonds) and miscellaneous jewellery
Orvieto Riccardo and Giuliana	1665	empty
Ottolenghi Linda e Olga	964	empty
Perugia Arturo	1568	empty
Perugia Fortunato and Gina	1584	empty
Perugia Luisa	2650	miscellaneous jewellery
Peiser Ester	215	empty
Sonnino Albertina	307	miscellaneous securities
Uzielli Isacco and Adolfo	187	empty

TABLE 4. *Balances of current accounts confiscated by the SS on 11 and 12 July 1944.*

<i>registered holders of safe-deposit boxes</i>	<i>box number</i>	<i>current account balance</i>
Bemporad Guglielmo	1632	—
Calò Ernesto and Valentina	34	L. 162
Camerini Adolfo	15	—
Errera Lidia	2704	L. 61,350.25
Ettinger Samuele	565	—

Mortara Furst Gemma	1015	—
Nunes Vais Laura	630	—
Orvieto Riccardo and Giuliana	1665	—
Ottolenghi Linda and Olga	964	—
Perugia Arturo	1568	L. 18,376.45
Perugia Fortunato and Gina	1584	—
Perugia Luisa	2650	—
Peiser Ester	215	—
Sonnino Albertina	307	—
Uzielli Isacco and Adolfo	187	L. 448 (Uzielli Isacco) L. 200.70 (Uzielli Adolfo)
		Total L. 80,537.40

The total sum of L.80,537.40 was consigned to the SS Command by Banca d'Italia bank draft issued on 13 July 1944.

On 20 July 1944 the Florence branch sent the Head Office the written opinion of one of the most respected solicitors in the Florence court, Gaetano Casoni, questioned by the Banca Commerciale Italiana about the bank's possible responsibility for the opening of safe-deposit boxes and the consignment of current account balances ordered by the German Command. Casoni ruled out any responsibility on the part of the banks, forced to comply with the SS for obvious reasons of *force majeure*.

The branch informed the Head Office in a letter of 24 July 1944 that the SS Command had also arranged for the safe-deposit boxes of Jews to be opened and their contents removed in other Florence banks: the Credito Italiano, the Monte dei Paschi, the Banca d'Italia and the Banco di Napoli (in the last two also demanding consignment of the sums paid into the current accounts). The acts of sequestering the safe-deposit boxes in the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro and the Banca Toscana were, however, immediately suspended by the rapid intervention of the Head of Province and particularly by the Swiss Consul, Carlo Steinhauslin. The action of the German Command was reported by the branch on the same day to the Inspectorate for the Defence of Savings and the Provision of Credit.

A note of 3 August 1944 on the assets seized by the SS from the Florence branch says that: "Since there is no sign in the files that a confiscation decree for the assets in question formerly reported as belonging to names of Jewish race has been issued by the Head of Florence Province, the EGELI must regard itself as not yet being invested with the legal powers to manage the goods in question. So no communication to the said body is necessary".

The Arturo and Luisa Perugia case.

On 25 May 1945, exactly one month after the end of the War, Arturo Perugia wrote to the Florence branch claiming his assets: the balance of the current account and the jewels registered to his wife, Luisa Perugia, taken by the Germans. He wrote: “Now, with the victorious outcome of the War, you can and will want to obtain compensation for the damages, while on your part you will want to provide to compensate me for everything”.

The response from the Florence branch was fairly curt. After having reminded its client that both the current account and the entire contents of the safe-deposit box had been sequestered by the Germans, it concluded: “if you wish to have clarification of this, please come to our offices and we will happily explain to you what happened. It is certain, however, that we have no obligation to compensate you, and it is up to you to address any requests for reimbursement to whom it may concern” (30 May 1944). On 7 June 1945 the Florence branch wrote to the Head Office summarising the situation that had arisen with Perugia. The letter shows that on 4 September 1945 all the Jews who had suffered misappropriation of their property had been invited to come to the offices of the branch so they could be informed of the sequestration of their assets by the Germans, to whom it had not been possible to offer resistance for reasons of *force majeure*. Not all the Jewish clients came, including Perugia, who had subsequently given the order to carry out several financial operations debiting his own current account. The bank had replied to Perugia that his current account no longer existed. “Mr Perugia’s game was obvious. Pretending ignorance of the fact that the balance of his current account had been removed by the Germans, he probably wanted us to inform him of this in writing, to provide the cue for an objection, which duly appeared on 25/5”. After having invited Perugia to come to the office for further clarification of what had happened, the branch informed the Head Office that “already many Jews, defended by the solicitor Prof. Finzi, have cited the Credito (defended by the solicitor Casoni) and the Comit (defended by the solicitor Rocchi) as being answerable for the damages suffered by them as a consequence of the removal by the Germans of their assets deposited at the said banks”.

On 4 August 1945 the Florence branch updated the Head Office on the lawsuit planned by many Jews against the Credito, whose expectations of the sentence seem to have been unfavourable to the bank. “If expectations come true”, reads the letter, “it is thought that another lawsuit would be attempted against the Comit, which after the Credito is the bank that most had to hand over deposits in the current accounts of Jews. And it should not be ruled out that we too would feel the repercussions, though at a level that may be regarded as very modest. Indeed, thanks to the responsibility we assumed at the time, also at great personal risk, to restrictively interpret the order

received from the German SS to try to safeguard the interests of our clients, the balances of only five current accounts of Jews, with a total of L.80,537.40, were reported by us and then removed, out of the 57 accounts existing here valued at about L.1,520,000 (meaning those of account holders with safe-deposit boxes). Finally, the Head Office was informed of a new claim made against the bank by the Jewish client Lidia Errera, who had asked for settlement of her current account whose balance amounted to L.61,350.25.

On 26 November 1946, Luisa Perugia, wife of Arturo, made a written request to the manager of the Florence branch for reimbursement of the entire value of the objects taken from her safe-deposit box, valued at about L.3,000,000 (three million) or, at least, for a settlement by the bank to end the matter. On 27 November 1946 the Florence branch informed the Head Office of the Perugia couple's visit to the bank with the intention of obtaining compensation both for the balance of the current account of L.18,376.45 and the jewellery contained in the safe-deposit box, described in detail, valued at about L.3,000,000. Regarding the return of the jewels to Luisa Perugia, the branch wrote that: "we leave the question of judging the legitimacy of the request up to you. We restrict ourselves nevertheless to observing that, also according to our solicitor, nothing is owed to Perugia regarding the content of the safe-deposit box, and this also with regard to the recent decision of the magistracy in a similar dispute concerning the Credito Italiano".

Regarding reimbursement of the current account registered to Arturo Perugia, the branch asked for advice from the Head Office, noting that in a similar case concerning Lidia Errera the Head Office itself had authorised making a settlement of 50% of the sum taken by the Germans plus expenses (21 June 1946). The branch concluded that "the Perugia couple live very comfortably on the outskirts of Florence on a 50 hectare estate with country house owned by them. We have been informed they also own a flat in Florence. They must certainly have been advised by some solicitor". On 21 December 1946, before deciding on the position to take with Luisa Perugia, the Head Office asked the branch for more precise information on the previously mentioned sentence between the Credito Italiano and Jewish clients and to know "whether Signora Perugia had declared a value for the safe-deposit box in question above L.100,000, requesting special insurance as is policy: this is important for the accursed hypothesis of our responsibility". The Florence branch replied on 18 January 1947 giving the Head Office the clarifications requested. Regarding the sentence relating to the claim for the content removed by the Germans from safe-deposit boxes, there had been a mistake: there had been no sentence of the kind, while a lawsuit was under way between the Comit and the Levi sisters, who were reported by the bank as Jews without being so, despite their surname, and their assets were for this reason taken by the Germans. Regarding Luisa

Perugia's safe-deposit box, the branch confirmed that no special insurance had been requested, so this had remained at L.100,000.

