

REPORT
BY
AIR VICE MARSHAL J.H. D'ALBIAC, C.B., D.S.O.,
ON
ROYAL AIR FORCE OPERATIONS IN CONJUNCTION
WITH THE ROYAL NAVY AND ARMY, IN IRAN
BETWEEN AUGUST 25TH and 31ST, 1941.

Map References :- IRAN: 1/4" - 10 B, C, E and I.
 1 G, K, O, H, L and P.
 2 I, M, F, J, N, G, K,
 O, L and P.
 8 C, G, K, D, H, L and P.
 9 A, E, I, M, B, F, J, N,
 C, G, K, O, D, H, L and
 F.
'IRAQ: 1/4" - J 38 O J 38 U.

List of Appendices :-

<u>Appendix No.</u>	<u>Title.</u>
"A"	'IRAQ Command, Royal Air Force Operation Order No. 23/1941.
"B"	Key to Operation Orders Form B.
"C"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order B.1 23/8.
"D"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order B.2 23/8.
"E"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order B.4 25/8. NOTE: This cancels Operation Order B.3.
"F"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order B.5 26/8.
"G"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order B.6 26/8.
"H"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order B.7 27/8.
"I"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order B.8 27/8.
"J"	A.H.Q. 'IRAQ Operation Order for Special Reconnaissance.
"K"	Map showing the distribution of pamphlets in IRAN.
"L"	Appreciation of the employment of the Royal Air Force by O.C., BASRAM Wing.
"M"	Royal Air Force, BASRAM Wing Headquarters Operation Order No. 1/1941. <i>Basra</i>
"N"	Royal Air Force, BASRAM Wing Headquarters Operation Order No. 3/1941.
"O"	Royal Air Force, BASRAM Wing Headquarters Operation Order No. 4/1941. NOTE: This Operation Order cancelled Operation Order No. 2/1941.
"P"	Signals report on Operations in IRAN.

BRIEF RESUME OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE OUT-BREAK OF HOSTILITIES AND THE OBJECT OF THE OPERATIONS.

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1. For some considerable time H.B.M.'s Government had viewed with growing concern the infiltration and activities of GERMAN agents into IRAN which, despite requested requests and warnings to the IRANIAN Government, had increased rather than decreased in the past few weeks.
 2. Recent exchanges of diplomatic notes between the two Governments had failed to improve the situation, and finally, after stern warnings by both BRITISH and RUSSIAN Governments were ignored, it was decided that certain portions of IRAN should be occupied in order to protect both BRITISH and RUSSIAN interests and to provide a L. of C. between RUSSIA and the South (PERSIAN GULF).
 3. The aim of the operations, therefore, was the capture and the occupation of the oilfields in the North West (NAFT-I-SHAH district), the oilfields in KHUZISTAN with the Refinery at ABADAN, and to gain control of the Trans-IRANIAN Railway from BANDAR SHAHPUR in the South to the railhead on the CASPIAN SEA at BANDAR SHAH.

THE FORCES AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE, THE ARMY, AND THE ROYAL NAVY.

The Royal Air Force.

4. The Air Forces available were divided into two distinct Groups. The Southern Group, operated from SHAIBAH, under the Command of Group Captain D.L. THOMSON who was designated Officer Commanding, BASRAH Wing. It comprised :-

No. 261 (F.) Squadron (O.C., S/Ldr. E.M. MASON, D.F.C.).
No. 84 (B.) Squadron (O.C., S/Ldr. W.T. RUSSELL).
No. 244 (G.P.) Squadron (O.C., S/Ldr. H.V. ALLOWAY).
No. 31 (B.T.) Squadron (O.C., S/Ldr. A. BURNSIDE, D.F.C.).

The Northern Group, operating from HABBANIYA under my direct Command, comprised :-

No. 11 (B.) Squadron (O.C., W/Cdr. A.L. BOCKING, D.F.C.).
No. 14 (B.) Squadron (O.C., W/Cdr. D.C. STAPLETON, D.F.C., A.F.C.).
No. 45 (B.) Squadron (O.C., W/Cdr. J.O. WILLIS, D.F.C.).

The Army.

5. The Army, under the command of Lieutenant General W.P. MINNAN, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., the G.C.C. 'IRAQ, were also divided into two forces. The Southern Force, commanded by Major General C.O. HARVEY, C.V.O., C.B.E., M.C., consisted of the 8th Indian Division, comprising the 18th, 24th and 25th Indian Infantry Brigades with their attendant Field Regiments and Field Companies, etc. The Northern Force, commanded by Major General W.J. SLIM, M.C., consisted of the 10th Indian Division, comprising the 2nd and 9th Indian Armoured Brigade, the 21st Indian Infantry Brigade and various Field Regiments and Field Companies.

Para. 10 (Cont'd.)

LOCATION.	TROOPS.
SUSANGURD	Det. 1 Inf. Regt. Det. 2 Inf. Regt. Det. 11 Inf. Regt.
QASR	4 aircraft. 10 Arm. Cars. 70 Motor Cars. 60 Requisitioned lorries. 600 horses. 10 guns. One Regt. (30 Inf. Regt. or 45 Inf. Regt.) 6 Div.
DIZFUL	19 Inf. Regt. (6 Div.):
SHUSH	Cav. ? probably 9 Cav. Regt. (6 Div.).
30 miles W. of HAWIZEH	Dets. of troops probably remainder of 6 Div., strength 2,000?
QASBAT	One Coy. Inf. } two btys. Arty. } 6 Div. transport }
ABADAN	13 Inf. Regt. (6 Div.). One Inf. Regt. (probably 11 Regt. Gendarmerie (3 Div.).
KHURRAMSHAHR	H.Q., 6 Div.
KHOSROABAD	(One Coy. Inf. (less Det. 60 men at (MANYOHI). (One pack Bty.
Between KHURRAMSHAHR and ABADAN	Sloop FALANG, BAMR. Gunboat KARUN, SINORG, SILAHUKH.
Arriving or about to arrive in the Area	$\frac{1}{2}$ Regt. Arty. (2 Div.) 105 Skoda short.

THE GENERAL PLAN OF OPERATIONS.

11. In the South the general scheme was of rather a complicated nature involving several separate and distinct operations all synchronised to be put into effect at the same time. These were as follows :-

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-AL- (i) The capture of ABADAN Refinery by the 24th Indian Infantry Brigade which was transported down the SHATT-EL-ARAB from BASRA in H.M. Ships, M.Ls. and barges, etc., to effect a landing on the jetties and in the creeks on the water front near the refinery. H.M. Ships were to capture or sink the IRANIAN sloop at its anchorage.

(ii) The Navy were to capture or sink the IRANIAN Naval sloops and gunboats at their anchorages in the KARUN River, at their Naval base at KHURRAMSHAHR, and, with the assistance of a small detachment of Army forces, capture the Naval Station and barracks on the East bank of the KARUN at KHURRAMSHAHR.

