Despatches re American LSTs to Greece

Map Room
Box 88
Despatches re Amer LST's to Greece

Hold
DISPATCH

FROM 8.N.A. ANKARA

RELEASED BY

DATE 19 DEC 1944

DECODED BY

PARAPHRASED BY

ROUTED BY

ADRESSEES

ADJUTANT-GENERAL-ADRESSEE

PRECEDENCE

1 PRIORITY

2 ROUTINE

3 DEFERRED

4 BASEGRAM

CINCMED; FOLEM

ADMIRAL ARCHER

BNLO BLACK SEA

SAC MED; SBN GRECE

COM 6TH FLT

BAD WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

CINCUED; FOLEM

ADMIRAL ARCHER

BNLO BLACK SEA

SAC MED; SBN GRECE

COM 6TH FLT

BAD WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

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TOP SECRET

REQUEST YOUR COMMENTS ON FOLEM'S 292120 TO CINCMED AND ADMIRALTY ONLY, AND ON CINCMED'S 091343.

2. CONVOYS PROCEEDING TO BLACK SEA WILL IN FIRST INSTANCE COMPRISE ONLY US SHIPS AND NOT ARE INFORMING US AUTHORITIES OF FOLEM'S PROPOSAL THAT TURKS SHOULD BE ASKED TO REDUCE PORT DUES AT ISTANBUL FOR SHIPS IN CONVOY. IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT SOME BRITISH SHIPS MAY BE INCLUDED LATER ON.

3. RUSSIANS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO COMPLETE PREPARATIONS FOR FOR RECEIPTION OF CONVOYS BY 15TH JANUARY. ADMIRAL ARCHER 090101 NOT TO ALL REFERS. FIRST SAILING IS LIKELY TO BE 2 US SUGAR SHIPS ARRIVING DARDANELLES APPROXIMATELY 23RD JANUARY.
4. BRITISH NCSO WILL BE INSTALLED ISTANBUL AS SOON AS THERE IS PROSPECT OF CONTINUOUS MOVEMENTS. IT IS NOT CONSIDERED WORTH WHILE SENDING NCSO FOR THE 2 SHIPS MENTIONED IN PRECEDING PARAGRAPHS, ROUTEING OF WHICH CAN BE HANDLED BY PRESENT ORGANIZATION.

5. ADMIRALTYS GENERAL COMMENTS ON CINCHENS 091343 WILL BE RESERVED PENDING YOUR REPLY AND FURTHER INFORMATION FROM WASHINGTON.
RETURN OF SHIPS PROPOSED URDIS 101238 AND 101614 INCLUDING 6 YMS APPROVED.

COMINCH: COPIES #1 TO #8 INCLUSIVE.
**NAV A l**

**M**

**N u c E**

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**INFORMATION**

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**DECLASSIFIED**

E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4
NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date 10/12/94
**DISPATCH**

**FROM**: COMINCH

**RELEASED**: ADM C. M. COCKE

**DATE**: 1ST DEC 1944

**TOR CODE**: 1949/11

**DECODED BY**: PARAPHRASED BY ELY CHECKED BY POILEY

**ROUTED BY**: ELY

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**INFORMATION**

**FOR ACTION**

**UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.**

**URDIS 19254. ALL LST'S ORDERED RETURN U.S. ARE TO CARRY LCT. HEREBY CONFIRM 16 LST ARE TO BE RETURNED PLUS LST 506 IF PRACTICABLE. 23 LOT'S ALTHOUGH RELEASED WILL REMAIN IN WED UNTIL FURTHER ORDERS.**

**DECLASSIFIED**

**E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 3(D) or (3)**

OSD letter, May 28, 1973

**RECEIVED BY**: RHP, NARA DATE MAY 28 1973

**COMINCH: COPIES 1 TO 8 INCLUSIVE.**

**COMINCH HAS DELIVERED TO NCR FOR FURTHER DISTRIBUTION TO**

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**NO. 1 ADMIRAL**

**NO. 2 FILE**

**NO. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM**

**NO. 4 SPECIAL**

**OPNAV 15-76**

**DECLASSIFIED**

E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4

NLR 101

BY RT, NARA, DATE 4/12/94
**SECRET DISPATCH**

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**THIS IS TOP SECRET. COM 8TH FLEET SENDS FOR ACTION TO COMINCH AND CNO AND INFO TO CINCLANT CTF 81 AND CINCHED.**