The Florence branch asked the Head Office to communicate its decisions on the Perugia case in two letters of 20 March and 26 May 1947, reporting that: "the Perugia couple complained to other persons, who informed us, of the lack of a response from us to their request for compensation for the contents of the safe-deposit box registered to Luisa Perugia, removed by Germans, for which, given the importance of the names in question and the many connections they have in our city, we would like to be able, after the long period that has transpired, to give an answer".

On 15 July 1947 the Florence branch advised the Head Office that it had received a letter from the investigating magistrate of the Florence attorney's office regarding the opening of Luisa Perugia's safe-deposit box, which noted the start of a legal proceeding against Giovanni Martelloni, former Commissioner for Jewish affairs for Florence and asked the branch for a copy of the notarial report drawn up on the occasion of the sequestration mistakenly dated November 1943. Furthermore, the branch again asked for instructions on what outcome to give to the case in question. On 23 July 1947 the much awaited reply from the Head Office arrived: "Please courteously advise Mrs Perugia that we – as things currently stand – do not intend recognising any responsibility for the forced opening of safe-deposit box number 2650 [...]". It also asked the branch to inform the investigating magistrate of Florence of the exact date on which the box was forced – 12 July 1944 and not November 1943 – and that this was not ordered by the Commissioner for Jewish affairs Martelloni but by the German SS Command.

Finally, the branch was asked to find out about any other lawsuits concerning the opening of safe-deposit boxes.

On 31 July 1947 the legal office of the Milan branch sent the Head Office a copy of the case between Sara and Eugenia Levi and the Florence branch of the Banca Commerciale Italiana, to be heard on 17 October 1947. The Levi sisters, who had been erroneously added to the list of Jewish names, but were actually "Aryan", accused the bank of being responsible for the error, demanding repayment of the damage suffered due to that error.

On 11 August 1947 the branch advised the Head Office it had informed Luisa Perugia of the directives received regarding the case and that she had reacted by insisting that she be recognised something as compensation for the damage suffered and also threatened to bring the matter to the knowledge of the Jewish Community to try to persuade her fellow Jews not to patronise the Banco di Roma. Furthermore, it informed the Head Office that there had been a favourable sentence for the depository banks concerning repayment of the balances of current accounts taken by the SS.

The Lidia Errera case.

On 5 August 1945 Lidia Errera wrote to the Florence branch: “On 29 November 1943 I sent you an order to sell 25 Centrale shares. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of the same month I spoke on the telephone to your Mr Dani, the share office manager, asking him to confirm that the sale had been made and whether I could collect the relative sum. Mr Dani assured me that I could collect it when I pleased during the next few days. But on 1 December when I went to the share office at 9 a.m. to collect the proceeds of the shares, Mr Dani advised me that the current account had been stopped!

I must first say that I had never authorised the bank to open a current account of this sort for me, that if on 30 November I had been immediately paid as I had requested, nothing could have been taken from me, [so] it is clear that what has happened to me is due solely to the action of the bank.

So before proceeding with an action to protect my interests, I ask you to pay me the proceeds of the shares in question and the relative interest”.

On 16 August the Florence branch replied to Mrs Errera that if the assistant manager Dani had said on 1 December that the sum could be collected in the following days, this was due to the fact that he was unaware of the directives stopping Jewish assets as she herself was unaware, and for greater clarification asked her to await the orders from the Head Office.

Giving notice of the “Lidia Errera case” to the Head Office, the branch specified that “our official, though not remembering the detail mentioned by the woman, ruled out the possibility of having been able to give an assurance for payment of the proceeds, knowing of the existence of the stop on Jewish assets [...]. The internal order stopping Jewish assets issued by us to the offices carries the date 3/12/43: evidently Mrs Errera did not come to us to collect the sum on the morning of 1 December as she claimed, otherwise we do not see why we would not have paid her the value of the shares sold by us on her behalf” (18 August 1945).

On 4 September 1945 the branch asked the Head Office for new instructions on Errera and sent a copy of the sentence handed down by the Florence Court in the trial brought by a group of Jews against the Credito Italiano to obtain payment for their deposits in an existing account despite the removal of the deposits themselves by the Germans. It was feared that such a sentence, against the Credito Italiano, would have repercussions for other banks, including the Banco di Roma.

On 27 September 1945, Lidia Errera again wrote to the Florence branch saying: “I repeat, the error was yours and I cannot accept that only a few hours, rather very few hours earlier you were not informed of the situation at that time, or at least you did not foresee it. I therefore do not think it right that I should have to be sacrificed in this way, not having any current account but only the sale deed of the 25 shares from the day before”.

On 22 October 1945 the Head Office wrote to the branch asking for details of what had happened, whether there had been any acts of violence and whether the bank had proceeded to pay out the

current accounts because of the violence used by the German forces without having had the possibility of resisting. It also wanted to know what order authorised the German officer who signed the removal order, whether the German authorities had issued orders to stop or sequester Jewish goods and, finally, whether there were any directives from the Italian authorities apart from the decree issued by Mussolini on 4 January 1944.

On 8 November 1945, the branch responded to the Head Office declaring that: the stop on Jewish assets had been ordered in writing by the Prefecture of Florence on 16 December 1943 and confirmed on 19 January 1944; the German military authorities had not issued directives to stop or sequester, even though “there were rumours that the action of removal had been initiated by the German military command in Florence, on the basis of a directive issued in February 1944 by Marshal Kesserling”; it was not possible to firmly establish the rank of the German, Gold, who had signed the removal order. Regarding the violence of the German Command’s action, the branch emphasised that “it would not seem to us to be in any doubt, even considering the particular circumstances we were going through at the time, that there was an act of violence in the request made by the German Command in the execution of what its agents carried out, even if revolvers were not pointed at us; one has only to consider the particular, very delicate moment the Florentine people were going through at the time, with the constant nightmare of deportations, torture, blackmail etc., to be convinced that any other more vigorous resistance would certainly have been opposed; there was therefore no chance of resisting and we had to submit to *force majeure*”.

On 21 December 1945 the Head Office wrote to the branch: “We are convinced that Lidia Errera cannot claim any damages for the noted forced opening of the safe-deposit box registered to her and for removal of the valuables contained in it”.

But on 27 December the branch pointed out that the opinion expressed by the Head Office on 21 December related to the forced opening of the safe-deposit box and not the removal of the current account deposit of L.61,350.25, which Errera was asking to be reimbursed. And it added: “Following the sentence of this court in the case brought by various Jews against the Credito Italiano [...], we thought that, when examining the question we asked, the precise object of your dispute with Errera (reimbursement of the current account deposit registered to her) may have escaped you [...]. For your knowledge we inform you that our relationship with Mrs Errera is not of any particular importance: but she has family ties to Jewish names who are important clients of ours. It must also be kept in mind that our behaviour toward Errera in this controversy will certainly have repercussions among the other Jews who, like the said woman, had deposits with us; so your possible agreement to Mrs Errera’s request could establish a principle to be followed with our other Jewish clients, with deposits totalling about L.20,000”.