Para. 11 (Cont'd.).

(iii) The Navy, with small detachments of Army forces, were to capture the GERMAN and ITALIAN merchantmen lying at anchor at BANDAR SHAHPUR, capture or sink the IRANIAN Naval sloop or gunboat guarding these ships and also capture and hold the Port of BANDAR SHAHPUR.

(iv) The 18th Indian Infantry Brigade was to capture KHURRAMSHAHR and the area up to the IRANIAN/IRAQ border. This involved an advance under cover of dark in M.T. making a wide detour from TANOOMAH to attack KHURRAMSHAHR from the North.

(v) The 25th Indian Infantry Brigade were to advance up the direct line from TANOOMAH to AHWAZ and capture the area QASR SHEIKH.

12. In the North the scheme was of a more simple nature and entailed the advance from KHANAQIN of the 2nd Armd. Brigade and 21st Indian Infantry Brigade to secure the oil-fields at NAFT-I-SHAH, the PAITAK Pass and the road leading to KERMANSHAH via KARIND.

THE ROLE OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE.

13. The role of the Royal Air Force in all these operations was as follows :-

- (i) Direct support of the Military and Naval operations in the ABADAN Area and at NAFT-I-SHAH.
- (ii) Strategical leaflet dropping and bombing operations against military objectives in IRAN.

See 'IRAQ Command Operation Order, No. 23/1941, dated 8th August, 1941; attached as Appendix "A".

DIARY OF EVENTS FROM FIRST LIGHT, 25TH AUGUST, 1941
(D.I.) UNTIL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES ON 28TH AUGUST, 1941.

Copies of the relevant Operation Orders are attached as Appendices).

25th August, 1941 - KHUZISTAN.

14. At first light the attack began in all sectors and from the earliest news it became evident that we were being successful everywhere.

15. The first flight of our fighter aircraft surprised three Hawker type enemy aircraft running up on the ground at AHWAZ aerodrome and successfully strafed them.

16. A flight of Blenheim bombers then attacked the hangars. They reported further aircraft seen dispersed on the aerodrome and the fighters were again despatched to deal with them, followed by a second bombing raid in which one of the two hangars was hit and set on fire. The ground strafing by the fighter aircraft had also been successful and it was thought that a considerable number of the enemy aircraft had been rendered unserviceable.

17. ~~17.~~ Meanwhile, continuous fighter patrols had been maintained over KHURRAMSHAHR, ABADAN and BANDAR SHAHPUR Areas, although the patrol over the last named discontinued after 1000 hours in order, in some small measure, to conserve our fighter strength for more pressing needs. The news that the BANDAR SHAHPUR operation had been successful and that opposition had practically ceased, allowed this decision to be taken.

18. Tactical reconnaissances had been, and were still being, carried out by the Vincents of No. 244 Squadron and proving of value to the various Brigades carrying out the operations.

19. A feature of the morning's operations was the successful landing without opposition of a Company of the BALUCH Regiment by B.T. aircraft (Valentias) of No. 31 Squadron at HAFT KEL for the purpose of providing escort and protection for the BRITISH and INDIAN women and children evacuees from MASJID-I-SULAIMAN to HAFT KEL. Arrangements had been made with the Staff of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company to indicate whether it would be safe for the B.T. aircraft to land by displaying large white "X X" on the landing ground and this was done. The B.T. aircraft were escorted from SHAIBAH on the outward and return journeys by two long range Hurricanes and were routed well to the S.E. of the one place where hostile aircraft were likely to be encountered, i.e. AHWAZ.

20. It is regretted to have to record that two of the Valentias overshot and were damaged on landing at HAFT KEL, and having since been written off after salvage of all useful parts. There were no personnel casualties. The remaining four Valentias with their Hurricane escort arrived safely back at SHAIBAH at approximately 1030 hours.

21. Meanwhile, on the ground, the operations had been progressing very satisfactorily. Opposition from the forces at KHURRAMSHAHR on the West bank of the KARUN had been overcome. The Wireless Station and the Customs Post at PUL-I-NAU were in our hands and, although KHURRAMSHAHR had not been occupied, our Armoured Cars had entered the town and returned to report all quiet.

22. On the East bank of the KARUN, one IRANIAN Naval sloop had been sunk alongside its jetty and the two gunboats and the rest of the Naval craft had been captured and the barracks, etc., occupied by our troops.

23. At ABADAN, after stiff fighting in opposition to our landing, the enemy had been driven off the waterfront and through the residential area towards BAMASHIR, and although resistance was still encountered from the direction of the barracks to the East of the refinery, the position was considered satisfactory.

24. BANDAR SHAHPUR was completely in our hands, the gunboat had been sunk and considerable damage had been sustained by the GERMAN and ITALIAN ships through sabotage before our forces could prevent this action. Everything, however, was being done to salvage as much as possible.

25. The 25th Brigade had encountered and overcome the little resistance offered at QASR SHEIKH and were bivouacked for the night to resume their advance towards AHWAZ the following day.

26. Advanced Divisional Headquarters with the Force Commander left BASRAH at 1130 hours and was established in KHURRAMSHAHR by 1630 hours. *Basra*

NAFT-I-SHAH and the PAITAK PASS.

27. In the NAFT-I-SHAH Area the Northern Column reached the area 3 miles East of SARIPUL, whilst the Southern Column occupied GILAN in the face of some opposition and shelling by the enemy.

26th August, 1941 - KHUZISTAN.

28. The operations at BANDAR SHAHPUR, so far as the Royal Air Force was concerned, could be considered as completed.

29. The 24th Brigade continued its mopping up operations and finally secured the whole of ABADAN Island.

30. The 18th and 25th Brigades consolidated their positions and made some small advance up the West bank of the KARUN. They crossed the river and secured the A.I.O.C. Pumping Station at DORQUAIN.

31. Air activity was confined to the following tasks :-

(i) A standing fighter patrol over AHWAZ to deal with any activity on the part of the IRANIAN Air Force or re-inforcements which might arrive from the North.

(ii) A standing fighter patrol over ABADAN Refinery for the protection of the refinery against possible bombing attack.

(iii) Tactical reconnaissance by Vincent aircraft over ABADAN Island covering the 24th Brigade mopping up operations.

(iv) Tactical reconnaissance by Vincent aircraft over the advance being made towards AHWAZ by the 25th Brigade.

32. By 0900 hours the situation was well in hand in all sectors and Tac/Recco. aircraft were ordered to ground and to remain on call.

33. During the morning two IRANIAN aircraft, believed to be Audax, took off from AHWAZ aerodrome. Squadron Leader MASON, on patrol with his Hurricane, shot one of these aircraft down to force land 5 miles S.E. of AHWAZ, the other aircraft regained the aerodrome and made no further attempt to fly. This was the only occasion in the South in which IRANIAN aircraft took the air.

NAFT-I-SHAH and the PAITAK PASS Area.

