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SECURITY INFORMATION

DISPATCH NO. (PGA-A-5416)

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CLASSIFICATION

Kapok-617

*Added for R.D.
Nov. 20, 52*

DATE 23 November 1951

TO : Chief, FDP

FROM []

DOCUMENT MICROFILM SERVICE

JAN 5
1960

SUBJECT: GENERAL- Operational
SPECIFIC- THUNDERCLAP Operational Report

REFS: ATHE-7845; ATHE-7766; PGA-A-5037(KAPOK-532);
ATHE-6731

1. Attached herewith is a detailed report on subject operation prepared by []

2. Due to the extreme nervousness admitted by T/5 at the time of the jump, it is possible that T/5 did not receive a slap on his shoulder(jump signal) prior to his exit from the plane, although T/5 insists that he was slapped by the dispatcher.

3. The change of the assembly plans by T/1 during the journey to their Drop Zone is difficult to understand as the group was given nighttime assembly problems in their training which they not only accepted with enthusiasm, but were able to perform in good order. It was this last minute change in assembly procedure that caused T/5 to think he was willfully abandoned by the group. Actually the bodies were so separated in their drop(Athe 6851) that their assembly training would not do them much good since it was based on voice signals. The same assembly tactics have worked efficiently with other groups wherever the bodies landed within hearing distance of each other. T/1 and the rest of the group were repeatedly told the importance of establishing W/T communications with us as soon as possible and it is highly doubtful that they would have even flirted with the idea of abandoning T/5, especially since they had to depend on T/5 for supply support from us. T/1, 2 and 3 knew their operational area thoroughly; consequently, they over zealously believed they could find T/5 no matter how they dropped. This is a common error in judgment that groups are usually guilty of, and consequently, great stress was laid on the assembly training to assure the group that a prepared assembly plan is far better than trying to find each other through chance.

4. The three rifle shots heard by T/5 may possibly have been pistol shots which were to be used by the group to assemble in case of utmost emergency. This is only an assumption since no other firing was heard.

5. It should be noted that T/5 had several skirmishes with Yugoslav patrols in which he killed several Yugoslav soldiers and in one case a civilian informer.

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FORM NO. 51-28
MAR 1949

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*Lab #59-138/1
Folder #1*

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28 Nov 51

23 November 1951

SUBJECT: Thunderclap Operational Report

The Yugoslav authorities no doubt thought that T/5 was a bona fide Albanian agent penetrating Yugoslavia on an operational mission. T/5's action in Yugoslavia shows his tremendous hatred for the Tito regime and may have some bearing on his information concerning Yugoslavia. Due to T/5's action in Yugoslavia, it is felt that T/5 should not be sent on an operation which would place him near the Yugoslav border, as his capture by the Yugoslavs would bring out the true story of his last escapade.

6. In view of what happened in T/5's case in Yugoslavia, it would be interesting to sound out the UDB on the possibilities of such incidents occurring unless some prearranged passwords and agreements are adhered to. This is merely a suggestion and by no means does it imply that we inform UDB of the above T/5 action, nor does it propose to blow our operational interests to the Yugoslavs.

7. The information brought out by T/5 has been passed locally to ZACACTUS only.

8. Some of the villages that T/5 visited are not listed in our gazetteer and since most of the time he was not sure where he was, he was unable to pinpoint them for us.

9. At present T/5 is quite a bit calmer and it is expected that he will return to normalcy within a short time.

RPB/gam
1 Atchmt -Thunderclap/5

Distribution:
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EX A-1
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THUNDERCLAP/5