On 5 January 1946 the Head Office replied to the branch: “Your Errera 27 we confirm our 21 same month not intending to compromise question principle”. After having reconsidered the question of the current account deposits and safe-deposit boxes removed by the Germans, the Head Office had decided to decline Errera’s request, trusting in the reversal of the Florence Court’s sentence against the Credito Italiano on appeal. On 16 January 1946 the Florence branch reported it had informed Errera of the Head Office decision and she had reacted by declaring her intention to protect her interests in the most suitable manner.

On 29 April 1946 the Milan legal office wrote to the Head Office about a meeting between the legal office directors of the Credito Italiano and the Banca Commerciale regarding the various lawsuits brought by Jews in Florence against the respective banks. Dr Bevilacqua of the Credito Italiano asserted that his bank’s policy was to settle all questions relating to Jews whose accounts had been removed by the SS, but the solicitor Martini of the Banca Commerciale Italian was of the opposite opinion, that all banks should oppose the claims that had brought about the trials in Florence. On 11 May 1946 the Head Office advised the Milan legal office that it had authorised the Florence branch to settle the dispute with Errera paying 50% of the current account and thus ending the matter, avoiding a lawsuit “whose content may have been unfavourable to us”.

On 4 June the Florence branch advised the Head Office that Errera’s solicitor, Enrico Finzi, had declared a willingness to accept 60% of the current account balance sequestered (of which 50% as reimbursement for the sum deposited and 10% for miscellaneous expenses), and asked for authorisation to make the settlement “given the relatively modest sum we would have to pay Mrs Errera and the positive reasons that advise against showing ourselves too reluctant to make a peaceful settlement of this debt”. On 3 May 1946 the Head Office confirmed the order to the branch to make the Errera settlement but at the same time gave instructions to have Errera declare in writing that she renounced any damages for the opening of the safe-deposit box from which in any case nothing had been taken. The operation of settling the Errera dispute with the payment of 60% was authorised by the Head Office on 24 June 1946. A note in pen in the margin of the letter sent to the Florence branch says: “Bocca – it has now been decided like this, let’s hope it doesn’t represent a dangerous precedent – 25.6.1946”.

On 13 July 1946 the Florence branch wrote to the Head Office that it had heard from the solicitor Finzi of the definitive outcome of the noted lawsuit of Jews against the Credito, settled on the basis of 60%, and to have accepted Finzi’s request to bring the sum to be paid to his client Lidia Errera into line with that percentage. The final sum agreed with Finzi was L.5,000 rather than L.6,075 for legal fees. The branch sent the Head Office a copy of the settlement deed made with the Banco di Napoli on whose model that of the Credito had been made. The Head Office approved the branch’s

work and authorised the payment of L.5,000 to Finzi, saying it was reassured by the fact that the Banco di Napoli had also thought it advisable to settle a similar sentence (20 July 1946) at 50%. On 25 July 1946 the Lidia Errera case could be considered definitively closed with the payment of L.30,375 as settlement for the sum of L.60,750 at the time deposited in a current account at the Banco di Roma branch and removed by the German Military Command on 12 July 1944, and payment of L.5,000 to the solicitor Finzi for his legal fees. Mrs Errera made out a normal receipt.

#### *Fiume (Rijeka)*

In the case of Fiume the transfer of moveable assets of Jewish origin worth a total of L.2,654 into the *Reichskreditkasse* and the *Oberkasse des Obersten Kommissars in der Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland* banks is documented.

On 1 July 1944 the Fiume branch informed the Head Office that “following precise written instructions given to us by the *Deutsche Berater für die Provinz Quarnero* in Fiume, we have had to close the accounts in the following names and pay the balances into the *Reichskreditkasse*, on the *Abteilung Finanzen=Referat Vermögensverwertung*:

Eisler Dr Enrico balance L.85

Weiss Laura “ “ 21

Wertzler Lazzaro “ “ 2,545

We advise that in future we will also be obliged in similar cases to follow the same procedure, unless you give precise instructions to the contrary”.

Another letter, also dated 1 July 1944, records the close of deposit passbook No. 164 in the name of Dr Luigi Roman and payment of the sum of L.380 into the *Oberkasse des Obersten Kommissars in der Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland* on the orders of the *Oberste Kommissar in der Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland* of Trieste.

#### *Frosinone*

The Frosinone branch informed the Head Office that it had no Jewish clients (3 February 1944).

#### *Grosseto*

The Head of Province of Grosseto ordered a stop on all Jewish-owned assets – registered and unregistered credits and deposits – with a decree of 17 November 1943 and ordered that they be reported to the Banca d’Italia. This was carried out with relative lists by the Grosseto branch on 18 December 1943 and by the Orbetello agency on 27 January 1944.

Six positions were noted in the list drawn up by the Grosseto branch, including deposits, government, industrial and stock credits and securities relating to: Soc. in the collective name of Azaria Lattes, Monildo Lattes, Ditta Servi Marco, Gino Nunes and Nino Sorani. As a consequence of the Head of Province's decree of 26 January 1944, the deposits of the above list were paid in cash to a total sum of L.84,417.85 while payment of the securities (partly deposited in the centralised treasury) was delayed awaiting new instructions from the Banca d'Italia. This operation took place on 8 February 1944 and the confiscated sum of L.84,417.85 was credited to an account at the Grosseto branch of the Banca d'Italia in the name of the Management of Sequestered Property Corporation.

The Head of Province of Grosseto, Alceo Ercolani, subsequently placed the moveable assets of 59 Jewish clients of various banks (see detailed list attached to the letter sent by the Grosseto branch to the Head Office on 11 March 1944) under immediate sequestration and confiscation with a new decree of 16 February 1944 and named the manager of the Banca d'Italia as sequestrator of such assets, authorising him to dispose of them according to his own unquestionable judgement.

On 25 March 1944 the Head Office ordered the Grosseto branch to keep solely to the instructions given locally by its Head of Province.

The last document dates from 17 May 1944 and gives an account of the forced opening of the safe-deposit box owned by Dario and Alessandro Servi held at the Grosseto branch. This operation was authorised by decree 289 of the Head of Province of Grosseto and took place on 11 May in the presence of a representative of the Head of Province, a representative of the EGELI and a procurator of the Banco di Roma. The forced box was found to be empty.

### *Imperia*

A copy of the report of assets belonging to names of Jewish race presented by the Imperia branch to the Head of Province on 8 February 1944. The list contains a single position relating to Jerusalem Giuseppe Bohor, son of Nissim, owner of a sum of L.45,645.

### *Livorno*

The Livorno branch began transferring currency on behalf of the Livorno notary Luigi Corcos between January and April 1944 at the request of the Monte dei Paschi di Siena. It exchanged correspondence with the Head Office regarding the identity of the person in question, concluding finally after some checks that "the client in question may be considered of Aryan race and the operation may take place".

On being questioned by the Livorno branch about the position to take with regard to bearer savings passbooks with indication of a name of Jewish race, the Head Office responded on 22 April 1944: “There is no explicit directive regarding the reporting of accounts relating to bearer savings passbooks, however it is thought that they do not have to be reported [...]. If it is allowed that such deposits may in some cases be withdrawn, it must consequently be recognised that they do not have to be reported as belonging to the person whose name is indicated on them, because otherwise, once reported, they could not in any way be withdrawn by those who in line with these instructions would have the right to do so”.