**PROPOSE TO RETURN FOLLOWING SHIPS WITH LANDING CRAFT CONVOY YOUR 191675 REFERS. PLUNKETT HOLLIS RUNNELS. I ACH MINDIV 18 (SWAY SYMBOL SHIFT THREAT). ATA 125 AND IF DESIRED BY YOU 6 YMS. YMS CONTINUE TO BE FULLY EMPLOYED IN CLEARING LARGE MINED AREAS IN MEDITERRANEAN.**

**COMMANDS 1 THROUGH 8.**

**added:** 1 ARL (Ashclaw)

**DECLASSIFIED**

RO. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4
OSD letter, May 3, 1972

By BHP, NARA Date: MAY 28, 1973

No. 1 ADMIRAL 1
No. 2 FILE
No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM
No. 4 SPECIAL

[Handwritten note: 10/16/41]

[Handwritten note: 10/12/1973]
## Secret Dispatch

**From:** G. M. COOK

**Released By:** G. M. COOK

**Date:** DECEMBER 13, 1944

**TOR Codebook:** 1454/1512

**Decoded By:** KOTEN/DIESEL

**Paraphrased By:** KOTEN

**Ready By:** HOWLAND

**Address:** COM 8TH FLEET

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**If Operational Check Below:**

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**Originator Fill in Date and Time Group**

(Use G.C.T.)

---

**Suspension Action On:** 22146 AND 2891913 EXCEPT TRANSFER OF 15

**U.S. List's Can Go Ahead.**

**Coding:**

E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(A) and 3(C) or 3(D)

OISD Letter, May 3, 1972

By RHP, NARA Date "MAY 28 1973"

---

**DECLASSIFIED**

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4

NLR 101

By RT, NARA, Date 4/12/44

---

**Handle Only in accordance with Top Secret instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations.**

---

**OPNAV 10-76**

---

**DECLASSIFIED**

E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4

NLR 101

By RT, NARA, Date 4/12/44

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**Copy No.**
**DISPATCH**

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**COMINCH**

**CTF 81 (OPS AND ADM)**

**INFO**

**COMINCH**

**ACTION**

**F-30**

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**TOP SECRET**

**LANDING CRAFT REFERRED PARAGRAPH 5 MEDCO 210 WERE IN ADDITION TO THOSE PREVIOUSLY MADE AVAILABLE OF WHICH 52 WERE LCT, OF THESE 26 HAVE BEEN RETURNED WIT LEAVING 24. ADDITIONAL 15 MAKES 30 STILL AVAILABLE FOR RELEASE. ASSURE THEREFORE YOU WILL DESIRE ALL RETURNING LST TO CARRY LCT YOUR MEDCOZX REFERS.

**LST 506** STILL AGROUND LEGHORN WITH SALVAGE DOUBTFUL. WITH 28 U.S. LST TO REMAIN IN THEATER 10 TO BE TRANSFERRED TO BRITISH 16 ONLY WILL THEREFORE REMAIN TO BE RETURNED U.S.

**PLEASE CONFIRM.**

**COMINCH COPIES 1 TO 6 INCL**

---

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4

NLR 101

By RT, NARA, Date 4/3/44
From: Allied Force Headquarters, Caserta, Italy
To: War Department
Br: F 65814 9 December 1944

F 65814 signed McNamara. TOPSECRET. Cite NAGG, personal for General Marshall for his eyes only.

A message is being dispatched today to Combined Chiefs of Staff protesting COMINT directive prohibiting further sailings American LSTs to Greek ports. This message sent at my suggestion in hope of clearing up unsatisfactory situation here. I pointed out that while it is understood that British were given free hand in Greece, unilateral directives for military operations there have already deprived us of one parachute brigade urgently required for immediate operation this theater, plus one brigade 46th British Division. General Wilson is now required to furnish such additional reinforcements as may be necessary.

