

TOP SECRET

The Fuehrer and Supreme Commander
of the Armed Forces

Fuehrer's Headquarters
12 November 40
2F 408

WFSt/Abt.L(I) No 33 356/40 g.K.Chefs

Only by officer

10 copies
4th copy
55

Directive No. 18

The preparatory measures of Supreme Hq for the prosecution of the war in the near future are to be made along the following lines:-

1) Relations with France.

The aim of my policy towards France is to cooperate with this country in the most effective way for the future prosecution of the war against England. For the time being France will have the role of a "non-belligerent power", -she will have to tolerate German military measures on her territory, especially in the African colonies, and to give support, as far as possible, even by using her own means of defense. The most pressing task of the French is the defensive and offensive protection of their French possessions (West and Equatorial Africa) against England and the deGaulle movement. From this initial task France's participation in the war against England can develop fully.

For the time being, the conversations with France resulting from my meeting with Marshal Petain are being carried on - apart from the current work of the armistice commission - entirely by the foreign office (Auswaertiges Amt) in cooperation with the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (OKW).

More detailed directives will follow at the close of these talks.

2) Spain and Portugal.

Political steps to bring about an early Spanish entry into the war have been taken. The aim of German intervention in the Iberian peninsula (code name Felix) will be to drive the English out of the Western Mediterranean. For this purpose:

- a) Gibraltar will be taken and the Straits closed.
- b) The British will be prevented from gaining a foothold at another point of the Iberian peninsula, or the Atlantic Islands.

The preparation and execution of this operation is intended as follows:

Section I.

a) Reconnaissance troops (officers in civilian clothes) make the necessary preparations for the action against Gibraltar and for taking over aerodromes. As regards disguise and cooperation with the Spaniards they will comply with the security measures of the Chief of Foreign Intelligence.

b) Special units of the Foreign Intelligence Bureau are to take over the protection of the Gibraltar area, in secret cooperation with the Spaniards, against English attempts to widen the terrain in front and against premature discovery and frustration of our preparations.

c) The units intended for this operation will be kept in readiness away from the French Spanish border and information will be withheld from the troops, at this early stage. In order to start operations, a warning order will be given three weeks before the troops cross the Spanish-French border (but only after conclusion of the preparations regarding the Atlantic Islands).

With regard to the low capacity of the Spanish railways, the army will detail mainly motorized units for this operation, so that the railways are available for reinforcements.

Section II

a) Units of the Air Force, directed by observation at Algeciras, will, at a favorable moment, carry out an air attack from French soil on the units of the British fleet lying in the port of Gibraltar, and will force a landing on Spanish aerodromes after the attack.

b) Shortly after this the units intended for use in Spain will cross the Franco-Spanish frontier on land or in the air.

Section III

a) Attack for the seizure of Gibraltar by German troops.

b) Mobilization of troops to march into Portugal should the British gain a foothold there. The units intended for this will march into Spain immediately after the units intended for Gibraltar.

Section IV

Support by the Spanish in closing the Straits after the seizure of the Rock from the Spanish-Moroccan side as well, if required.

As for the strength of the units to be used for operation "Felix" the following will apply:

Army

The units intended for Gibraltar must be in sufficient strength to seize the Rock even without Spanish assistance.

Apart from this, a smaller group must be available to aid the Spaniards in the unlikely event of the British attempting to land at a different point on the coast. The units to be kept in readiness for a possible invasion of Portugal are to be predominantly of a mobile nature.

Air Force

Sufficient forces will be detailed for the air attack on Gibraltar to guarantee substantial success.

For the subsequent operations against naval objectives and for the support of the attack on the Rock mainly dive-bomber units are to be transferred to Spain.

Sufficient anti-aircraft artillery is to be supplied to the army units, and is also to be used to engage ground targets.

Navy

Provision is to be made for U-boats to attack the British-Gibraltar Squadron, particularly when they leave harbor, which they are expected to do after the air raid.