### *Lucca*

On 9 December 1943 the Prefecture of Lucca asked bank managers to provide the Police Chief and Command of the Carabinieri with all information regarding the size of the deposits registered in the names of Jews. The next day, 10 December, the Lucca branch informed the Head Office of the orders received from the Prefecture, adding that after an exchange of ideas with the other main banks in the city “we agreed with them (in anticipation of the individual Head Offices, specifically questioned, being able to pass on their instructions) to place a provisional internal stop on all assets presumed belonging to people of Jewish race. In the meantime we have agreed to meet any requests from those concerned with the advice that for any operation on their deposit accounts they must present appropriate authorisation from the Prefecture”.

A few days later, on 16 December, having urged the branch to reply promptly and precisely to the requests of the Head of Province and other authorities, the Head Office pointed out that: “we do not see the reason for the decision taken by the main banks to place a provisional internal stop on all assets presumed to belong to people of Jewish race, given the absolute clarity of the letter from the Head of Province, who demands solely to be supplied with information that will be requested by the Police Chief or the Command of the Carabinieri; in any case keep to that agreement, even though it goes quite beyond the orders given by the Head of Province”.

On 8 February 1944 the Lucca branch sent the Head Office a copy of the new list sent to the Head of Province, which summarised the assets of four Jewish clients: Raffaele Gallani, Giuseppe Raschin, Ditta Recanati Dario and Leo Leone.

### *Milan*

On being asked by the Head of Province to send the list of Jewish clients and to stop their assets, the Milan branch informed the Head Office that it was waiting to obtain the complete list of Jewish

subjects from the Banking Confederation on the basis of which to make the report (14 January 1944).

On 28 February 1944 the Milan branch and suburban agency of Verbania sent the Head of Province a list of Jewish clients holding current accounts, securities and safe-deposit boxes with the relative amounts. There were 21 different lists grouping the Jewish clients according to the type of asset held, which indicate: 44 holders of current accounts, 36 holders of unrestricted deposit accounts, 13 holders of personal savings passbooks, 11 holders of provisional accounts, 4 holders of old accounts and old foreign Jew accounts, 1 holder of a foreign exchange account credit, 1 deposit of Jewish ownership deposited in the bank in escrow, 15 holders of securities held for safekeeping, 2 holders of securities held in guarantee, 27 holders of safe-deposit boxes, 5 clients with whom the bank is creditor, 14 holders of presumed Jewish race of current accounts, 11 holders of presumed Jewish race of unrestricted deposit accounts, 4 holders of presumed Jewish race of credit balances in lire, 3 holders of presumed Jewish race of securities held for safekeeping, 9 holders of presumed Jewish race of safe-deposit boxes, 1 holder of a bearer savings passbook (Verbania), 3 holders of securities held for safekeeping (Verbania) and 2 holders of bearer savings passbooks (Verbania).

On 7 March 1944 the Milan branch sent the Prefecture new lists compiled on the basis of new information.

On 17 March a German non-commissioned officer of the SS came to the branch and ordered the immediate opening of the safe-deposit boxes and consignment of the closed accounts without showing any written request. The bank staff objected that they could not authorise the operation without seeing a normal sequestration order. The officer insisted “in peremptory terms, threatening the immediate arrest of any officials who may have opposed his request”. In the meantime, confirmation of the sequestration order arrived from the German Command and the operation went ahead. A new box registered to Victor Duegas was forced on 22 March and its content – miscellaneous photographic items – sequestered by the SS.

TABLE 5. *Safe-deposit boxes forced between 17 and 22 March 1944.*

<i>holders</i>	<i>box number</i>	<i>valuables</i>	<i>date sequestered</i>
Duegas Victor	6968	Photographic materials	22.3.1944
Lorenzetti Andrea	2040	Sealed deposit No. 01446 with a value of L. 50,000	17.3.1944
Lenzi Giuseppe and Antonelli Sestilia	4152		17.3.1944
Martinoli Aristide	3392		17.3.1944

### *Padua*

On 14 December 1943 the Padua branch sent the Prefecture a list of deposits, current accounts and safe-deposit boxes registered to Jews in which eight positions were described, three of which related to Jewish clients with discriminatory exemption. The Prefecture and Head Office subsequently agreed that, with regard to the case of Bianca Negroni da Zara, an “Aryanised” Jew, the stop on the assets of “Aryanised” Jews was invalid.

In June 1944 Count Luca Pietromarchi, procurator of the Jew Dora Celestina Matarazzo, née Zuccari, asked the Credito Italiano to transfer the balances of all the current accounts owned by Zuccari (old account, mixed Americas account, stopped account, old Cetie account) to the Padua branch of the Banco di Roma with the relative mortgages on these. But the Credito did not authorise the transfer, keeping to the regulations in force regarding the stop on assets belonging to Jewish names. The Head Office of the Banco di Roma, asked to express an opinion on the question by the branch, advised it not to go ahead with the operation, even though the overall sum of the property in question seemed quite considerable.

A letter sent from the Verona branch to the Head Office on 26 October 1944 shows that the following current account balances in the Padua branch with an overall value of L. 9,866 were sent to Verona:

– Goldbacher Alberto	L. 1,234
– Romano Salvatore	L. 1,381
– Sacerdoti Fulvio	L. 1,187
– Orefice Roberto	L. 7
– Coen Silvio	L. 1,524
– De Benedetti Ines	L. 2,780
– Orefice Giorgio	L. 1,743

### *Orbetello*

On 31 December 1943 the Orbetello branch sent its sister branch in Grosseto a list of positions relating to its Jewish clients. The list included two safe-custody deposits of securities, one registered to Edvige and Pilade Servi with a value of L.13,200 and the other to Oreste, Erina, Ginesia, Dirce and Gisla Servi with a value of L.33,000; a current account in the name of the Servi sisters with a balance of L.1,960.70, a current account in the name of Guido Servi with a balance of L.295 and an account in the name of the Tersilio Servi heirs with L.309.90.

In a subsequent letter of 13 February 1944, the Orbetello branch informed the Head Office that it had excluded the bearer deposit registered to Ester Servi (balance L.53) from the list of reported Jewish assets because such had been agreed at a meeting of all the bank managers of Grosseto held at the Banca d'Italia. It also informed the Head Office that it had received the decree of the Head of Province of 26 January 1944 from its sister branch in Grosseto, ordering that Jewish assets be paid into a single deposit in the name of the Management of Sequestered Property Corporation at the Banca d'Italia.

On 18 February 1944 the Orbetello branch paid the total sum of the personal accounts of its Jewish clients (altered from that previously reported) to the Grosseto branch of the Banca d'Italia, while authorisation was requested to transfer the securities in the two safe-custody deposits held at the centralised treasury of Florence to the Banca d'Italia in Florence. These securities, owned by Edvige and Pilade Servi and Oreste, Erina, Ginesia, Dirce and Gisla Servi, are described in detail in the registered letter of 17 February 1944 sent to the manager of the Grosseto branch of the Banca d'Italia.

On 21 February 1944 the Orbetello branch informed the Head Office that the Banca d'Italia, as depository of credits belonging to citizens of Jewish race, had also wanted payment of the bearer savings deposit of Ester Servi (balance L.35) and that for the two safe-custody deposits of securities "it seems that the item will be settled by the sale of the securities and deposit of the proceeds".

The overall sum of the confiscated assets paid into the Grosseto branch of the Banca d'Italia on 19 February 1944 was L.3,706.40 (including the balance of the "bearer" savings passbook).

