

OPERATION VALUABLE

1. Foreign Office sanction for the above operation was given on the understanding that the first phase would consist of reconnaissance parties, which would go in immediately and whose reports would form the basis of a re-assessment, leading to a further decision as to the next phase.
2. Since then our friends have joined forces with the Americans, who take a somewhat wider view of the scope of the undertaking. At this point we have agreed to join the Americans in unofficial encouragement of the formation of an Albanian National Committee, to be created in Europe and later based on New York, in conjunction with other emigré committees, liaising through the National Freedom Council. While negotiating with the members of this Committee, and recruiting agents, it has become clear that the Albanians will be seriously discouraged, if we plan further operational phases without making provision for an external stiffening element against the eventuality of a reverse.
3. This consideration is welcomed by the Americans as it fits in with their concept. They are, therefore, willing to adopt it as an operational project and to supply the main effort required to put it into effect. The main aspects of this effort are: the establishment of a base, the recruitment and training of Albanians, the collection of equipment, the supply and re-supply to Albania and finally the disposal of personnel. This final aspect in particular the Americans have agreed to underwrite.
4. The immediate difficulty confronting the Americans is the establishment of an appropriate base. For various security reasons, they and we, are unwilling that Malta should be used. After a joint reconnaissance of the Eastern Mediterranean, it has been agreed by both parties, in conjunction with local military authorities, that there is only one suitable site - the remote and deserted air-strip Luiga di Savoia at Cyrene in Cyrenaica. Accordingly the Americans have asked ^{us} to attempt to obtain the necessary clearance from the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office is requested:-
 - (a) To give their concurrence to the establishment of the proposed base.
 - (b) To request the local authorities to give appropriate support.
5. Our friends fully endorse the American application, both as a general measure of the reverse lend-lease type and also as a means of cementing our close collaboration in this joint effort.

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6. If this clearance is granted, the question of the degree of our participation arises. Presumably we may take for granted those measures in which we have a clear advantage (such as training and the local availability of certain stores surplus to requirements) which are indispensable to the cover of the base (such as the supply of administrative staff.) But it is further suggested that we should enter into the project as full partners from the start, always reserving the right to contract out if the reconnaissance does not seem, in our judgement, to support a further phase, or if operational conditions make success too hazardous. ~~This would conform with previous decisions, and at the same time would provide a measure of build-up for a possible larger scale undertaking.~~

26th July, 1949.

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