Greece has already requested remainder of 46th Division. Remaider this Division now being pulled out for rest but should be available for latter stages of coming operation. To present loss of this Division decision just taken to divert 4th Indian Division to Greece in lieu of relieving 5th British Division in Palestine. This obviates any immediate effect on battle but means 5th Division will not close this theater early January as contemplated. If highest level decisions are not involved, recommend message reference LSTs be used as a vehicle to prevent further weakening this theater at the moment we are about to

CH-IN-9277 (9 Dec 44)
From: Allied Force Headquarters, Caserta, Italy

To: [Redacted]

Date: 9 December 1944

Resume the battle, unless concurred in by the Combined Chief of Staff.

New subject. Bad weather has delayed initiation of coordinated attack which was planned to begin when British have bridgeheads over Santerno. After visit to front I estimate most optimistic date 20 December. Fear British units will have little punch left by that time and in effect, we will have had two uncoordinated efforts. Have been assured British will have equivalent of five and one half divisions to participate and that my fears are unfounded. Hope to see Alexander tomorrow.

End.

ACTION: Gen Hull
INFO: Gen Arnold

CM-IN-9177 (9 Dec 44) 2122Z pa

THE MAKING OF AN EXACT COPY OF THIS MESSAGE IS FORBIDDEN
NAVAL MESSAGE

FROM COMINCH & CNO

RELEASED BY

DATE 9 DEC 1944

TOR CODEROOM

DECODED BY

PARAPHRASED BY

ROUTED BY

THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

091912

MY 091605 PROVIDES FOR THE TRANSFER OF TEN U.S. LST'S IN THE MEDITERRANEAN TO THE BRITISH X THIS TRANSFER CAN BE EFFECTED IMMEDIATELY X

WITH REFERENCE TO YOUR STATEMENT QUOTE POSITION OF COMINCH AND SACRED IS THAT WITHDRAWAL OF RESOURCES THOUGHT TO BE AVAILABLE DURING PROGRESS OF WAR OPERATION IS UNFORTUNATE UNQUOTE, THE QUOTE WAR UNQUOTE REFERRED TO DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE A WAR IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS PARTICIPATING X

UNLOADING OF U.S. LST'S NOT IN PROGRESS CAN BE COMPLETED X

LST'S LOADING ARE NOT TO MOVE FORWARD TO GREEK PORTS UNDER U.S. FLAG X

COPY TO: ADMIRAL LEAHY

SEALLED

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4
NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date 4/3/94
From: FREEDOM agd Wilson.
To: British Chiefs of Staff
Bptd: JSM Washington for U.S. Chiefs of Staff.
Nr: FX 65767 9 December 1944

1. The situation in Greece has compelled me to despatch additional British troops to General Scobie to enable him to carry out his task of maintaining law and order.

2. I am therefore diverting to the Piraeus 4th British Division now in process of embarkation for Middle East for a period of rest, retraining and internal security duties in relief of 5th British Division which on relief, was to be moved to Italy in December/January completing 4th January.

3. This course will involve the minimum interference with the battle in Italy and reinforcement by a British division will afford the best chance of withdrawing from Greece 2nd Parachute Brigade and 1 Brigade of 46th British Division at the earliest moment. Of these formations, 2nd Parachute Brigade was urgently wanted for operations in connection with the forthcoming battle. 46th Division is now being pulled out of the line in Italy for a period of rest and training. The absence of one of its brigades in Greece will therefore have no immediate effect on the battle.

4. Should the situation develop still more favourably

CM-IN-11249 (11 Dec 44)
WAR DEPARTMENT
CLASSIFIED MESSAGE CENTER.
INCOMING CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

MOST IMMEDIATE

From: FREEDOM agd Wilson
Nr: PX 62767. 9 December 1944

It will be possible to send on 4th British Division to Middle
East in due course and bring back 5th British Division to
Italy as presently planned. This would leave in Greece the
original force consisting of 8th Indian Division and 23rd
Armoured Brigade dismounted.

End.