34. There was no change in the PAITAK PASS Area but the Southern Column containing the 2nd Lmd. Brigade was advancing slowly from GILAN towards SHAHABAD.

35. At the special request of the 10th Divisional Commander, No. 45 Squadron bombed enemy gun positions in the PAITAK PASS, all bombs falling in the target area.

27th August, 1941 - KHUZISTAN.

36. There was no change in the military situation in this area, but Royal Air Force activities comprised the following tasks :-

- (i) A standing fighter patrol of one Gladiator was maintained over ABADAN Refinery.
- (ii) A Vincent, with Hurricane escort, made a reconnaissance of the HAFT-KEL and MASJID-I-SULAIMAN Areas.
- (iii) A fighter patrol was maintained over AHWAZ until weather conditions deteriorated to such an extent that all flying ceased about noon.

HAFT-I-SHAH and the PAITAK PASS Area.

37. Considerably more activity took place in the North on this day and by 1700 hours the military position was as follows :-

- (i) The Southern Column consisting of the 2nd Indian Armoured Brigade had occupied SHAHBAZ and the Imperial Agricultural Estate at ALFABAD, the IRANIAN troops (about 2,000 strong) having been driven back off the high ground East of GILAN the previous day.
- (ii) The Northern Column, the 21st Infantry Brigade, had found no opposition on the PAITAK PASS and had advanced to reach KARIND in the afternoon.

One Blenheim of No. 45 Squadron made a useful reconnaissance of the PAITAK PASS.

28th August, 1941 - KHUZISTAN.

38. The area round ABADAN, KHURRAMSHAHR and QASR SHEIKH, having been successfully cleaned up, General HARVEY laid his plans to capture AHWAZ on this day.

39. The 18th Indian Infantry Brigade advanced up the East bank of the KARUN through KUT ABDULLA Pumping Station to AHWAZ, whilst the 25th Indian Infantry Brigade advanced up the West bank to capture the barracks, aerodrome and the bridge heads over the river at AHWAZ.

40. (i) No. 84 Squadron Blenheims bombed troop concentrations and barracks at intervals of 20 minutes per flight commencing at 0530 hours. The aircraft returned to base, bombed up, refuelled and remained on call.
- (ii) No. 261 Squadron provided continuous fighter cover over AHWAZ from 0600 hours.
- (iii) No. 244 Squadron provided Tac/Recco. by Vincents over each column either side of the river.

41. At 0730 hours G.M.T. the White Flag of truce was displayed over AHWAZ and firing ceased. General HARVEY met the IRANIAN G.O.C. at 1300 L.S.T. and agreed the following terms :-

Continued/..... Page 9.

Para. 41 (Cont'd.).

- (i) IRANIAN troops confined to barracks West bank of the KARUN for 24 hours.
- (ii) All British prisoners to be released immediately.
- (iii) The British Forces to camp on the East bank of the KARUN, North of the town.

These arrangements were carried out satisfactorily and the general atmosphere in the town amongst the populace proved friendly towards the British. Divisional Headquarters were installed in the Rest House and offices of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

NAFT-I-SHAH and the PAITAK PASS Area.

42. Our troops advancing towards KERMANSHAH from SHAHABAD encountered some opposition at ZIBRI, some 25 miles out, subsequently the IRANIANS sent out a flag of truce offering to withdraw from positions covering KERMANSHAH and surrender the City. This was agreed and the City was to be handed over at 0600 hours on the 31st August, 1941.

The Commander of the 10th Indian Division visited the IRANIAN G.O.C. in KERMANSHAH during the afternoon and our forward troops halted 2 miles from the City.

43. News was received that H.I.M. the SHAH had ordered the cessation of all resistance to the BRITISH and RUSSIAN Forces entering IRAN and that further questions would now be settled by peaceful negotiations.

PAMPHLET DROPPING OPERATIONS.

44. The work of the bomber squadrons, operating from HABBANIYA, during the period under review consisted chiefly of pamphlet dropping on the Cities and chief towns in North, North West and Central IRAN, as follows :-

- (i) On the 25th ^{AUGUST} ~~September~~, Nos. 14 and 45 Squadrons dropped pamphlets on TEHERAN and KASHAN.
- (ii) On the 26th ^{AUGUST} ~~September~~, Nos. 11 and 14 Squadrons dropped pamphlets on KAZVIN, ISFAHAN and SHIRAZ.
- (iii) On the 27th ^{AUGUST} ~~September~~, Nos. 11 and 14 Squadrons dropped pamphlets on KERMANSHAH, MALAYAR, SULTANABAD, KHURRAMABAD, DIZFUL, HAMADAM, QUM and suitable smaller towns en route.
- (iv) On the 28th ^{AUGUST} ~~September~~, all three Squadrons dropped pamphlets on ZENJAN, SENNA, TAKISTAN, GULPAIGAN and DURUJIRD.

45. Details of the numbers of pamphlets dropped and objectives are contained in the map attached as Appendix "K".

PHOTOGRAPHY.

46. Some days prior to the commencement of operations in IRAN, a flight of No. 2 Photographic Reconnaissance Unit, comprising 2 Long Range Hurricanes with one Lockheed Electra for service work and personnel, and commanded by Squadron Leader MACPHAIL, arrived at HABBANIYA to photograph possible strategic bombing targets in IRAN. This was successfully achieved and if strategic bombing had been ordered, the results obtained would have proved of considerable value.

47. Advantage was also taken of the presence of this Flight to obtain certain photographs of important areas required by the Royal Navy and Army in connection with the operations. It was stated that these photographs proved of the greatest assistance.

THE
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

GENERAL REMARKS.ROLE OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE.

48. Although the campaign was of brief duration the part played by the Royal Air Force in these operations was manifold and included the following :-

- (i) Fighter support against potential air attack.
- (ii) Tactical reconnaissance in support of ground forces.
- (iii) Air transport of troops.
- (iv) Strategical reconnaissance and photography.
- (v) Leaflet dropping.
- (vi) Bombing in close support of ground forces.
- (vii) Area bombing ahead of advancing troops.

49. In addition the Royal Air Force were ordered to be prepared for strategical bombing of military objectives in IRAN if the necessity arose.

50. With the exception of strategical bombing these tasks were successfully achieved and there is no doubt that each, in its own way, was of valuable assistance to the Naval and Military operations.

51. In the earlier planning stages of the operations conversations took place between the Services and, as a result, it was considered advisable to place certain limitations on the method of employment of the Air Forces concerned. For example, in the Southern Sector, as no trained Army co-operation or close support squadrons existed in this Command and neither the fighter nor bomber personnel involved had the training necessary to recognise our own troops or to deal with the various signs and symbols employed in close support of the Army, I considered it advisable that bombing should be confined to definite and recognisable objectives and that ground strafing should be restricted entirely to enemy occupied aerodromes.

