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REMARKS FROM COVER SHEET OF 896-CAGWU TS#67570 copy 3 of 3

OD/CO to PL/PM

- (1) Please give us your recommendations for correction of deficiencies in training that are apparent upon reading this debriefing report.
- (2) Some of the more outstanding deficiencies noted are as follows:
 - a. Improper briefing as evidenced by the lack of knowlege of mission and terrain.
 - b. Lack of aggressiveness.
 - c. Failure to use predesignated alternate assembly points.
 - d. Lack of basic collection of information training.

(Initialed)
OD/CO

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE/METHOD/EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

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SECURITY INFORMATION

896-CAGWU

13 November 1951

SUBJECT: Exfiltration, Three Members Chestnut Team

TO: Chief, ZACactus
Washington, D.C.

INFO: Chief, ZACactus

Attn: []

Attn: []

1. Forwarded herewith is [] de-briefing report of the three men who were separated from their Chestnut companions and who escaped to LCFlake via TPRoach on 30 October.

2. Bedause little time was spent within HTFlowerland little intelligence resulted. The only encounter th~~is~~ group had with a possibly friendly native was fruitless and serves mainly to emphasize the growing fear of Murat reprisals.

[]

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1 Enclosure (as stated above)

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MEMORANDUM

13 november 1951

Subject: De-Briefing of Exfiltrates of Chestnut Team

To :

From :

[] }
[] }

[12 '55

The five men of the Chestnut team were dropped October 15, 1951 shortly after midnight on Mt Grab (hill 1275). This was approximately 3 kilometers away from their scheduled DZ. The terrain was mountainous and wooded with no reasonably safe landing zone. The leader, Sal Kepi, hesitated before jumping after realizing this was not the scheduled drop zone but when asked by number 2 man why he was delaying his jump he responded by immediately jumping. (See attachment to 842-CAGWU - believe dispatcher was referring to Chestnut rather than Walnut). The team landed on the side of a mountain, the top of which was covered with snow. Sal Kepi sprained both heels; Mitar Hagjija landed in a tree. The other three men landed without casualties. The bundles landed about 1/4 of a mile away, several of which dropped on trees. The latter were left where they had dropped. It took the men approximately two hours to assemble. After assembling, the leader, who was the only member of the team familiar with the drop area, told his men that he was not altogether familiar with this present location. He had remembered, however, flying past the field which he believed to have been the scheduled DZ.

The team walked in single file, headed by Sulejman Elezi, who took over the lead because of the foot injuries suffered by Kepi. The latter was immediately behind Elezi. At 6 a.m. October 15, while still walking in single file, the team was fired upon by the Communists. The last three men in the line (Simon Duka, Mitar Hagjifa and Ilias Jonus) were the three who managed to exfiltrate. The exact number of attacking Communists was not known. The attackers were dressed in both civilian and army clothing. There was no consistency of dress. Although the exfiltrates stated these attackers numbered over 50 it is believed that this is an exaggeration. The battle lasted until 4 p.m. October 15, when the exfiltrates managed to escape the area. It was believed that one of the Communists was wounded. Duka's clothing was hit by a bullet but there was no body injuries. It was at this point that the three men who managed to escape lost all contact with the other two men. What happened to them was not known. The three stranded men began their trek toward the border. It is to be noted that their leader, who was lost to them, was the only one who knew the area. As a result, they were only able to relate a rough account of their escape route. After walking two hours they heard mortar fire coming from the area behind them. After another hour of walking they came upon a large tent with a water bag hanging nearby. They believed this to be an Army tent but no soldiers were seen in the immediate vicinity.

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On October 67570-A

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On October 16 they went to a small isolated house in order to ask for food. A woman came to the door but refused to give them any help. She told them that although she was not a Communist she and her family would be in danger so long as the three men remained. She asked them to leave. (They only managed to rescue a little food from their bundles, and this had been eaten). The woman refused to take any gold or dollars, and gave no assistance.

On October 18, while only 1 kilometer from the border, they came across two sleeping soldiers. Because they did not know how far from the border they were, they proceeded quietly. A short time prior to this the men waded across a small river (name unknown). Here, Ilias Jonus lost his HTNeigh card and forged identification papers as well as his gold pieces. Duka and Hagfifa managed to save their papers although Hagfifa's papers were slightly damaged by water.

They crossed the border into Yugoslavia about three days after making their landing in Albania. The men were unable to pinpoint the border crossing but stated it was a short distance north of Bllate. There was no difficulty in crossing the border. The only soldiers seen were the two found sleeping about 1 kilometer from the Yugo-Albanian border.

During the three[?](4) day trip to the border the exfiltrees travelled chiefly at night, keeping away from all towns and villages. The only Flower spoken was to the woman who refused them food. No military installations were seen other than the army tent previously mentioned. Several times they came across telephone wires - usually one or two lines - but no attempt was made to cut them.

The group then walked for three days to Bista, Yugoslavia. They came upon a shepherd who gave them food for which he was paid ten dollars. It was not known when the shepherd was first met that he was a Yugoslav soldier. (It appears that each TPROach brigade has its own flock and shepherd). This shepherd was a member of the Second Brigade. He asked no questions and demanded the stragglers not ask any. No names were exchanged. The men then headed south toward Garon, Yugoslavia. They arrived after one day of travelling. There they received excellent treatment from the people. The team first told the TPROachers that they were on patrol but, noting that this was not believed, and after being asked whether they were fighting for Free Albania or Free Kossova, they told their benefactors (who spoke Albanian) that they were fighting for Free Albania. No mention was made of their sponsors. The Albanian speaking Yugos told the three men that their newspapers gave a great deal of attention to teams being dropped into Albania. Mention was made of Greek-Italian teams especially. The team was able to purchase food (9 loaves of bread) shoes (saddles) for 20 gold pieces. Although no known legal gold exchange existed, gold coins were readily accepted

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in the black market. After three days in Garon the men hired a guide who took them as far as Presba. This trip took approximately 6 days. The guide refused to take them any further and was dismissed after being paid 10 gold pieces.

They continued their trip to the Greek border and made their crossing on October 30 near Kastrikan, Greece. The crossing occurred without incident. They immediately gave themselves up to the Greek authorities, using the code password. An attempt was made by the Greeks to interrogate the men (through an Albanian interpreter) but the attempt stopped when Liman Duka, the spokesman refused to answer anything.

Attached: Overlay exfiltration route to TProach

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