#### *Orvieto*

No relevant documentation due to an absence of Jewish clients.

#### *Parma*

On 12 January 1944 the Parma branch sent the police headquarters a list of Jews holding assets at the bank showing 10 positions (Armando and Ines Bassani Bachi, Alberto Carmi, Enrico Carmi, Adolfo Melli, Ida Moscati, Giacomo Ottolenghi, Aldo Tedeschi, Cesare Vigevani, Emma Vigevani and Rolando Vigevani). The same list was sent to the local Cassa di Risparmio, on the orders of the Prefecture published in the *Gazzetta di Parma* No. 304 of 21 December 1943.

On 18 January 1944 the Revenue Office asked all the banks in Parma to transfer their previously reported assets into a current account in the name of the head of the Parma Revenue Office, as president of the Provisional Committee for the Management of Jewish Assets at the Cassa di Risparmio.

On 3 February 1944 the Parma branch transferred Jewish moveable assets with a total value of L.26,459.20 to the Cassa di Risparmio, along with various securities on deposit, while it retained the contents of the safe-deposit boxes and securities held to guarantee loans in favour of the bank (see list enclosed with the letter of 3 February 1944). On 8 February the Parma branch presented a new report on the assets of Lorenzo Foà (current account and safe-deposit box).

On 20 December 1944 notification was given of the confiscation decree for assets belonging to Giacomo Ottolenghi (securities with a value of L.10,000 as surety for a current account with a balance of L.6,140) and Rolando Vigevani (securities with a value of L.100,000 as surety for a current account with a balance of L.52,250) at the Banco di Roma, and the Parma branch informed the Head Office of this. In its reply of 26 January 1945, the Head Office wrote that “we inform you that in another province the EGELI has authorised the banks to sell that part of the securities necessary to meet their own credits. It is therefore not unlikely that similar directives will also be made in your area, in which case you should direct any questions to that corporation, specifying the type of loan, its amount and the pre-determined surety and ask how the sale should be made, given that art. 13 of Mussolini’s legislative decree of 4 January 1944 directs that the sale of confiscated assets must take place according to the instructions given by the Ministry of Finance. In other words, as you will appreciate, it is important that the laws in force are properly observed. It is in any case understood that you will not proceed to request any authorisation on your own initiative and that, in that case, you will consult us first”.

### *Perugia*

On 11 February 1944 the Perugia branch informed the Head Office that it had put a stop on all the assets of Jews and sent the local Banca d’Italia the names and sums stopped. It enclosed a list of the Jewish clients showing five positions (Guido Coen, Roberto Coen, Bernardo Dessau, Aldo Pacifici and Spitzer Ervino).

### *Pesaro*

A copy of the report of assets belonging to names of Jewish race presented by the Pesaro branch to the Head of Province on 28 February 1944. The list shows three positions relating to Silvio Viterbo, Lazzaro Montebrocchi and Giorgina Morpurgo.

### *Piacenza*

In Piacenza, police order No. 5 had immediate effect: on 5 December 1943 the moveable assets, real estate and all other assets of the heirs of the Jew Ferdinando Pesare were sequestered. The

management of the Maglificio Fernando Pesaro and the assets of Emilio Pesaro, son of the deceased Fernando, were immediately entrusted to the sequestrator Piero Salsi. The balances were as follows:

- Maglificio Fernando Pesaro
  - “Old” current account No. 6873 with a credit balance of L.9,231.40
    - “New” current account No. 6873 with a debit balance of L.24,235.70
    - Pesaro Emilio
- “Old” current account No. 7084 with a credit balance of L.107.20.

On 10 January 1944, in compliance with the directives made by the Head of Province on 27 December 1943, the Piacenza branch sent the Provincial Corporate Economy Council a list of assets and valuables belonging to Jews, whose management had already been assigned to the sequestrator Salsi in accordance with the decree of 5 December 1943. It showed six positions relating to Elisa Soliani, Maria Pia Foà, Eloisa Finzi, Umberto Muggia, Maglificio Ferdinando Pesaro and Emilio Pesaro, to which that of Mario Levi (debtor to the Banco di Roma for L.16,395) was added on 24 January.

On 21 February 1944 the Head Office urged the branch to make new written agreements with the Prefecture regarding the previously sequestered assets, relations with the sequestrator etc., after the new regulations established by the decree of 4 January 1944 and added: “you should not have reported the credits because that was never prescribed, but it will not have harmful consequences. You will however want to assert your rights with the EGELI as soon as you learn that management of your debtors’ assets has been taken over by that institute”.

On 15 March 1944 the Head of Province decreed the confiscation and transfer to the state of all real estate and moveable assets belonging to the Jew Umberto Muggia.

TABLE 6. *Assets confiscated by the Head of Province of Piacenza from Umberto Muggia on 15 March 1944*

<i>type</i>	<i>description</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>bank</i>
Real estate	Land	Income L. 12,704.20	
Real estate	Building	Income L. 586.65	
	Building	Income L. 630	
Moveable assets	Passbook No. 831	L. 4,862.60	Cassa di Risparmio
Moveable assets	Passbook No. 832	L. 619.05	Cassa di Risparmio
Moveable assets	Unrestricted deposit account No. 607	L. 292.95	Banco di Roma, Castelsangiovanni branch

Moveable assets                      Passbook No. 1997 L. 8.004                      Banca Nazionale del  
Lavoro, Fiorenzuola branch

On 24 May 1944 the Head of Province decreed the confiscation and transfer to the state of the sum of L.118.80 deposited at the Piacenza branch of the Banco di Roma by the Jewish client Maria Foà in the unrestricted savings passbook No. 1229, assigning it to the EGELI.

A letter of 5 October 1944, sent by the Cariplo Land Bank to the Milan branch of the Banco di Roma shows that the Piacenza branch had transferred the following Jewish assets to its sister branch in Milan (21 August 1944):

- L. 1,922.15 balance of unrestricted deposit account No. 212 of Eloisa Finzi;
- L. 127.35 balance of savings passbook No. 2114 of Elisa Soliani;
- L. 112.20 balance of savings passbook No. 1229 of Maria Pia Foà;
- L. 295.95 balance of unrestricted deposit account No. 607 of Umberto Muggia;
- 200 Società Monteponi shares of Umberto Muggia;
- 19 Società Emiliana di Esercizi Elettrici shares of Umberto Muggia.

In accordance with the orders of the Head Office received by the branch on 8 August 1944, the credit balances of the Maglificio Pesaro and of Emilio Pesaro, already under sequestration management, were excluded from the transfer to Milan.

On 9 January 1945 the Piacenza branch informed the Head Office that it had arranged for the forced opening of the safe-deposit boxes owned by the Jews Eloisa Finzi and Umberto Muggia after having received an order from the Head of Province (4 December 1944 Division IV, ref. No. 21583) and from the EGELI (9 November 1944, ref. No. 25896). As shown by the enclosed reports, the first of these boxes was found empty, while the other registered to Muggia contained valuables and documents, mainly industrial securities described in detail, which were sent to the sister branch in Milan, as ordered by the regulations regarding the transfer of valuables and jewellery from the safe-deposit boxes of Jews to the northern offices of the banks, contained in the decree of 4 January 1944. These assets remained in bond to the EGELI awaiting the confiscation decree from the Head of Province.

#### *Rieti*

No relevant documentation due to an absence of Jewish clients.