52. Discussion also took place with regard to the employment of bomber transport aircraft and in view of the great shortage of this type and their vulnerability to even the lightest form of enemy attack I was forced to the conclusion that their employment should be limited to the transport of troops to aerodromes known to be held by our own forces. The only exception which I made in adopting this policy was agreement to provide bomber transport aircraft for the transport of troops to HAFT KEL to protect BRITISH women and children evacuees as I felt that the end justified the means.

53. During the operations in the Northern Sector I was asked by the G.O.C., 10th Division, to carry out a bombing attack on the PAITAK PASS. I agreed, with some reluctance, for not only had visual and photographic reconnaissance shown that this Pass, and the valley in the rear of it, were lightly held, but also I was asked to deliver the attack some 36 hours before the intended Army attack on the Pass. I feel that if the Pass had been strongly held it would have been better to have employed bomber forces in strength a very short time before the Army intended to attack, thus obtaining full advantage of the consequent demoralisation and disorganisation of the enemy defences.

METHOD OF CONTROL.

54. The method of control adopted during these operations was as follows. In the Southern Sector all units, consisting of fighter, bomber, reconnaissance, and bomber transport aircraft, were placed under the command of Group Captain D.L. THOMSON, who was designated Officer Commanding, BASRAH Wing, and who operated his units in close collaboration with S.N.O.P.G. and G.O.C., 8th Division, who were responsible for the operations of their respective Services. The Officer Commanding, BASRAH Wing, remained with G.O.C., 8th Division, throughout the operations and, although in the early stages this was found to be satisfactory, the move forward of the G.O.C. in the later stages made it difficult for O.C., BASRAH Wing, to exercise control over his units based back at SHAIBAH.

55. Owing to lack of sufficient staff outside Air Headquarters, the three Blenheim Squadrons employed on pamphlet dropping and bombing were controlled directly from the Operations Room, Air Headquarters. This arrangement worked satisfactorily but placed great strain on the Air Staff of Air Headquarters owing to the complete absence of proper operations room officers, trained in operations room duties. In point of fact the Officers on duty in the Operations Room were the Command Photographic Officer, the G.S.O.II, and one junior Intelligence Officer lent for the purpose.

56. The Higher Command of the operations rested with the G.O.C. IRAQ and myself. Before the operations commenced I felt that, together with the Air Staff and Signals Staff, I should move into BAGHDAD in order to be in close contact with Force Headquarters. After due consideration and in view of the fact that it was necessary for the Air Staff to control three medium bomber squadrons directly from Air Headquarters, I decided, however, that I alone would join the G.O.C. in BAGHDAD, leaving my Senior Air Staff Officer and his staff at HABBANIYA to control the operations under such orders as might be issued from time to time by telephone from BAGHDAD. This arrangement worked satisfactorily.

CO-OPERATION AND ACTIVE LIAISON BETWEEN SERVICES.

57. Throughout the period of operations the co-operation between the Navy, Army and Air Force was excellent and all Services did their best to appreciate the difficulties, capabilities and limitations of the others.

58. The actual method of liaison between the Services in the Northern and Southern Sectors was different for the following reasons :-

(i) In the Southern Sector the Air Forces were employed in close support of the Army and entirely in furtherance of the Army's aims. A fighter squadron provided cover in defence of the attacking military forces, the bomber squadron and Army co-operation squadron provided such direct support as was possible, and a reconnaissance squadron carried out its normal role.

Continued/..... Page 13.

(ii) In the Northern Sector, there were no air forces allotted specifically to the Military Commander, but arrangements were made whereby bomber support could be provided if the necessity arose. This bomber support would be made available from the three medium bomber squadrons at HABBANIYA whose main role was pamphlet dropping and, if necessary, strategical bombing of military targets in IRAN.

59. For these reasons, therefore, in the Southern Sector, as has been explained above, the O.C., BASRAH Wing, remained with the G.O.C. and was thus able at any time to appreciate the military situation. He was, however, occasionally out of touch with his own forces. In the Northern Sector, a Wing Commander, actually a member of the British Military Mission, was attached to the G.O.C., 10th Division, as his air advisor. This officer performed useful services but as there was no definite allotment of Air Forces to this force he was not in a position to commit the Royal Air Force to any particular course of action without reference to higher authority.

60. It is obvious that both methods have disadvantages. In the first instance, the Air Force Commander with the Military Commander becomes out of touch with his own forces. In the second instance, the Liaison Officer, although free to advise the Military Commander, has not the authority to demand action.

61. On the whole it is considered that in operations in direct support of the Army the Air Force Commander should, if possible, be with, or in close touch with, the Military Commander, but in this event ample and efficient communication by means of W/T. or teleprinter between the Air Force Commander and his own forces must be assured.

62. Where, however, the primary role of a striking force is strategical, and devoted to objectives which may not be directly connected with the military operations, but with a proviso that support of ground forces may be required, as was the case in the Northern Sector, it is thought that the only feasible method of liaison is to place a senior R.A.F. Liaison Officer on the staff of the Military Commander. It must be clearly understood, however, that this Liaison Officer is on the staff of the Military Commander solely to advise as to what the Air Force can or cannot do and to forward his requests to higher authority. He has no power to order air support himself.

63. The selection and appointment of suitable liaison officers is considered to be of the utmost importance. In my opinion he has two definite roles and responsibilities, both of which require seniority and experience :-

(i) He should be readily accessible to the Military Commander who should have confidence that his knowledge presents a true picture of Air Force capabilities and limitations.

(ii) He should be sufficiently able that the Air Force Commander may have confidence in his judgement and in the advice proffered to the Military Commander.

COMMUNICATIONS.

64. See "Signals Report on Operations in IRAN", attached hereto as Appendix "P".

ORGANISATION AND TRAINING.

Establishments.

65. (i) The personnel establishment for a Blenheim squadron proved inadequate, as owing to sickness all personnel were extremely overworked. If there had been any casualties due to enemy action the difficulty of running the squadrons would have been greatly increased.

(ii) If the 16 I.E. aircraft of a Blenheim squadron are required to be always available, it was considered that the present aircraft establishment of 16 I.E. and 5 I.R. aircraft was insufficient.

Equipment.

66. (i) It was found that there was an insufficiency of both Blenheim IV and Hurricane aircraft spares. In particular, there are no Blenheim IV or Hurricane air-screws, and no Hurricane tropical radiators.

(ii) The Oxygen Plant of No. 32 A.S.P. came to the Command with no transport or aircraft cylinders.

Abnormal Climate.

67. As usual in August, the temperature in 'IRAQ' was extremely high, which made the task of both air and ground crews difficult.

Failure of any particular technical equipment.

68. Many of the Blenheim aircraft were unable to fulfil their role as they could not carry out long range raids owing to excessive oil consumption. It is considered that this was due to the manner in which the engines had been operated prior to their arrival in this Command, i.e. running for long hours at a high boost pressure. This necessitated changing a large proportion of the engines.

Casualties, etc.