1. On 16 August 1951, THUNDERCLAP departed from Athens on board the Covert Craft. T/5 does not remember many details concerning the plane trip to the Drop Zone but he has reported several incidents which throw some light on the disorganized jump (FGA-A-5037). T/5 stated that he had become dizzy and somewhat nervous soon after the door was removed. T/5's nervousness was caused not only by his looking through the open door, but also as a result of his seeing several tracers fired at the Covert Craft.¹
2. Enroute to the DZ, T/1 made two important changes in the instructions given the team by [] a) Contrary to instructions, T/1 advised T/3 and 5 to remain where they landed after the parachute jump and that he (T/1) would seek them; b) T/1 discarded the rendezvous area which THUNDERCLAP had agreed to use in the event they were unable to locate each other on the DZ.
3. In connection with the first change in instructions, THUNDERCLAP had been trained in the field to assemble toward T/1. Oral signals were to be employed by all the team members with T/1's signal being different from that used by the other three team members.
4. T/5 reports that T/1's substitution for the rendezvous area only provided for T/1, 2 and 3. In the event that the team members did not assemble at the DZ, T/1 instructed T/2 and 3 to locate him through friends whom they knew in the area. T/5, however, was not included in this plan, especially since he was not familiar with the area.²
5. When he was instructed by the jump master, T/5 placed himself at the jump position by the door of the plane. T/5 asked the jump master if it was time to leave the plane, and was told to wait until he was slapped on the shoulder. T/5 reports that he became more dizzy while standing at the door, and he forced himself not to look down. T/5 does not recall hearing a bell signal in the plane, nor anything concerning the static lines (FGA-A-5037, para 10), but he remembered T/2 being 4-5 feet behind him and he could not understand why T/2 was not close behind him. Further questioning revealed that T/5 knew why the bell signal is used during parachute jumps.
6. While standing at the No. 1 jump position, T/5 stated that he felt a slap on his shoulder and immediately left the plane. He waited for his chute to open, released his leg bag without difficulty, and prepared to hit the ground. T/5 reports that he was shaken up considerably when he hit the ground, which was inclined approximately 20-30 degrees. His chute enveloped him and he rolled in the direction of the decline. His leg bag was approximately six feet away from where he landed.

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THUNDERCLAP/5

7. Approximately ten minutes after he landed, T/5 heard three scattered rifle shots. He tied his folded chute to the leg bag, strapped the leg bag to his back, and climbed approximately 50 meters to higher ground. He hid his chute in some bushes on this higher level and waited until 0300 hours. He called out with his voice signal several times, and could not understand why T/1 did not come to him.
8. At 0315, T/5 headed downward in what he believed to be a southeast direction. Approximately one hour's walking distance from the DZ, he hid his W/T equipment. T/5 reports that he destroyed the W/t generator because he felt that the hiding place was not secure, and he was unable to continue carrying the heavy leg bag while seeking a more secure hiding place. Except for the W/T equipment, T/5 placed the contents of the leg bag into his rucksack and continued walking southwest until 0600.
9. T/5 was not familiar with this area and as a result he does not know where he went. He estimates that he stayed within five to ten kilometers from the DZ for approximately eight or nine days. T/5 reports that he made no attempt to search for the other three team members because the area in which he thought they might be located would leave him exposed to view from higher ground. (The possible location of the other three team members was along the path of the plane on the drop night). While in this general area, T/5 destroyed his signal plan and backup plan by cutting them into small pieces and buried them in the ground along with the W/T crystals.
10. Approximately seven days after he dropped into Albania (23 August), T/5 approached an old woman outside a village (probably Fshat) and asked for food. The woman warned T/5 that a patrol of soldiers was presently in the village and that it would be dangerous for him to go to her house then. T/5 watched her as she entered the village and after dark T/5 approached the house which he had seen her enter earlier that day. The old woman gave T/5 some bread and cheese.
11. The day after T/5 had received food from the old woman, he concluded that he should return to Greece via Jugland. He started out in the direction which he believed would take him near Gostivar. On the way to the border he stopped at a shepherd's hut for food (probably 26 August). The occupants of the hut were two old men who asked T/5 if he were Liman PEPOSI.³ T/5 answered at first that he was PEPOSI, but when it became evident that the old man knew he was not PEPOSI, T/5 told them that he was one of PEPOSI's men. The old men stated they had not heard of PEPOSI for a long time and wondered what became of him.

