

Aldershot, 18th July 1941

XII CORPS OPERATION INSTRUCTION No. 27

Bvt. Cptn. Comdg. Special Detachment Theseus

Reference Maps: Topographical Map of Crete, German Assault Plan May 1941, Allied Disposition May 1941

## A. Situation

1. Axis powers took Crete on 1st June 1941. Axis forces have reinforced their position. At the time of this order we can assume only a remainder of token resistance by under-armed and untrained Greek civilian resistance units. Support is not available.

2. Crete has been divided into 4 prefectures by the Axis. The 3 western Chania, Rethymno, Heraklion are controlled by German forces. The easternmost province Lasithi is controlled by Italian forces. Lasithi is mountainous, mostly rural and sparsely settled. Vegetation is sparse. Roads are few and damaged.

3. Enemy strength is overwhelming; total c. 60,000 strong. The German prefectures are held by the 164th Infantry Division, known as Fortress Division Crete, under Generalleutnant Josef Flottmann, and not yet withdrawn elements of the elite German 1st Parachute Division. The Italian 51st Infantry Division Sienna, including the 141st CCNN, under General Gualtiero Gabutti, garrisons Lasithi. Avoid enemy contact.

4. Intelligence obtained reports that elements of the SS Panzergrenadier division Totenkopf deaths head have been put under the command of Standartenführer SS Colonel Professor Horst-Helmut von Hummelburg. Hummelburg appears to have full use of, at least, a 120 men strong SS Sonderkommando special command of the 3rd SS Armoured Division.

5. Hummelburg is a high-ranking member of SS Ahnenerbe, the study society for Intellectual Ancient History, which has the personal protection and sponsorship of Hitler and Himmler. The purpose of Ahnenerbe is to experiment and launch expeditions with the intent of proving that prehistoric and mythological Nordic populations Aryans had once ruled the world. Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler claims and promotes that the Aryans originally came from Atlantis and are beings directly from heaven, i.e. did not evolve as other humans did. Intelligence received that Hummelburg is conducting experiments to weaponize the occult.

6. A small task force will consist of men and women from various units of Allied and affiliated forces, including SOE and LAYFORCE. Most members of this detail have special capabilities. General Montgomery will disclose further details in person.

## B. Mission

7. Report to General Montgomery for mission briefing post haste.

8. Leave Aldershot on 20th July at 4 am. Report to Wing Commander Huxley at Aldershot airport. Huxley will taxi to Crete.

9. Parachute into Lashiti Prefecture, Crete, depending on weather conditions on either 21st or 22nd July. The DZ is in a largely unsettled mountain area 1 mile south of the village Sitanos. Sitanos lies 3 miles west-south-west of Zakros and 5 miles west of the small harbour Kato Zakros.

10. Interface with Greek resistance at Sitanos if possible. The village headman, Kostas Tefhanikos, is your contact. He will be able to provide shelter, provisions, and further information.

11. Primary Task is to reconnoitre the digging site near Kato Zakros, determine what Hummelburg is really doing and destroy, or remove to Cairo, any occult tools, weapons, books, and other artefacts.

12. Secondary Tasks at Kato Zakros are to kill, or kidnap and remove to Cairo, Hummelburg, and to gain any information on troop deployments, especially the North African theatre. The military commander of the SS Sonderkommando, Major Hartlaub, may have pertinent military intelligence: until recently, he served on General der Panzertruppe Rommel's staff.

13. This is a specific raid and recon mission, use judgement what else can be achieved as Tertiary Tasks, such as destroying Axis materiel and weapons, especially any aircraft, provided doing so does not endanger the success of the Primary and Secondary tasks. Reduce Axis capabilities on Crete, preferably where relevant for the North African and European theatre.

14. When the mission is complete, contact the landlord or Georgios Tavern at Kato Zakros. He will organise your transport to Cairo. Reach Cairo at best possible speed.

The successful completion of this mission is essential for the progress of the Allied African campaign. No secret of occult weapons must interfere with Allied progress. Gaining further intelligence is paramount. The swastika flying over Cairo is unacceptable. I expect a full report, especially on the suppressed De Lisle carbine, in due course. Godspeed!

Bernard Montgomery  
Act. Lt-General  
Cmd. XII Corps