69. Where squadrons had to be accommodated under canvas it resulted in a fairly high incidence of sickness due mainly to sandfly fever and gastric enteritis, but the incidence was approximately normal for the season in 'IRAQ'. *enteritis*

General.

70. The maps of IRAN were found to be inaccurate, especially with regard to altitudes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HONOURS OR AWARDS.

71. In view of the limited nature of these operations, no recommendations for Honours or Awards have been forwarded.

APPRECIATION BY G.O.C. 'IRAQ.'

72. At the conclusion of the operations the following message was received from Lieutenant-General E.P. QUINAN, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., General Officer Commanding, 'IRAQ Force :-

"I wish to express to you and all ranks of the Royal Air Force who took part in these operations, my thanks for their excellent work which contributed so much to the success of the operations".

DISTRIBUTION LIST.

<u>RECIPIENT.</u>	<u>COPY NO.</u>
Headquarters, R.A.F., MIDDLE EAST	1 - 4.
G.O.C., 'IRAQ, BAGHDAD	5.
Senior Naval Officer, PERSIAN GULF	6.
British Embassy, BAGHDAD	7.
Headquarters, R.A.F., INDIA	8 - 9.
C.-in-C., INDIA	10.
Combined Intelligence Centre 'IRAQ	11.
Air Officer Commanding	12.
Air Officer i/c Administration	13.
Senior Air Staff Officer	14.
M.E.T.I.S.	15.
Operations Record Book	16 - 17.
File	18.
Spare	19.
Spare	20.
Spare	21.
Spare	22.
Spare	23.
Spare	24.

DECLASSIFIED'IRAQ COINLAND OPERATION ORDER NO. 23/1941.

Copy No. _____

Date :- 8 August, 1941.

APPENDIX "A" - Strength, types of aircraft and location of IRANIAN Air Forces.

INFORMATION.

1. There are at the present moment considerable numbers of GERMANS (Approximately 2,500) in IRAN. These men are mostly technicians and "tourists", and are highly organised as a "Fifth Column". There is no doubt that at any moment decided upon by the GERMAN Government, this Fifth Column will be used to damage by sabotage BRITISH and RUSSIAN interests in and near IRAN, and may be used to stage a coup d'etat with the object of bringing IRAN into the war actively on GERMANY's side. The main BRITISH interest in IRAN is oil.

2. In order to counter this threat, diplomatic pressure is being brought to bear by the BRITISH and RUSSIAN Governments to persuade the IRANIAN Government to expel all the GERMANS from IRAN. In the event of failure in this respect, His Majesty's Government intend to occupy the A.I.O.C. oilfields, installations and refineries in KHUZISTAN, and the small oilfield at NAFT-I-SHAH.

3. The occupation of NAFT-I-SHAH will be carried out by a small force of mechanised troops who will not be afforded air support except in emergency. The KHUZISTAN operation will be carried out as a combined operation by air, army and naval forces.

4. The role of the Royal Air Force will be to support the Army and Naval forces in the KHUZISTAN operation and to bring direct pressure to bear on the IRANIAN Government by attacking military objectives in IRAN.

INTENTION.

5. To employ all the available Air Forces in 'IRAQ in order to provide :-

(a) Direct support of the military and naval operations in KHUZISTAN, and, in emergency, of the military operation at NAFT-I-SHAH.

(b) Strategical bombing operations against military objectives in IRAN.

EXECUTION.Organisation.

6. The Air Forces available for these operations will be one fighter squadron, one medium bomber squadron, one (reduced) general purpose squadron, and a flight of heavy transport aircraft, together with three medium bomber squadrons now in course of being move to 'IRAQ.

These Air Forces will be organised as follows :-

(a) Nos. 11, 14 and 45 Squadrons (Blenheims) will be based at HABBANIYA and will operate under ~~the direct~~ orders of Air Headquarters.

(b) No. 244 Squadron will operate under command of the Military Force Commander, BASRAH Area.

(c) Nos. 84 (Blenheim), 261 (Hurricane, Gladiator) Squadrons, together with a detachment (6 transport aircraft) of No. 31 Squadron, all based at SHAIBAH, will constitute a force to be known as the BASRAH Wing.

8. The BASRAH Wing will be commanded by Group Captain D.L. THOMSON, who is to keep his Headquarters situated with that of the Military Force Commander. He is responsible for advising the military commander as to the best employment of the Units of the BASRAH Wing. Flight Lieutenant W.A. CHASE of Air Headquarters will be attached to the BASRAH Wing as Staff Officer (Operations) to Group Captain D.L. THOMSON.

Role of Units.

9. Nos. 11, 14 and 45 Squadrons will operate against objectives in the TEHERAN Area and elsewhere in IRAN as required, and may be called upon to operate in direct support of military force attacking NAFT-I-SHAH.

10. The Units of the BASRAH Wing will operate as required by and at the request of the Military Force Commander, subject to the following limitations :-

(a) No. 84 Squadron may be called upon to carry out operations (bombing or reconnaissance) in direct support of the military operations in KHUZISTAN, but may NOT be employed on strategical operations outside the area of military operations without specific authority from Air Headquarters. If this Squadron is required to undertake bombing operations in close support of our troops, the greatest care is to be taken that objectives are accurately specified and the pilots are kept fully informed as to the position of our own troops.

(b) The primary role of No. 261 Squadron is to provide fighter protection to the military and naval forces operating in KHUZISTAN. This Squadron is NOT to be used for attacks against ground objectives, except that IRANIAN aircraft on the ground may be attacked if the Military Commander agrees to the consequent reduction in the amount of direct cover afforded to his troops. The manner in which the squadron is employed is left to the discretion of O.C., BASRAH Wing, but, within Air Force limitations, should receive the approval of the Military Commander. Plans for the employment of fighters in this initial operation must take into account the absence of any adequate warning system from the ground.

(c) The aircraft of No. 31 Squadron Detachment may be used to transport troops, equipment and supplies from SHAIBAH or BASRAH to ABADAN or elsewhere as and when required by the Military Commander, who will indicate his requirements to O.C., BASRAH Wing. In no circumstances are transport aircraft to be despatched on a mission unless it is fully established that the landing ground to which they are proceeding is in our hands.

11. The role of No. 244 Squadron is to undertake tactical reconnaissance and such other Army co-operation tasks as are possible, having regard to its limitations of equipment and training, as required by the Military Force Commander.

Date of Commencement of Operations.

12. The provisional date for the commencement of operations is 12 August but it is possible that a postponement may be necessary. The date finally decided upon will be notified to all concerned by signal.

Security.

13. From the day preceding the commencement of operations, full black-out precautions, dispersal of aircraft and defence measures are to be taken at HABBANIYA, SHAIBAH and BASRAH.

ADMINISTRATION.

14. The O.C., R.A.F. Station, HABBANIYA, will be responsible for the administration of Nos. 11, 14 and 45 Squadrons and detailed instructions have already been issued.