ACTION: CC/S
INFO: Adm Leahy
       Gen Arnold
       OPD
       Gen Bissell
       Adm King
       C of S

CM-IN-21249 (11 Dec 44)  21282 pa

DECLASSIFIED
By Authority of S M 522 71

By Date MAY 28 1973

THE MAKING OF AN EXACT COPY OF THIS MESSAGE IS FORBIDDEN

DECCLASSIFIED
E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4
NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date 4/3/94
FROM COM 8TH FLEET
RELEASED BY
DATE 9 DECEMBER 1944
TOR CODENO 1646
DECODED BY SJOsten
PARAPHRASED BY SJOsten BY Bennett
ROUTED BY

PRESENT SITUATION YOUR 82146 REFERS AS FOLLOWS:

(A) 5 LST UNLOADING OR ABOUT TO UNLOAD IN GREEK PORTS.
(B) 2 LST LOADING VEHICLES AT TARANTO DUE TO SAIL 189708A.
(C) NEED FOR REINFORCEMENTS TO PRESERVE ORDER REPORTED TO BE URGENT.
(D) UNLOADING OF LIBERTIES AT PIRAEUS REPORTED TO BE IMPRACTICABLE DUE TO LACK OF FACILITIES AND STEVEDORE STRIKES.
(E) EXCLUSIVE OF US LST THERE ARE ONLY 4 LST (3 GREEK 1 BRITISH) IN MED. OF THESE ONLY 2 GREEK ARE OPERATIONAL.
POSITION OF CINCNED AND SACMED IS THAT WITHDRAWAL OF RESOURCES THOUGHT TO BE AVAILABLE DURING PROGRESS OF WAR OPERATION IS

DECLASSIFIED E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4 NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date 4/12/94
UNFORTUNATE. URGENT DISPATCH IS BEING ADDRESSED COOS SEEKING CONFIRMATION AND REQUESTING INSTRUCTIONS. THE 2 LST AT TARANTO ARE BEING HELD LOADED PENDING CLARIFICATION OF SITUATION.

COMINCH: COPIES 1 TO 8 INCL.
**DISPATCH**

**DRATER**: F-31A  
**EXT.**

| FROM | D. C. MINGH |  
| RELEASED BY | G. U. COOKE |  
| DATE | 9 DECEMBER 1944 |  
| TOR CODESIGN | S91625 |  
| DECIDED BY |  
| PARAPHRASED BY | MONCCE |  
| ROUTED BY | MONCE |  

**ADDRESS**

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**INFORMATION FOR ACTION**

- ADMIRALTY CINCLANT SCAFE
- CINCLANT COMPLIANT

**PRIORITY**

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**IF OPERATIONAL**

15. CHECK BELOW  

**GENERAL**

**ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME GROUP**  
(Use G. C. T.)

**CONSITUENT**

**CCS HAS DIRECTED SACRED TO RELEASE FOLLOWING SHIPS AND CRAFT:**  
- (A) ALL U.S. LSTs ABOVE 20
- (B) THE 49th LC(4) AND 15 LCT REFERRER TO IN PARA 5 OF MEDCODS 216.

**OFF SHIPS AND CRAFT**

OF SHIPS AND CRAFT SO RELEASED COMETHFILT HEREBY IS AUTHORIZED TRANSFER TO BRITISH UNDER LEND LEASE 15 LST, COMBEED S91625 COMTROLFT B91529

**RENDER AND 15 RETURN TO U.S. EARLIEST PRACTICABLE**

17 LST LC(L) AND 15 LCT. LCT'S TO BE DECKLOADED ON LCT'S WHO ARE TO CARRY THEIR ALLOWANCE OF LCVP'S PLUS MAXIMUM NUMBER ADDITICIAL LCVP'S AND LCM(3). PROPORTIONATE AMOUNT SPARE PARTS TO BE RETURNED. COMTFLN

**15 DIRECTED TO REDUCE NUMBER OF LCT'S EX 11THMIIH AUTHORIZED FOR TRANSFER TO BRITISH BY MEDCOD 202157 SEPTEMBER FROM 35 TO 25 AND TO SAIL THE 15 LST'S REALIZED FROM THIS REDUCTION TO U.S. LST'S TO CARRY LCT'S IF AVAILABLE OTHERWISE EXCESS LCVP'S PLUS PROPORTIONATE SPARE PARTS.