To support the Spaniards in the closing of the Straits, preparations are to be made in cooperation with the army for the transfer of single coastal batteries.

An Italian participation is not envisaged.

As a result of operation "Gibraltar", the Atlantic Islands (in particular the Canaries and Cape Verde Islands) will gain increased importance for the British conduct of the war at sea, as well as for our own. The commanders in chief of the Navy and Air Force are examining how the Spanish defense of the Canaries can be supported and how the Cape Verde Islands can be occupied.

I also request that the question of an occupation of Madeira and the Azores be examined and also the advantages and disadvantages that would arise from this for the conduct of the war at sea and in the air. The results of this examination are to be given to me as soon as possible.

3) Italian Offensive against Egypt.

If at all, the use of German forces only comes into consideration after the Italians have reached Morsa Metruh. Even then the use of German air forces will be considered mainly if the Italians put at our disposal the air bases necessary for this.

The preparations of the branches of the armed forces for use in this or any other North African theatre of war are to be carried on as follows:-

Army

Holding an armored division ready for use in North Africa (composition as previously provided for).

Navy

Fitting out of such German ships lying in Italian ports as are suitable as transports for the transfer of the strongest possible forces either to Libya or to North West Africa.

Air Force

Preparations for attacks on Alexandria and the Suez Canal, so as to deny the British Command the use of the latter.

4) Balkans.

The commanders-in-chief of the Army will make preparations for occupying the Greek mainland north of the Aegean Sea in case of need, entering through Bulgaria, and thus make possible the use of German air force units against targets in the Eastern Mediterranean, in particular against those English air bases which are threatening the Roumanian oil area.

In order to be able to face all eventualities and to keep Turkey in check, the use of an army group of an approximate strength of ten divisions is to be the basis for the planning and the calculations of deployment. It will not be possible to count on the railway, leading through Yugoslavia, for moving these forces into position.

So as to shorten the time needed for the deployment, preparations will be made for an early increase in the German Army mission in Roumania, the extent of which must be submitted to me.

The Commander-in-chief of the Air Force will make preparations for the use of German Air Force units in the South East Balkans and for aerial reconnaissance on the southern border of Bulgaria, in accordance with the intended ground operations.

The German Air Force mission in Roumania will be increased to the extent proposed to me.

Bulgarian requests to equip their army (supply of weapons, ammunition) are to be given favorable treatment.

5) Russia

Political discussions have been initiated with the aim of clarifying Russia's attitude for the time being. Irrespective of the results of those discussions, all preparations for the East which have already been verbally ordered will be continued.

Instructions on this will follow, as soon as the general outline of the army's operational plans has been submitted to, and approved by, me.

6) Landing in England

Due to a change in the general situation it may yet be possible or necessary to start operation "Seelöwe" in the spring of 1941. The three services of the armed forces must therefore earnestly endeavor to improve conditions for such an operation in every respect.

7) I shall expect the commanders-in-chief to express their opinions of the measures anticipated in this directive. I shall then give orders regarding the methods of execution and synchronization of the individual actions. In order to assure secrecy, only a restricted staff will work on these plans. This applies particularly to the operations in Spain and for the plans concerning the Atlantic Isles.

signed: ADOLF HITLER

initialled: Jodl

Distribution:

Ob.d.H (Op. Abt.) 1st Copy
Ob.d.M (I.Skl.) 2nd Copy
Ob.d.L. (LwFüSt.Ia) 3rd Copy

O.K.W.:

SFSt, 4th Copy
Abt. L. 5th - 10th Copy

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION
OF DOCUMENT NO 444-PS

15 October 1945

I, FRED NIEBERGALL, 2nd Lt Inf, O-1335567, hereby certify that I am thoroughly conversant with the English and German languages; and that the above is a true and correct translation of Document 444-PS.

FRED NIEBERGALL
2nd Lt Inf
O-1335567