15. The O.C., R.A.F. Station, SHAIBAH, will be responsible for the administration of Nos. 244, 261, 84 Squadrons and No. 31 Squadron Detachment and instructions have already been issued in paragraphs 9 - 14 of 'IRAQ Command Operation Order No. 22/1941, dated 2nd August, 1941.

INTER-COMMUNICATION.

16. The attention of O.C., R.A.F. Station, HABBANIYA, and the O.C., BASRAH Wing, is directed to Standing Operational Instructions, 'IRAQ Command, dated 21st July, 1941, copies of which are held by them. These instructions are to be brought to the notice of all Squadron Commanders.

17. Orders issued to Nos. 11, 14 and 45 Squadrons by this Headquarters will be issued by means of Form "B" to these Instructions. The O.C., BASRAH Wing, will issue his orders also by means of Form "B". Should it be necessary for this Headquarters to issue any bombing instructions to O.C., BASRAH Wing, Form "A" will be employed.

18. Full signals instructions are being issued separately.

Reports.

19. All operations reports rendered by squadrons are to be made in the manner prescribed in the Operational Instructions referred to above.

20. ACKNOWLEDGE.

(Sgd.) S.B. HARRIS.

Air Headquarters,
Royal Air Force in 'Iraq.

Group Captain,
Senior Air Staff Officer.

Continued..... Page 4.

DISTRIBUTION LIST.

<u>Recipient.</u>	<u>Copy No.</u>	<u>Method of Issue.</u>
O.C., No. 11 Squadron	1.	D.R.L.S.
O.C., No. 14 Squadron	2.	D.R.L.S.
O.C., No. 31 Squadron	3.	D.R.L.S.
O.C., No. 45 Squadron	4.	D.R.L.S.
O.C., No. 84 Squadron	5.	By air.
O.C. No.244 Squadron.	6.	By air.
O.C., No.261 Squadron	7.	By D.R.L.S.
O.C., HABBANIYA	8.	By D.R.L.S.
O.C., MOSUL	9.	By air.
O.C., SHAIBAH	10.	By air.
O.C., BASRAH	11.	By air.
O.C., No. 54 R.S.U.	12.	D.R.L.S.
O.C., No. 32 A.S.P.	13.	D.R.L.S.
S.A.S.O., A.H.Q.	14.	By hand.
S.E.S.O., A.H.Q.	15.	By hand.
A.O.A., A.H.Q.	16.	By hand.
S.P.S.O., A.H.Q.	17.	By hand.
Organisation, A.H.Q.	18.	By hand.
S.R.M.O., A.H.Q.	19.	By hand.
Armament, A.H.Q.	20.	By hand.
C.S.O., A.H.Q.	21.	By hand.
Gd. Accts., A.H.Q.	22.	By hand.
C.A. & A.E. A.H.Q.	23.	By hand.
C.B., A.H.Q.	24.	By hand.
C.F.O., A.H.Q.	25.	By hand.
C.I.S., A.H.Q.	26.	By hand.
C.O.C., 'IRAQ	27.	D.R.L.S.
S.N.C.P.G.	28.	By air.
G.O.C., 8 Div.	29 - 32.	By air.
Operations Record Book	33 - 34.	-
File	35.	-
Spare	36 - 38.	-

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Appendix "A" to
'I.C.O.O. No.23
of 1941.

IRANIAN AIR FORCE.

Strength.

The IRANIAN Air Force at 1.10.1940 consisted of :-

Fighters - 25. General Purpose aircraft - 100.
Training Aircraft - 75, Pilots - 300.

Types and numbers of operational aircraft.

Hurricane - 1 (u/s. indefinitely). Fury - 24.
Audax - 63. Hind - 34. Oxford - 3.

Locations as at 1.10.1940.

	<u>Fighters.</u>	<u>General Purpose.</u>
TEHERAN AREA	25	54.
AHWAZ		18.
TABRIZ		14.
MESHED		14.

Recent Additions.

- (i) Curtiss P.40 (TOMAHAWK) 9.
These are being assembled at AHWAZ and will not be in service for approximately two months.
- (ii) Rearwin Cloudstar Trainers 25.
Of these 16 are reported to be in use.

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DECLASSIFIED

To :- _____ (R) _____.

From :- Wing
Station.

- A. FORM B _____ (number).
- B. DATE.
- C. INFORMATION.
- D. INTENTION.
- E. PERIOD COVERED.
- F. FORCES TO BE EMPLOYED.
- G. OBJECTIVES AND FORCES TO BE EMPLOYED ON EACH.
- H. ALTERNATIVE OBJECTIVES.
- J. REPORTS REQUIRED.
- K. ROUTEING.
- L. ANY SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.
- M. BOMB LOAD.
- N. COMMUNICATIONS.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. TIME OF ORIGIN AND DATE.

PLACE.

Group Captain, Commanding,
Wing
Station.

DECLASSIFIED

SECRET.

To :- O.C., No. 11 Squadron) (R) {O.C., HABBANIYA.
 O.C., No. 14 Squadron) {O.C., SHAIBAH.
 O.C., No. 45 Squadron) {O.C., BASRAH) Wing. Basra

From :- Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.

- A. Form B.L.
- B. 23rd August, 1941.
- C. IRANIAN Government has failed to take steps to remove GERMANS from IRAN as demanded by BRITISH and RUSSIAN Governments. BRITISH land forces will, therefore, invade IRAN to secure the oilfields vital to our war effort. BRITISH and RUSSIAN aircraft will also drop pamphlets on selected IRANIAN towns explaining how their Government has failed to take steps to prevent GERMAN exploitation of IRAN.
- D. To drop pamphlets on TEHERAN, KASHAN, ISFAHAN, SHIRAZ.
- E. Will be notified by signal. 25/8.
- (i) 12 aircraft in two flights - 14 Squadron.
 - (ii) 12 aircraft in two flights - 45 Squadron.
 - (iii) 12 aircraft in two flights - 11 Squadron.
- (i) 12 aircraft - 14 Squadron - TEHERAN.
 - (ii) 12 aircraft - 45 Squadron - KASHAN.
 - (iii) 6 aircraft - 11 Squadron - ISFAHAN.
 - (iv) 6 aircraft - 11 Squadron - SHIRAZ.
- H. Nil.
- J. Estimate of areas where pamphlets landed. Reports of enemy aircraft and movements of ground forces. Enemy aerodromes seen, their size and whether in use.
- K. (i) Nos. 14 and 45 Squadrons direct HABBANIYA to objectives and return. Aircraft may land at SHAHRABAN, BAQUBA or BAGHDAD AIRPORT on return if short of fuel and inform Air Headquarters who will arrange for fuel to be sent.
- (ii) No. 11 Squadron HABBANIYA to SHAIBAH. Refuel.
 SHAIBAH - ISFAHAN - SHIRAZ - SHAIBAH. Refuel.
 SHAIBAH - HABBANIYA.
- L. (i) Flights may be ordered by Squadron Commanders to proceed to objectives independantly, if flying in squadron formation should be considered to involve risk of excessive fuel consumption.
- (ii) Both flights of No. 11 Squadron to fly over both objectives.
- (iii) No offensive action to be taken in any circumstances. Aircraft may only fire guns if attacked by enemy a/o.
- (iv) Pamphlets will be issued to squadrons by A.H.Q. probably p.m. 25/8.
- (v) One aircraft in each formation to carry camera and photograph objective.