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12. Two days before T/5 crossed the Albania-Yugoslav border, he encountered at approximately 1700 hours three patrols heading in his direction. One patrol of two men was on T/5's level while the other patrols were on higher ground to his right and left. T/5 reports that he was unable to turn back, so he waited until the patrol on his level was ten meters away and opened fire with his Schmeisser. The patrol on T/5's level took cover while the two patrols on higher ground opened fire with their rifles. The patrols ceased firing when T/5 fired a burst at each of them with his Schmeisser. T/5 then headed in the direction from which the patrols had come. He reports that all members of the patrols wore uniforms similar to those worn by Greek soldiers.
13. One hour after encountering the three patrols, T/5 approached a clearing and observed four soldiers guarding a crossroad with a machine gun mounted in a strategic position. As T/5 attempted to pass to their right he was observed by other soldiers in the vicinity. T/5 was fired on by three soldiers; two were armed with German rifles and one had a Schmeisser. T/5 was wounded in the left thigh during this encounter. The bullet appears to have passed completely thru his thigh close to the skin surface. Shortly after the firing began, T/5 managed to enter a wooded area and escaped from the patrol.
14. On 30 August, T/5 crossed into Yugoslavia and met an old man in the prohibited area along the border. The old man told T/5 that Gostivar was six hours walking distance away to the southeast. T/5 headed southeast and south for the next three days. On the first day he was fired on by a patrol which was out of range. The second and third days he observed two or three patrols consisting of civilians and uniformed personnel. At this point, T/5 had no food and he feared that the wound in his thigh would not heal. Instead of continuing toward Greece, he decided to head for his village in Gilan, Kosovo, where he was certain that he would receive food and shelter. The decision to go to Kosovo resulted from his believing that he would encounter less difficulty in that direction. T/5 headed north toward Skoplje. Before reaching Skoplje he stopped at a house for food and noticed that the calendar date was 5 September.
15. On 6 September (?) T/5 stumbled on Yugoslav soldiers on maneuvers at an unknown location. He estimated their number to be about two hundred. T/5 was observed by some of the soldiers and they challenged him in Serbian and in Albanian. T/5 reports that the soldiers probably did not have live ammunition in their weapons because they did not open fire for at least 15 minutes. A group of five to eight soldiers finally opened fire on T/5. A bullet struck his Schmeisser and knocked it out of his hands and another bullet glanced off his chest barely touching his skin. T/5 states that the bullet which struck his Schmeisser bent the barrel. He fired with his pistol several times and withdrew with the soldiers following. When the soldiers approached close to him, T/5 hurled a hand grenade at them. Some of the soldiers were wounded by the grenade and all the soldiers stopped following. When T/5 had

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proceeded some distance away, he was fired on with mortars. One of the mortar bursts ripped the right heel of his shoe and flesh-wounded him in the heel. The wound did not prevent him from walking rapidly and he entered a small village about 15 minutes away. T/5 stole a horse in this village and rode off as rapidly as possible. Approximately one hour's distance from the village, T/5 met an old man. He took the old man's shoes, cigarettes and tobacco and gave him one gold napoleon. T/5 reports that he was observed by three armed men on horseback approximately two hours later. They fired at him and chased him for approximately 15 minutes. The following day T/5 left the horse where he found another with a saddle and continued on horseback until he reached the vicinity of Frizar (sic). He continued on foot toward Pleshin(sic) where he was fired on by two soldiers out of range and later by three soldiers within range. The latter three ran off when T/5 returned the fire with his pistol. T/5 continued on, passed Varosh, Mal i Sejeves, Mal i Smires and arrived in his village of Kabash approximately 11 September.

16. T/5 entered the village of Kabash at approximately 2100 hours and went directly to the house of Xhemal Azizi. T/5 chose Azizi's house because he knew that AZIZI never kept dogs around the house, and also because AZIZI had given shelter to members of his family in the past. AZIZI'S wife was somewhat fearful of sheltering T/5, but AZIZI told T/5 he could remain there as long as necessary. In order that AZIZI'S children should not learn of T/5's presence, the latter stayed in a stable during the day and went into AZIZI'S house only after the children had gone to sleep.
17. Approximately five days after he had been in Kabash, T/5 told AZIZI to bring Jani SELMANI with whom T/5 had left a revolver and ammunition for safe keeping while on a previous mission. SELMANI had the revolver with him when he visited T/5, and he had kept it in good condition. T/5 told SELMANI to keep the revolver in his possession and asked for 9 mm ammunition for his pistol. SELMANI, along with AZIZI, procured some 9 mm ammunition as well as some civilian clothing and medicine for T/5.
18. A few days following SELMANI'S visit, T/5 told SELMANI to bring his brother-in-law, Rexhep TERPEZE, who is the Krietari Komunes(Chief of the Commune) in Terpeze or in Pozhren. TERPEZE informed T/5 that the Albanians in Kosovo are anti-Tito and strongly desire unification with Albania. TERPEZE stated that the Kosovars are willing to unite with Albania even under the present Hoxha regime, but not because they are pro-Hoxha. The Kosovars contend that if they were joined to Albania, they would be able to take an active role against the Hoxha regime. TERPEZE also informed T/5 that the Kosovars are confused over the present United States-Yugoslav relations. They cannot understand why the United States is aiding Tito who claims to be a true Communist. The Kosovars have seen many American products, but these are still sold through the cooperatives. TERPEZE stated that only a small percentage of American products are sold on the open market, and this takes place mostly in the large cities where Americans are present.