#### *Rome*

On 16 March 1944 the Rome branch informed the Head Office it had sent 481 reports of Jewish assets to the Head of Province, the list of which has not been preserved.

### *Siena*

A copy of the report of assets belonging to names of Jewish race presented by the Siena branch to the Head of Province on 30 December 1943. The list shows eight positions.

### *Teramo*

A copy of the report of assets belonging to names of Jewish race presented by the Teramo branch to the Head of Province on 24 February 1944. The list shows only one position relating to Alberto Pappo, owner of a sum of L.26,619.

### *Turin*

On 21 December 1943 the Istituto San Paolo di Torino asked the Turin branch of the Banco di Roma to urgently report all assets of Jewish ownership as directed by decree of the Head of Province published in the press on 14 December 1943.

The list of Jewish positions sent on 31 December 1943 to the Istituto San Paolo di Torino is missing (mentioned in a letter from the Turin branch to the Head Office on 7 March 1944). On 10 May, 25 July and 10 August 1944 all the safe-deposit boxes owned by Jews at the Turin branch were opened. There was a total of 15 boxes, most of which were empty (11). The valuables found in the other four were owned by:

Enrico Fubini, Box No. 764 c: miscellaneous objects, 4 bonds of L.10 each Restructured Bevilacqua La Masa Premium loans, 1 serviceman's policy of L.5,000.

Gustavo Civita and Gilardini Civita, née Metella (Aryan), Box No. 221a: 1 x 5 lire coin, miscellaneous objects and documents.

Eugenio Gentili, Box No. 325 a: miscellaneous objects.

Alfredo De Giorgi, Box No. 2867 a: miscellaneous share and insurance certificates registered to Ester De Giorgi, née Bachi.

The operations were made in the presence of Dr Francesco Principato representing the Head of Turin Province and Antonio Salvadori of the Istituto San Paolo as representative of the EGELI. The contents found in the various safe-deposit boxes were provisionally placed in sealed deposits registered to the individuals (at the Banco di Roma) awaiting instructions from the EGELI.

### *Trieste*

On 19 November 1943 the Police Chief in the Adriatic Coast Operations Zone ordered all banks to send the manager of the Banca d'Italia, as peripheral representative of the Inspectorate for the Defence of Savings and the Provision of Credit, a complete list of all valuables (cash and objects in the various accounts and deposits, securities of any type and the contents of safe-deposit boxes) belonging to Jews.

On 7 December 1943 the Trieste branch of the Banco di Roma advised that all items registered to Jews had been stopped, adding that "to this end the local Inter-provincial Union of Banks and Insurance Companies has given us an extract of the registry details showing the names in question".

On 16 December 1943 this action was given explicit approval by the Head Office.

Following dlgs 2/1944 of 4 January, the Trieste branch once again reported the assets held and registered in Jewish names, this time to the Head of Province. At this point, however, it asked the Head Office for official clarification so as to definitively establish by which of the two authorities – Italian or German – the assets of Jews were effectively stopped (letter of 14 February 1944 with attached detailed list of all deposits and personal valuables registered to Jews at the bank).

The Head Office replied by suggesting the branch "await the confiscation decree from the Head of Province with the order to consign the assets covered by the report to the EGELI and its representative, taking the opportunity to make known your credit rights to this same body" (letter of 24 February 1944).

But the question of Italian or German authority regarding the sequestration of Jewish assets in Trieste was soon clarified: only the supreme commissioner of the SS and the superior commander of the police could give directives in the Adriatic coastal provinces on assets registered to Jews. So the decree of 4 January 1944 was not applied in the Adriatic coast, as the foreign authorities had already made provisions for "Jewish assets". Consequently, all the Jewish goods stopped and sequestered were credited to the account of the supreme commissioner and not that of the EGELI.

On 18 March 1944 the Trieste branch informed the Head Office that it had received an order from the financial department of the High Commissioner's Office to transfer to an account registered to the Property Administration of the Supreme Commissioner the following assets registered to Jews: Paolo Melauri (balance of current account of L. 7,265 and 1 trunk on sealed deposit with a declared value of L. 200,000), Alberto Gotzl (balance of current account of L. 19,280) and Camillo Ara (balance of current account of L. 27,005 and L. 3,000 BTN [nine-year Government bond]). In conclusion, it added: "We will proceed with the other transfers if and as we are instructed by the above-mentioned authority".

On 3 April 1944 the Head Office of the Banco di Roma had no choice but to acknowledge the German *diktat*, renouncing all rights and authority on outstanding questions relating to Jews in the Adriatic Coast Operations Zone.

#### *Udine*

On 8 February 1944 the Udine branch informed the Head Office that it had reported all assets presumed to belong to citizens of Jewish race to the Prefecture. There were seven personal positions regarding various kinds of moveable assets (boxes, securities, deposits), which had already been reported the previous 30 November to the local Banca d'Italia branch as provincial representative of the Inspectorate for the Defence of Savings and the Provision of Credit, on the orders of the German authorities of the Adriatic coast.

#### *Venice*

On 14 February the Venice branch informed the Head Office that it had reported 97 names of Jewish clients holding assets, in accordance with the order made by the Head of Province and the decree of 4 January 1944, and to have sent the EGELI a letter offering to manage the accounts and securities of the Jews.

The EGELI answered on 23 February 1944 ordering the bank to hold the reported stopped assets until new directives were made and deferring its decision on the offer to manage the said assets.

In November 1944 the EGELI asked the Venice branch to transfer all valuables (securities, jewellery, cash) of Jewish ownership to its sister branch in Verona. The Venice branch expressed its concerns regarding this to the Head Office on 28 November 1944, asking it to make a statement on the wisdom of transferring assets with a total value of L.20,000,000 to Verona.

On 4 December 1944 the Venice branch informed its sister branch in Bergamo that the EGELI, through the Credito Fondiario delle Venezie “has asked all the banks holding securities and valuables belonging to Jews, mainly consisting of sureties for debit operations, to ask for authorisation to sell the said securities at the best price up to the point strictly necessary to repay the advances previously agreed. To this end the banks have been interested in sending the EGELI the bank statements with the deeds for the relative securities”.

On 6 December 1944 the Venice branch sent the EGELI the statement of the guaranteed account in the name of Gino Ravà, whose balance of L.46,867.85, reported to the Prefecture on 19 January 1944, had in the meantime been reduced to L.45,757.15 in favour of the bank, asking it to authorise the sale of 75 Montecatini shares and to explain the procedure to be followed.

On 9 December 1944 the Head Office authorised the Venice branch to arrange the transfer of Jewish assets to the Verona branch, but to also ask the Istituto di Credito Fondiario delle Tre Venezie to issue a declaration of exemption from all responsibility for the risks involved in their transport and reimbursement for all costs of the operation. On 19 December 1944 the Head Office specified to the Venice branch that even the partial sale of assets that were “stopped” but not yet officially “confiscated” by decrees issued by the Head of Province could not be authorised. Furthermore, the sale of confiscated assets should be made according to the instructions of the Ministry of Finance.

The Venice branch informed the Head Office, again on 19 December, that confiscation orders had not been issued for only 16 of the 95 Jewish positions reported. The assets of the other 79 positions were to be considered the property of the state from the date of each individual confiscation decree. On 30 December 1944 the Venice branch sent the Head Office the list of confiscation decrees issued by the Head of Province up to that time and asked it to confirm the mandate previously given to the Bergamo branch to sell part of the Jewish assets confiscated from the Jew Gino Vittorio Ravà with a debit balance of L. 45,757.15 guaranteed by industrial shares worth more than L.1,000,000.