Continued/..... Page 2.

- M. (i) For G (i) - 60,000 leaflets.
 (ii) For G (ii) - 25,000 leaflets.
 (iii) For G (iii) - 40,000 leaflets.
 (iv) For G (iv) - 25,000 leaflets.
- N. Wireless silence until crossing frontier on return
 journey unless forced to land on enemy territory in
 which case fact and position to be signalled in SYKO
 to A.H.Q.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. 1200/23.

(Sgd.) B.A. CASEY.

Wing Commander,
AIR STAFF.

Air Headquarters,
ABBANIYA.

DECLASSIFIED

To :- O.C., No. 14 Squadron) (R) { O.C., HABBANIYA.
 O.C., No. 14 Squadron) { O.C., SHAIBAH.
 O.C., No. 45 Squadron) { O.C., BASRAH Wing.

Baira

From :- Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.

- A. Form B.2.
- B. 23rd August, 1941.
- C. As in Form B.1, dated 23rd August, 1941.
- D. To drop pamphlets on KASVIN, QUM, KERMANSHAH and HAMADAN.
- E. 26th August, 1941.
- F. 12 aircraft - 14 Squadron.
- G. 12 aircraft - 14 Squadron - KASVIN.
- H. Nil.
- J. As in Form B.1, dated 23rd August, 1941.
- K. No. 14 Squadron to KASVIN via SENNA. Return flight direct to QAIYARA.
- L. (i) Squadron to proceed to and from objectives in squadron formation. Formation may split up on crossing frontier on return flight if necessary to conserve fuel.
 (ii) No offensive action to be taken unless further orders received from Air Headquarters.
 (iii) One aircraft in each formation to photograph each objective and each large town passed over.
- M. For G - 40,000 leaflets.
- N. As in Form B.1, dated 23rd August, 1941.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. 1900/23 L.S.T.

(Sgd.) B.A. CASEY.

Air Headquarters,
HABBANIYA.

Wing Commander,
AIR STAFF.

DECLASSIFIED

SECRET.

To :- No. 45 Squadron (R) No. 11 Squadron.
 No. 14 Squadron.
 O.C., HABBANIYA.
 O.C., SHAIBAH.
 O.C., BASRAH WING.

Basra

From :- Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.

- A. Form B.4.
- B. 25th August, 1941.
- C. Map references 1/4 inch scale 'IRAQ/IRAN Series. Sheets 2A, 2F, 2K, 2J, 2I, 2M. BRITISH ground forces will enter IRAN territory from KHANAQIN at dawn on the 25th August. By the end of that day they expect to have captured SAR-I-PUL F7984, GILAN and NAFT-I-SHAH oilfields. On the 26th August they expect to have captured KARIN G1464 and SHAHABAD also named HARUNABAD thus cutting off the PERSIAN troops in the PAITAK PASS F.9478. By 1500 hours L.S.T. on 26th August BRITISH troops will be West of a North and South line through point F.8581 (4 miles East of SAR-I-PUL) and East of a similar line through SAR-I-MIL G0569. The PAITAK PASS area between these two lines will thus be clear of BRITISH troops.
- PERSIAN troops estimated at 10,000 strong with approx. 8 A.A. guns are in positions defending the PAITAK PASS. They are well concealed.
- It is hoped that air photographs of the area will be available.
- D. (i) To bomb PERSIAN troops in the PAITAK PASS area after 1500 hours L.S.T. on 26th August.
 (ii) To drop leaflets on HAMADAN and KERMANSHAH and any other towns of importance en route.
- E. 26th August, 1941.
- F. 12 aircraft - No. 45 Squadron.
- G. (i) 12 aircraft on objectives in PAITAK PASS area. If no troops seen, area is to be bombed for moral effect.
 (ii) Same 12 aircraft to drop pamphlets on HAMADAN and KERMANSHAH.
- H. Nil.
- J. Estimation of positions where bombs and pamphlets landed. Movements and location of enemy ground forces. Enemy aircraft seen.
- K. From HABBANIYA via KHANAQIN and QASR-I-SHIRIN to PAITAK PASS, hence to HAMADAN, KHERMANSHAH, BAGHDAD and return HABBANIYA.

Continued/..... Page 2.

- L. This Form B cancels all reference to No. 45 Squadron in Form B.2 and cancels Form B.3.

Special attention to be paid to formation flying over BAGHDAD and other towns.

Method of bombing attack at discretion of Squadron Commander but crews to be amply warned not to attack any objective outside area stated.

- M. For D. (i) Load 4.
For D. (ii) 80,000 pamphlets (including 30,000 originally intended for No. 11 Squadron).
- N. Wireless silence until crossing frontier on return journey unless forced to land on enemy territory in which case fact and position to be signalled in SYKO to A.H.Q.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. 1930/25 L.S.T.

(Sgd.) S.B. HARRIS.

Air Headquarters,
HABBANIYA.

Group Captain,
AIR STAFF.

DECLASSIFIED

SECRET.

To :- No. 14 Squadron.

From :- Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.

- A. Form B.5.
- B. 26th August, 1941.
- C. As in Form B.1, dated 23rd August, 1941.
- D. To drop leaflets on HAMADAN and QUM.
- E. 27th August, 1941.
- F. 12 aircraft of 14 Squadron.
- G. 12 aircraft of 14 Squadron on HAMADAN and QUM.
- H. Nil.
- J. As in Form B.1, dated 23rd August, 1941.
- K. QAIYARA - HAMADAN - QUM and return direct.
- L. As in Form B2, dated 23rd August, 1941.
- M. 100,000 leaflets (50,000 each for HAMADAN and QUM).
- N. As in Form B.1, dated 23rd August, 1941.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. 1200/26 L.S.T.

(Sgd.) A.J.D. ROSE.

Air Headquarters,
HABANIYA.

Major, G.S.O.II,
Duty Operations Officer.

DECLASSIFIED

SECRET.

To :- No. 11 Squadron and No. 45 Squadron.
(R) R.A.F. Station, HABBANIYA.

From :- Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.

