

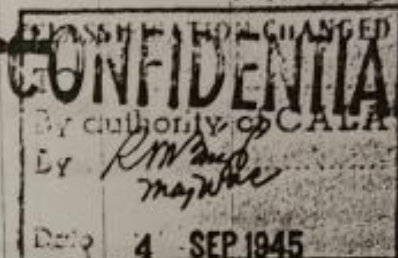
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SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
Office of the Chief of Staff

OCT/383.6-4/OPS(C)

5 April 1945

SUBJECT : Airborne contact and reconnaissance teams
TO : Brigadier J.S. Nichols, DSO, MC,
Commander, Special Allied Airborne
Reconnaissance Force



file
55 SHAEF File No. 383.6/1

GENERAL

1. Plans for the relief, protection and evacuation of allied prisoners of war in GERMANY are being prepared at Supreme Headquarters. It has become apparent that, although the existing system of intelligence must continue to be the foundation of our information, conditions in 'HELLFIRE' will be such that the Supreme Commander will require a swift and reliable means of confirming and supplementing intelligence about prisoners of war.

2. It has therefore been decided to form 420 parachute contact and reconnaissance teams which can be dropped into GERMANY as soon as 'HELLFIRE' conditions allow. These teams will each consist of one officer, one assistant and one W/T operator. The roles of these teams will be:

- a. To obtain information regarding conditions at prison camps and kommandos.
- b. To place prisoners of war and foreign workers in W/T communication with the AEF.
- c. To assist reception arrangements for air supply.
- d. To facilitate liaison between relieving forces on the one hand and senior officers at prisoner of war camps and foreign workers on the other.

COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES

3. Under the general direction of this Headquarters you will be responsible for the formation, training and administration of the contact and reconnaissance teams.

Conduct of Operations

4. SHAEF will be responsible for:
- a. directing you to drop teams in a specified area,
 - b. briefing the teams,
 - c. exercising coordinating control over the teams in the field,
 - d. taking action on intelligence received from the reconnaissance teams.

You will be responsible for:

- a. mounting the teams,
 - b. looking after the interests of the teams in the field,
 - c. passing the intelligence received from the field to the SHAEF PW War Room.
5. a. Teams overrun by ground forces will immediately come under command of the local military commander.

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- b. Teams dropped in areas to which it is later decided to despatch airborne forces will be placed under command of First Allied Airborne Army.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SOE AND OSS

6. SOE and OSS have agreed to be responsible for furnishing you with:-
- all possible assistance and advice in setting up your organization,
 - technical stores and personnel who can be made available from their resources.
7. With the assistance of the War Office and SHAEF Signals, SOE will be responsible for:-
- signals training,
 - operational signal plan,
 - working of main station.
8. In view of their great experience in conducting special operations you should consult SOE and OSS fully at all stages of your planning.

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT CONTACT

9. On matters concerning the airborne reconnaissance teams you are authorized to deal direct with the following organizations:-

The War Office, ETOUSA, The Air Ministry, First Allied Airborne Army, and USSTAF, in addition to all Staff Divisions of SHAEF, including Air Staff.

TRAINING

10. A broad training syllabus for the airborne reconnaissance teams will be drawn up by G-3 Division of this Headquarters. In its preparation, the following agencies will be consulted: A-2, Air Staff, SHAEF (who coordinate all air intelligence and serve both the Air Ministry and USSTAF), G-1 (PW), G-2, G-3 (DP), SPM, OSS and SOE. It is anticipated that both G-3 (PW) and A-2 will attach liaison officers to the command organization in order to assist you in this matter.

11. You are requested to forward brief weekly progress reports (5 copies) to G-3 Division, SHAEF.

SECURITY

12. The code name for the project of dropping these teams into GERMANY under 'ECLIPSE' conditions will be 'VICARAGE'.

By direction of the Supreme Commander:

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~~V.B. SHER~~ J. DeCS
 Lieutenant General, US Army,
 Chief of Staff.

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