**CCS MINGH**  
**COPIES 1 TO 8 INCLUSIVE.**

**SCR PASSED TO NCR FOR FURTHER DISTRIBUTION TO:**

- GCS(#9)......VCHD(#10)......OP-85(#11)......12(#12)......12ME(#13)......19(#14)......19(#15)......20(#16)......20(#17)......20(#18)......26(#19)......39(#20)......51(#21)......60(#22)......65(#23)......65(#24)......  

**No. 1 ADMIRAL**

- No. 2 FILE

**No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM**

- No. 4 SPECIAL

**DECLASSIFIED**

E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4  
NLR 101  
By RT, NARA, Date  

**OFRAY 19-78**
DISPATCH

FROM: COMHIGH AND CHO
RELEASED BY: ADRIAL E J KING
DATE: 9 DECEMBER 1944
TO: CODENO: C9126
DECORATED BY: MONROE
PARAPHRASED BY: LICKEL
ROUTED BY: MONROE

CON 8TH FLEET

ON RECEIPT OF YOUR MESSAGE RE: US LST'S (OIC 34) TRANSFER TO THE BRITISH, THIS TRANSFER CAN BE EFFECTED IMMEDIATELY.

WITH REFERENCE TO STATEMENT IN YOUR OIC 34, "POSITION OF CINCHED AND SACKED IS THAT WITHDRAWAL OF RESOURCES THOUGHT TO BE AVAILABLE DURING PROGRESS OF WAR OPERATION IS UNFORTUNATE", THE "WAR" REFERRED TO DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE A WAR IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS PARTICIPATING.

UNLOADING OF U.S. LST'S NOW IN PROGRESS CAN BE COMPLETED.

LST'S LOADING ARE NOT TO MOVE FORWARD TO GREEK PORTS UNDER U.S. FLAG.

DECLASIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4
NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date: 28 MAY 1973
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**DISPATCH**

**FROM**: COMINCH & CNO

**RELEASED BY**: ADM E J KING

**DATE**: 8 DECEMBER 1944

**CIND 6TH FLEET**

**TO**: CODEWORD:

**DECODED BY**: [Illegible]

**PARAPHRASED BY**: HOFNER

**CHECKED BY**: [Illegible]

**DISTRIBUTED BY**: HOFNER

**INFORMATION**

**DECLASSIFIED**

**E. O. 12356, Sec. 3(E) and 3(D) or (D)**

**OSD LETTER, MAY 28, 1973**

**By**: RHP, NARA

**SUPERSEDED BY**: [Illegible]

**TOP SECRET**

**DECLASSIFIED**

**E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4**

**NLR 101**

**By**: RT, NARA, Date: 4/1/74
FROM COM 6TH FLEET ACTION COMINCH.

THIS IS TOPSECRET.

IN VIEW GREEK SITUATION AND REPORTED ATTITUDE STATE DEPARTMENT.

ATTENTION INVITED FACT US LST'S CURRENTLY EMPLOYED FERRYING TROOPS AND MATERIAL TARANTO TO PIRAEUS. MY TS 6348, 073922, 071344, 1001632, ALL NOVEMBER REFER.

DECLASSIFIED
R.O. 11688, Sec. 3(D) and 3(D) or (D)
OSD letter, May 2, 1972
By RHP, NARA Date May 28, 1973

ACTION:F-30
(TOSERECFT FROM COMNAVEU AND COM 12TH FLEET WHO ASKED PD NEW YORK NOT AN ADEE TO DELIVER ACTION TO COMMODORE FLANIGAN. CNO ALSO HAS ACTION.)

FOR COMMODORE FLANIGAN.