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19. TERPEZE informed T/5 that teams escaping to Yugoslavia from Albania are put to work on road repair gangs. In some cases, part of a team is sent back to Albania on a mission for the Yugoslavs and the remaining members of the team are kept as hostages. TERPEZE stated that an unidentified British team had escaped to Yugoslavia from Albania. The British team had been told by the British to escape to Yugoslavia if necessary and that the British would secure their release. After being put to work with a road repair crew, some members of the British team escaped back to Albania in an effort to return to Greece.
20. T/5 learned from TERPEZE that the Yugoslavs have an Albanian refugee camp in Vuciturna. The Albanian refugees, however, are divided into two categories: one category includes those who are put to work for the Yugoslavs; the second category includes those who are given food, shelter, and clothing without having to work. TERPEZE did not know why the Yugoslavs divided the Albanian refugees into these two categories.
21. TERPEZE told T/5 that there were some resistance activity in the Jakova and Regove areas, but he did not know any particulars concerning these resistance groups. TERPEZE did state, however, that Hasan ALIA from Remnik has been sought by the government forces since 1944. ALIA had taken refuge in the mountains since 1944, and he may be active with the above mentioned resistance groups.
22. While T/5 was in Kabash, his sister, Fatime LESICE, came to the village. T/5's sister was living with her father-in-law, Hysen LESICE, in Lesice. The sister was in Kabash three days before T/5 consented to informing her that he was present. The sister gave the following story as to why she had come to Kabash. Her father-in-law, LESICE, was approached by a well-dressed stranger in Shkup. The stranger said that LESICE'S friends sent their regards and if LESICE wrote to them he should send them the stranger's regards. The stranger walked away when LESICE said he did not know him. When Fatime LESICE learned of the incident, she thought it had some connection with her brother (T/5 and THROWOFF/6) and decided to go to Kabash⁴.
23. T/5 was also visited by his aunt who is the widow of Hasan KABASHI⁵. The aunt informed T/5 that the KABASH family had received T/5's letter in May 1951. The letter had no stamp on it, and it was postmarked Gilan⁶. The aunt also informed T/5 that the brother of Hajredin VUCITURNA visited her on 23 May 1951. The brother was surprised to learn that the THROWOFF members had already departed for Greece. The brother told the aunt that VUCITURNA had not been contacted by THROWOFF/3 as had been planned⁷. T/5 reports that VUCITURNA is hiding in Rohavec.