TABLE 7. *Jewish assets confiscated by the Head of Venice Province up to 30.12.1944*

<i>names</i>	<i>confiscation decree</i>	<i>date</i>
Angeli Ines	7823	30.3.1944
Artom Enrichetta	7826	30.3.1944
Bassani Edgardo	8015	30.3.1944
Bondi Leo	8021	31.3.1944
Camerino Renzo	8025	1.4.1944
Coen ved. Hirsch Adele	8033	1.4.1944
Coen Pirano Giorgio	9779	14.4.1944
D’Angeli Marcello	8045	3.4.1944
D’Angeli Vittorio	8047	3.4.1944
Fano Sonino Gina	8058	25.3.1944
Fiandra Della Torre Vittoria	8065	25.3.1944
Friedemberg Ravà Emma	8073	23.3.1944
Levi Diomede	8812	5.4.1944
Levi Lionello	8815	5.4.1944
Levi Ottolenghi Nina	8817	5.4.1944
Levi Sergio	8819	5.4.1944

Morpurgo Liliana	8831	5.4.1944
Muggia Giuseppe	8834	5.4.1944
Namer Sara	8836	5.4.1944
Navarra Ugo	8837	5.4.1944
Polacco Giulio	8853	6.4.1944
Ravà Aldo	8855	7.4.1944
Ravà Carlo	8858	7.4.1944
Ravà Gino	2225	7.4.1944
Ravà Elda	8856	7.4.1944
Reiser Maria	8861	8.4.1944
Salviati e & fratelli Camerino	10281	20.4.1944
Schreiber Carlo	8874	10.4.1944
Segré Maria	8877	11.4.1944
Sonino Gastone	2229	12.4.1944
Sonino Wanda	8887	12.4.1944
Sullam Angelo	2227	12.4.1944
Tagliacozzo Bruno	8888	12.4.1944
Tagliacozzo Salvatore	8889	12.4.1944
Viterbo Ettore	8896	12.4.1944
Vivante Ginevra	8899	12.4.1944
Alazraki Elia	7817	30.3.1944
Alpron Coen Lucia	7019	30.3.1944
Camerino Olga	8023	31.3.1944
Friedenberg Alberta	8071	25.3.1944
Friedenberg Marina	8074	25.3.1944
Friedenberg Vittorio	8087	22.3.1944
Fries Girardi Linda	8078	22.3.1944
Ditta F.lli Jarach Saccheria	8082	22.3.1944
Oreffice Sandra	8842	6.4.1944
Torzo Lilla	8899	12.4.1944
Treves de Bonfili Ugo	8892	12.4.1944
Abendana Clotilde	7816	30.3.1944
Saraval Eugenio	8879	10.4.1944
Arbib Valeria	7825	30.3.1944

Camerino Ernesto	8022	31.3.1944
Camerino Guido	8026	1.4.1944
Cavalieri Padoa Emma	8030	1.4.1944
Cavalieri Gianna	8031	1.4.1944
Coen Terzo	8038	1.4.1944
De Benedetti Orefice Alice	8040	3.4.1944
Fano Arrigo e Anau M.Letizia	8056	4.4.1944
Fano Vittorio	8064	25.3.1944
Franco Renzo	8069	25.3.1944
Friedenberg Mario	8076	22.3.1944
Minerbi Roberto	8830	5.4.1944
Muggia Franca	8833	5.4.1944
Musatti Elia	8835	5.4.1944
Nunes Vais Ercole	8838	5.4.1944
Oreffice Aldo	8840	6.4.1944
Oreffice Marco	27670	30.10.1944
Polacco Bruno	8850	6.4.1944
Sacerdoti Edmondo	8867	10.4.1944
Salom Ettore	8863	10.4.1944
Vivante Bice	8897	12.4.1944
Vivante Costante	8898	12.4.1944
Vivante Jacopo	8901	12.4.1944
Friedenberg Lia Anna	8072	25.3.1944
Friedenberg F.Ili di Mario	8079	25.3.1944
Jesurum Vittorio	8085	25.3.1944
Leghziel Elia	8811	5.4.1944
Sarfatti Gustavo	8872	10.4.1944
Oreffice Roberto	12811	30.10.1944
Guetta Benedetto	6881	22.5.1944

On 3 January 1945 the Head Office wrote once again to the branch on assets not yet confiscated: “Whenever the EGELI or its representative should insist on handing over assets before issue of the confiscation decree, have them issue a written order with the express declaration of exemption from any responsibility toward the account holders”.

Regarding the transfer to Verona of Jewish assets, the Venice branch informed the Head Office that “the Fondiario, objecting that in general it did not intend issuing the declaration in question, reserved the right to specify the manner in which the securities of Jewish ownership should be consigned” (24 January 1945).

On 9 February 1945 the Head Office returned again to the subject of the transfer of Jewish assets from Venice to Verona, stating that “if the Fondiario should arrange for the consignment of the securities in question to the local Cassa di Risparmio in order to concentrate all Jewish owned assets at that bank and then arrange for a single transfer to Verona, thus complying with superior directives, we cannot offer any opposition. But if it is simply a case, as we believe, of transferring the said securities from one bank to another, we do not see the need for such a transfer”. In the meantime, the transfer of assets was carried out in various stages, as shown by the frequent correspondence exchanged between Venice and Verona in April 1945.

#### The Elda Ravà case

Before the legal directives on Jews were issued by the government of the RSI between July and December 1943, the Venice branch of the Banco di Roma had asked its Jewish client Elda Ravà to settle the outstanding balance of her secured account of L.47,073.45, including capital and interest, no later than 20 December 1943. This was never carried out by Signorina Ravà, who was at the time concerned with escaping from the Germans, first to Florence than to Switzerland. As the sum was guaranteed by shares whose overall value came to L.56,650.20, the compulsory sale of some of the shares (25 property, 100 Montecatini and 50 Sade shares) was made through the Management Committee of Exchange agents at the Venice stock exchange. The difference between the proceeds of the sale (L.138,400) and settlement of the debt (L.47,073.45) came to L.91,326.55, which was paid into a guaranteed current account in Ravà’s name. On 31 December 1943, following payment of the excess and capitalisation of the debit and credit interest, Ravà’s guaranteed current account had a balance of L.33,606.60. On 7 April 1944 the Head of Venice Province issued a confiscation decree stating that the proceeds of the sale of Ravà’s securities and the remaining unsold securities were to be held at the Venice branch under bond to the Ministry of Finance and the EGELI. Immediately after the War, on 21 June, Elda Ravà went to the bank and withdrew the entire sum in her current account of L.42,179.90.

On 4 July 1945 Ravà wrote to the Venice branch asking for precise information on her shares. On 21 July the Venice branch replied with a detailed summary of each stage of what had happened starting from October 1943 and notified her of the compulsory sale of some shares at the Venice stock exchange to pay off her debt with the bank of L.47,073.45.

On 4 November 1945 Ravà's solicitor, Luigi Lepore, wrote to the managing director of the Banco di Roma accusing the Venice branch of having made an arbitrary action to the detriment of Signora Ravà, who was at the time unable to protect her interests, while the bank's credit of L.47,000 was solidly underwritten by securities amounting to L.56,650.20. Prior to bringing a lawsuit against the bank, the solicitor indicated he was prepared to accept some settlement.