YOUR LETTER OF THE 28TH FORECASTED RECEIPT BY US FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF A DESPATCH DIRECTING THAT THE TOTAL LST WE TURN OVER TO THE BRITISH WILL NUMBER 25 INSTEAD OF 35 AS ORIGINALLY ORDERED. WE HAVE ALREADY TURNED OVER 23 TO THE BRITISH. 4 ARE ENROUTE TO BASE 2 TO BE TURNED OVER ABOUT 11 DECEMBER, AND 8 MORE ARE ABOUT TO DEPART SOUTH COAST FOR BASE 2. IF WE ARE TO TURN OVER ONLY 25 REQUEST IMMEDIATE NOTIFICATION TO THAT EFFECT OTHERWISE WE SHALL PROCEED AS ORIGINALLY DIRECTED AND SEND THE CREWS OF THESE 35 LST HOME.
OCS has directed SACRED to release following landing ships and craft:

(A) All U.S. LOT above 20

(B) The 40 LCIs(L) and 15 LOT referred to in PARA 5 OF MCDOS 210 X

OF SHIPS AND CRAFT so RELEASED CAN REFILL HERSELF AS AUTHORIZED TRANSFER TO BRITISH UNDER LEASE 30 LOT X CIRCUM 091830 COMETIVFLFT 062530 REFER X

AND IS DIRECTED RETURN TO U.S. EARLIEST PRACTICAL 17 LOT 40 LCIS(L) AND 15 LOT X LOT'S TO BE DELOADED ON LOT'S WHO ARE TO CARRY THEIR ALLOWANCE OF LCP'S PLUS MAXIMUM NUMBER ADDITIONAL LCP'S AND LCM(3)X PROPORTIONATE AMOUNT SPARE PARTS

TO BE RETURNED X COMETIVFLFT IS DIRECTED TO REDUCE NUMBER OF LOT'S EX 11THFTR AUTHORIZED FOR TRANSFER TO BRITISH BY MIDIS 06257 SEPTEMBER FROM 35 TO 25 AND TO SAIL THE 10 LOT'S REALIZED FROM THIS REDUCTION TO U.S. X LOT'S TO CARRY LOT'S IF AVAILABLE OTHERWISE EXCESS LCP'S PLUS PROPORTIONATE SPARE PARTS

OCS....VOCO....SP-05....12....12...19....19C....20L....20....23....23....28....39....DUPERS....1OGUD....BUSHELS....BUSANIA

OCT 19-70

DECLASSIFIED
E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4
NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date 2/3/94
From: A. F. H. Q.
To: War Department
Nr: FX 56326 22 November 1944

To Chiefs of Staff, repeated: J. S. M. Washington
for U. S. Chiefs of Staff from A.F.H.Q. signed Wilson.
Mag srl nbr 56326. This is MEDCOS 210.

1. Since the dispatch of MEDCOS 205 there have been
certain developments which radically affect the proposed course
of action set forth in paragraph 3 of that telegram. These
are:

(A) The main weight of the Russian effort in
southeast Europe has gone in even further north than expected
and the Partisans having received little support from the
Russians have made but slow progress westwards.

(B) Largely as a result of (A) it now appears
that the Germans may be able to extricate from Yugoslavia the
equivalent in personnel of some 12 Divisions. While these
troops will initially be disorganized and largely without
major equipment it seems certain that the enemy's line joining
his Italian and Hungarian fronts will, by the time we should be
in a position to attack it, be substantially stronger than
had formerly been appreciated. In particular, he will un-
doubtedly be able materially to reinforce the Istrian Penin-
sula and the projected operation against Fiume is likely to
From: A. F. H. Q.
Nr: FX 56326
22 November 1944

prove more formidable undertaking than I originally expected.

(c) The decision to continue intensive operations by SHAPE throughout the winter calls for the exercise also of continuous pressure on Kesselring if this theater is to do its utmost to contain the maximum enemy forces away from the Western Front at this decisive time.

(d) The critical artillery ammunition situation to which I referred in Para 1 (c) of MEDCOS 205 will last for a longer period than had previously been expected and this combined with the consideration under (c) above will materially restrict offensive potentialities in this theater next spring.

2. I am convinced therefore that the proper course under my present directive is to concentrate my resources primarily on the Battle in Italy. The following considerations support this conclusion:

(A) From the administrative point of view it is possible to develop a weightier thrust more rapidly in Italy than across the Adriatic, since the L of C is now well developed behind AAL, but would require to be developed almost from scratch on the Dalmatian coast.
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(B) The grouping of the German forces in this theater, disposed as they are on interior lines, coupled with the lack of sufficient ammunition to undertake a prolonged offensive at intense rates of fire, rules out the possibility of simultaneous major operations on both sides of the Adriatic with any good prospect of success. These are also precluded by the time factor and the necessity for sustained pressure on Kesselring in conformity with SHAPE's operations.