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24. On 24 September T/5 departed for Greece. He passed in the vicinity of Mal i Nderglaves and continued near Lepence. On 27 September(?), T/5 met three civilians near Skoplje. One of the three civilians was wearing a star badge on his lapel which, according to T/5, indicates that the person is a Communist Party member. T/5 greeted the three civilians, passed on a short distance, and then circled back within hearing distance of the three civilians. When T/5 overheard the civilian with the star badge telling the other two to go to a nearby village and inform the troops of T/5's presence in the area, he approached them with his pistol drawn. T/5 ordered the star-badged civilian to go along with him, and sent the other two civilians off. In a wooded area a short distance away, T/5 shot and killed the civilian he had taken with him. T/5 reports that he took the dead person's identity card, but destroyed it by burning the following day.
25. T/5 continued heading south and southwest. He entered several houses during the night to steal food and several times he found abandoned shepherds' huts where he slept during the day. At an unidentified time and place, T/5 ran into a six-man uniformed patrol. T/5 fired with his pistol, but the patrol did not return the fire. T/5 reports that snow began falling at 0900 on an unknown date and the snow was two to three feet deep by nightfall.
26. At an unknown location in the Macedonia area, T/5 was challenged by a soldier who was at a post outside a small village. This incident occurred at approximately 0100 hours. T/5 tried to convince the soldier that he was a local shepherd and that he was returning to his home. On the command of the soldier, T/5 advanced toward him with his hands in the air. At the same time, however, T/5 had his pistol in his hand. When T/5 advanced within reach of the soldier's rifle he grabbed the rifle and at the same time shot the soldier three times with his pistol.
27. T/5 reports that he crossed into Albania by mistake a few days following the incident mentioned in para. 26. He states that he entered Albania somewhere near Pogradec. T/5 was not aware of his mistake until he overheard a three-man patrol speaking in Albanian. - According to T/5, each member of the patrol wore a uniform and each had a red star on his cap.
28. On 18 September (?), T/5 crossed the Albania-Greece border. Even this time he did not realize he had crossed the border until he was informed of such by an old man. T/5 met no other Greeks until the following day when he discovered some Greek soldiers in a deserted village. The soldiers were surprised when they discovered T/5 in their midst, but treated him well once they were convinced that he was not an enemy. The soldiers informed their post in Kastoria of T/5's presence, and that evening a Greek captain arrived and took T/5 to Kastoria.

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- 29. In Kastoria, T/5 was given a bunk in the house which served as the Greek Captain's office.⁸ T/5 met Tahir ADEMI at this house. ADEMI informed T/5 that he had been an Albanian border guard and that he had escaped to Greece several months ago. ADEMI also told T/5 that he was kept there by the Greek Captain who used him for odd chores around the house. ADEMI is anxious to be sent to a refugee camp, and he was told by the Greek Captain that soon he would be permitted to leave.
- 30. At the house mentioned in para. 28, a Greek officer offered T/5 alcoholic beverage and also questioned him. T/5 reports that he did not reveal anything to this officer. At Kastoria, however, T/5 was questioned by a Greek Major for three or four hours. T/5 stated that he told the Major many details concerning his activity in Albania and Yugoslavia.
- 31. When T/5 arrived in Kastoria, he surrendered his pistol to the Greek Captain. The pistol was returned to T/5 when he departed for Athens, but it was not the same pistol. Instead, T/5 had been given a pistol with a jammed sliding chamber. T/5 did not discover this until he was taken to Kozani from where he was to depart for Athens. T/5 gave the pistol to the Greek officer on duty at Kozani and informed the latter that he would report the incident to the Americans and Greeks in Athens.

¹ Field Comment: T/5's reporting of tracer fire appears correct according to the ZACACTUS debriefing report of the air crew. See PGA-A-5037, Atchmt A.

² Field Comment: Since T/5 was not located by T/1, he (T/5) concluded that he had been abandoned by the other three team members, especially since T/1 decided the rendezvous area and did not include T/5 in his substitute plan.

³ Field Comment: According to a memo from [] to [] dated 17 April 1951, Liman PEPOSI and Tahir VATA were recruited by ZACACTUS in the early part of April 1951. Muharrem BAJRAKTARI recommended PEPOSI and VATA.

⁴ Field Comment: The Albanian Ministry of the Interior reported that THROWOFF/6 had been killed. See [] 7766.

⁵ Field Comment: According to the June 1951 issue of ATDHEU (Fatherland), Hasan KABASHI was killed fighting the Yugoslav Communists on 15 October 1951. ATDHEU is the organ of the Legality party.

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⁶Field Comment: It appears that this is one of the four letters which were forwarded to headquarters. See PGA-A-3835 (KAPOK 410) and PGAW-2411.

⁷Field Comment: For additional information concerning Hajredin VUCITURNA see PGA-A-3109.

⁸Field Comment: It appears that Tahir ADEMI is the same person whom THROWOFF/2 and 3 met when they were in Kastoria. See PGA-A-5168(KAPOK 561).

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