On 24 November 1945 the Head Office sent Lepore's letter to the Venice branch, asking it for information on the matter. The branch's reply with a complete account of the matter arrived on 6 December 1945.

In a memo on the Ravà dispute dated 22, 28 and 29 December 1945, the solicitor Orlandi, appointed to act for the bank, mentioned three conversations with Lepore in which the latter had confidentially confirmed that he was prepared to settle if the bank were to pay his client the sum of L.15,000 as compensation for damages.

Prior to deciding on the wisdom of the settlement, on 25 January 1946 the bank's legal office wrote to Antonio Catani, manager of the Florence branch, asking for further information on the Ravà case in order to find out whether there had been any particular reasons why the Venice branch had decided to make the compulsory sale of its client's assets. Catani replied on 28 January 1946 explaining the banking policy of the Venice branch: "after 8 September 1943, when the racial measures were already taking shape, the Venice branch quickly instigated a firm policy of repayment for names of Jewish race, on the instructions of the Head Office. These included Signora Ravà, who had for some time had an amount carried forward and an account secured by shares that had been inactive. For some months we had been insisting in person and in writing that the client regularise her position, even though at that time – as known – serious directives prohibited the opening or continuation of loans against shares that were not justified – as in the case of Ravà – by industrial or commercial requirements. It was also a question of risk, given that following the downward trend in the stock market, and the clearly negative forecasts, the margins in that period were rapidly dwindling. At a certain moment Ravà left Venice [...]. We still had an agreement, properly signed by the client; on expiry (December 1943), we thought it wise to make use of the authority granted us and – in agreement with our solicitor – decided to make the compulsory sale. We also sought to protect the interests of the absent client, limiting the sale to the shares strictly necessary to cover the sum of the outstanding debt and guaranteed account, albeit with a certain margin. The prescribed procedure for such cases was strictly followed in the matter. It must be noted that – given the current poor stock market performance and considering the debit interest saved from December 1943 on – Ravà could probably now repurchase all the sold shares without

loss". The "Elda Ravà" case ended on 12 April 1946 when the Head Office authorised payment of L.15,000 to Signora Ravà.

### *Verona*

On 8 February 1944 the Verona branch sent the Head of Province a list of assets belonging to Jewish clients, along with holders of safe-deposit boxes. There were nine positions, relating to Enzo Levi, Attilio Keichembach, Seligmann Goldschmedt, Marco Fresco, Enzo Levi and Renata Levi Bassani, Giuseppe Teller, Guido Basevi and Guglielmo Sforzi.

On 11 December 1944 the Verona branch informed the Head Office, the Head of Province of Verona and the Istituto di Credito Fondiario delle Venezie, as EGELI representative, that it had received some accounts from its sister branch in Venice registered to Jewish names, the balances of which had been previously confiscated in accordance with the decrees of that Prefecture.

On 29 December 1944 the Verona branch informed the Head Office that, on the orders of the Prefecture, it had proceeded with the forced opening of three safe-deposit boxes belonging to the Jews Enzo Levi and Renata Levi Bassani, Guido Basevi and Guglielmo Sforzi, confiscated by the State with decrees of the Head of Province of 5 July 1944. As shown by the report written on 29 December 1944, the three boxes were found empty.

The Venice and Padua branches transferred all their accounts relating to Jewish clients, previously confiscated with decrees issued by the respective Prefectures, to the Verona branch, as documented by the letters sent by the Verona branch to the Head Office between 11 December and 19 April 1945. For the list of names and relative balances, see the various lists dated 11, 15 and 21 December 1944; 31 January, 12 February, 8, 22 and 27 March and 19 April 1945.

### *Viterbo*

A copy of the report of assets belonging to names of Jewish race presented by the Viterbo branch to the Head of Province on 8 February 1944. The list contains one position relating to Sadun Renato, holder of a current account with a credit balance of L.245.

### *Voghera*

On 11 February 1944 the Voghera branch informed the Prefecture of an account registered to the Società Industrie Autartiche "SIA" (with a balance of L.127,470.35) belonging to names of Jewish race. On 14 February the Voghera branch informed the Head Office that a sequestrator, Nicola Traverso, had been appointed for the SIA. The Head Office replied asking the branch to agree with the Prefecture on what policy to follow in its relations with the sequestrator (22 February 1944).

Finally, on 11 March 1944, the branch informed the Head Office that “the SIA has presented a normal balance sheet to the Pavia Prefecture, asking for authorisation to continue business with the aim of avoiding closure of the factory. The Head of Province agreed to the request and, awaiting the decision of the EGELI to which the case has been forwarded, has nominated Dr Traverso as sequestrator [...]. It remains agreed that the aforesaid person has the same facilities as the sequestrators of companies belonging to enemy citizens”.

### 3. The reinstatement of Jewish staff employed by the Banco di Roma

Folder 15 “Ebrei. Ripristino delle anzianità” (b. 4, Serie “Ufficio del Personale”) contains statements, reckonings and correspondence relating to the repeal of the racial provisions regarding nine bank employees, dismissed by directive of rdl 1728/1938 of 17 November and subsequently reinstated in accordance with rdl 20 January 1944.

Subsequent to l. 220/1950 of 11 April, the salaries owed to reinstated Jewish staff was paid as shown by the following table:

TABELLA 8. *Salaries owed to reinstated Jewish staff*

<i>name</i>	<i>rank</i>	<i>branch</i>	<i>date of reinstatement request</i>	<i>date of reinstatement</i>	
					<i>net sum recognised</i>
Aldo Gandus	Procurator	Milan	26.5.1945	21.10.1945	L. 63,562
Maurizio Molco	Clerk	Milan	18.2.1946	1.7.1946	L. 120,132
Giorgio Almansi	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade clerk	Milan	24.7.1945	16.10.1945	L. 25,584
Giacomo Sarfatti	Office manager	Venice	16.6.1944	1.8.1944	L. 15,844
Tullio Ascoli	Clerk	Rome	22.11.1944	1.3.1945	L. 18,547
Leopoldo Herbst	Clerk	Florence	30.8.1944	1.10.1944	L. 1,490
Antonio Baldini	Clerk	Turin			L. 13,351

The names of Jewish staff dismissed in November 1938 and subsequently reinstated also included Enrico Tedeschi, office manager, who returned to work on 28 November 1946 and died on 12 January 1950, Bruno Mondolfo, clerk, of whom the following is written: “He left the service in Beirut on 26 June 1941; he was repatriated by the consular authorities in June 1941 and offered severance pay but refused; he was not reinstated but took employment with another firm; he was

reinstated in the Head Office on 27 November 1944 and signed an Italian contract on 1 January 1950”, and Rosina Sestieri, of whom no information is available.

In applying articles 1 and 2 of l. 220/1950 of 11 April, the bank also had to regularise the position of reinstated Jewish employees with the social security fund. While the bank had to pay its share, the Jewish employees in question also had to pay their personal quotas with the relative interest for the period between their dismissal and reinstatement.

“Following and in keeping with the above requirements, and subject to reimbursement of what they were paid at the time of their dismissal both from the bank and from the defunct social security fund, steps must be taken to reinstate their seniority (of service, career and membership of the social security fund) as if the employee had never ceased to belong to the bank, unless they prefer not to make use of the faculty allowed by art. 2 of l. 220/1950 of 11 April” (Personnel office, section 2, note for section 3 and 4, Rome, 9 November 1950, p. 1).