3. Accordingly, I propose to direct General Alexander, after the capture of Bologna, to exploit to the limit of his resources with the object of destroying or containing the maximum enemy forces in Italy. I would point out, however, that initial failure to capture Bologna will necessitate a pause. If during this pause the enemy starts to withdraw I will of course resume the offensive to the maximum extent possible to prevent the dispatch of Divisions to other theaters. At the same time I propose to contain the maximum number of German formations in northwest Yugoslavia by creating threat across the Adriatic:

(A) By providing supporting arms to build up the strength of the Partisans in that area.

(B) By affording the Partisans the maximum air support, and

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By Authority of SM.M-22-7

CM-IN-22685 (23 Nov 44) By RAY Date 5-28-72

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NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date 4/13/94

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(c) By deception methods. To effect these objects I propose to establish across the Adriatic an air base for the operation of Fighter Bomber Squadrons, together with such light forces, artillery, armor and administrative resources as can be spared without serious prejudice to the continuance of the campaign in Italy. This will have the added advantage of facilitating the transfer of forces across the Adriatic, should this course later commend itself.

4. The abandonment of the pincer movement suggested in Para. 2 of MEDCOSS 205 will, in view of the terrain considerations referred to in that paragraph, render the effective destruction of Kesselring's force difficult, particularly if he starts his withdrawal in good time. To confine major operations to Italy does, however, make it possible to attack Kesselring in the greatest strength at the most suitable moment in conformity with operations in other theaters. This appears to me the only course which offers reasonable prospects of preventing Kesselring from withdrawing formations to reinforce other fronts.

5. On the other hand, by the end of this year the enemy will be faced with the necessity of holding a very long front, from the high Tatra to the Po or the Adige, which...
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MOST IMMEDIATE

From: A. F. H. Q.
Nr: FX 56326 22 November 1944

he will in any event be severely stretched to hold in the face of the greatly superior strength of the Russian and Allied forces opposing him. The possibility that Trans-Adriatic operations may later be desirable to exploit a weakness in this line cannot therefore be ruled out. The rapid transfer of Divisions across the Adriatic will require the provision of the assault shipping indicated in Para 6 of MEDOSS 205. I recognize, however, that there may be other urgent demands on the United States assault shipping at present in this theater. If it is considered undesirable that I should retain my present assault resources against what at this stage can only be regarded as a contingency, I would urge:

(A) That equivalent British amphibious resources may be made available to me in good time if trans-Adriatic operations later become desirable.

(B) That I be permitted in any event to retain in the theater sufficient amphibious lift to enable me to continue landing forces to support the Yugoslav Partisans, to enable IFA to undertake harassing operations in the northern Adriatic, and to launch minor operations in the Aegan. In addition, it may well be desirable to make an end run on a brigade group scale in support of AAIs operations.

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By Authority of SM 52-71

CM-IN-22885 (23 Nov 44)

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E. O. 12356, Sec. 3.3 or Sec. 3.4
NLR 101
By RT, NARA, Date 4/1/74
From: A. F. H. Q.  

Number: FX 56326  
22 November 1944

While I should much prefer to retain my present assault resources which give me an important degree of flexibility, if my allocation is to be restricted to the requirements stated in Para (B) above, I estimate that I could release landing ships and craft to the order of 20 LST, 40 LCI and 15 LCT. These numbers are in addition to the landing ships and craft already offered for release in MEDCOS 205, some of which have already been withdrawn.

6. I therefore suggest:

(A) That the proposals outlined in Para 3 above be approved as a basis for action subsequent to the December offensive.

(B) That the amphibious resources asked for in Para 6 of MEDCOS 205 be allowed to remain under my control until it becomes clear that trans-Adriatic operations will in no circumstances be called for.

Distribution:

Restricted

FOOTNOTE: MEDCOS 205 in CH-IN-24865 (26 Oct 44) CO/S
ACTION: CO/S
INFO: Adm Leahy; Gen Arnold; OPD; Gen Bissell; Adm King;
C of S

CH-IN-22885 (23 Nov 44) 2215Z ekk

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