- A. Form B.6.
- B. 26th August, 1941.
- C. 1/4 inch scale 'IRAQ/IRAN' series. Sheets 2F and 2J. British ground forces are disposed as follows :- One column in area just West of PAITAK PASS, Map Ref. F.9378. A second column is advancing p.m. today on SHAHABAD (also named HARUNABAD), Map Ref. G.4346, with intention of continuing advance tomorrow to KARIND, Map. Ref. G.1464, thus cutting off PERSIAN troops in the PAITAK PASS. PERSIAN troops at 10,000 strong with 8 A.A. guns are reported in concealed positions defending the PAITAK PASS. Air photographs of the area will be available.
- D. To drop leaflets on KERMANSHAH, MALAYAR, SULTANABAD, KHURRAMABAD, and DIZFUL.
- E. 27th August, 1941.
- F. 12 aircraft of No. 11 Squadron.
- G. 12 aircraft of No. 11 Squadron to drop leaflets on objectives given in D.
- H. Nil.
- J. Estimation of positions where bombs and leaflets landed. Movements and locations of enemy ground forces. Enemy aircraft seen.
- K. HABBANIYA - BAGHDAD - KERMANSHAH - MALAYER - SULTANABAD - KHURRAMABAD - DIZFUL - BAGHDAD - HABBANIYA. *Malayar*
- L. Special attention is to be paid to formation flying over BAGHDAD and other towns.
- M. For D. 170,000 leaflets, for equal distribution over the five targets.
- N. Wireless silence until crossing the frontier on return journey unless forced to land in enemy territory, in which case fact and position to be signalled in SYKO to Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. 1930/26 L.S.T.

(Sgd.) A.J.D. ROSE Major

Air Headquarters,
HABBAANIYA, 'IRAQ.

for Group Captain,
S. A. S. O.

APPENDIX "H".

To :- No. 14 Squadron.
From :- Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.

- A. Form B.7.
- B. 27th August, 1941.
- D. To drop leaflets on TENJAW - TAKISTAK - HAMADAN - SENNA and any suitable towns en route.
Map reference of TAKISTAN is 36° 05' N., 49° 45' E.
- E. 28th August, 1941.
- F. 12 aircraft No. 14 Squadron.
- G. 12 aircraft No. 14 Squadron as in D above.
- J. As for B.1.
- K. As required.
- M. 100,000 pamphlets at discretion of Squadron Commander.
- N. As for Form B.1.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. 1845/27 L.S.T.

(Sgd.) A.J.D. ROSE Major

AIR HEADQUARTERS,
HARRAMIYA, 'IRAQ.

for Group Captain,
S. A. S. O.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED

- To :- No. 11 Squadron and No. 45 Squadron.
(R) R.A.F. Station, HABBANIYA.
- From :- Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.
- A. Form B.8.
- B. 27th August, 1941.
- C. 1/4 inch scale 'IRAQ/IRAN series Sheets 2F and 2J. PERSIAN troops estimated 10,000 strong with 8.A.A. guns reported in concealed positions holding PAITAK PASS F.9378. Own troops - Northern column in area just West of PAITAK PASS (F.9378) with forward elements along line F.9278 - F.9388. Southern column advanced from GILAN (F.8437) to SHAHABAD (HARUNABAD) G.4346, 1400 hours 26/8, with intention of continuing advance to KARIND G.1464 thus cutting off PERSIAN troops reported in PAITAK PASS. Air photographs of this area are available.
- D. (i) To drop leaflets on BURUJYED and GULPAIGAN.
(ii) To be prepared to bomb PERSIAN troops resisting our advance during daylight 28/9/41.
- E. 28th August, 1941.
- F. (i) 12 aircraft No. 45 Squadron.
(ii) 12 aircraft No. 11 Squadron.
- G. (i) 12 aircraft No. 45 Squadron to drop leaflets on objectives given in D (i).
(ii) 12 aircraft No. 11 Squadron to standby at 2 hours notice. Objectives to be issued later. Bombs at dispersal point but not loaded.
- H. Nil.
- J. Estimation of positions where bombs and leaflets landed. Movements and locations of enemy ground forces. Any aircraft seen. One aircraft in each Flight to photograph objectives.
- K. (i) No. 45 Squadron HABBANIYA - BAGHDAD - BURUJYED - GULPAIGAN - KHURRAMABAD - BAGHDAD - HABBANIYA.
(ii) No. 11 Squadron to be issued later.
- L. (i) Special attention to be paid to formation flying over BAGHDAD and other towns.
(ii) Special instructions for bombing to be issued later.
(iii) Aircraft are not to cross PERSIAN territory at height below 3,000 feet.
- M. (i) For D (i) - 40,000 leaflets for equal distribution over targets.
(ii) For D (ii) - Load 4.

- N. Wireless silence until crossing frontier on return journey unless forced to land in enemy territory, in which case fact and position to be signalled in SYKO to Air Headquarters, 'IRAQ.
- O. ACKNOWLEDGE.
- P. 1730/27 L.S.T.

(Sgd.) A.J.D. ROSE

Major

for Group Captain,
AIR STAFF.

Air Headquarters,
HABBANIYA, 'IRAQ.

APPENDIX "J".

From :- Air Headquarters,
Royal Air Force in 'IRAQ.

To :- Officer Commanding, No. 45 Squadron.
Copy to :- O.C., R.A.F. Station, HABBANIYA.
Force Headquarters, BAGHDAD.

Date :- 27th August, 1941.

Ref :- S.12800/10/Air.O.

Subject :- OPERATION ORDER FOR SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED

Map Ref.:- 1/4 inch to 1 mile 2J and 2M.

1. One Blenheim aircraft is to be detailed to carry out a special reconnaissance in the SHAHABAD - KERMANSHAH area at 06.30 hours, 28th August, 1941.

SPECIAL TARGETS.

- (a) Any enemy movements on road SHAHABAD - KERMANSHAH.
- (b) Any enemy positions on high ground on either side of main road CHAHAR - ZABAR (Map Ref. Sq. G.55).

REPORTS.

Khanakin

- (i) Message containing report is required at KHANAKIN when Divisional Headquarters Code Sign will be displayed in circle. If no sign displayed message is still to be dropped in circle.
- (ii) Verbal report to Operations Room, Air Headquarters, on completion of operation.

2. ACKNOWLEDGE.

(Sgd.) S.B. HARRIS.

G/Cpt.

T.C.O. 2100 L.S.T.

for Air Vice Marshal,
Commanding, R.A.F. in 'Iraq.

DECLASSIFIED <small>MOST SECRET</small>

THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE AIR FORCES OF THE BASRAH WING
IN EXECUTION OF THE ORDER "COUNTENANCE".

(Refer to R.A.F. 'IRAQ Command Operation' Order No. 23/1941 dated 8th August, 1941).

1. The Air Forces available for this operation consist of :-

No. 261 (F.)	Squadron	{ 13 Hurricanes, 6 Gladiators }.
No. 84 (B.)	Squadron	{ Approx. 12 Blenheim Bombers }.
No. 244 (G.P.)	Squadron	{ Section of 4/6 Vincents }.
No. 31 (B.T.)	Squadron	{ 6 Douglas / Valentia }.

2. The limits of use of this force have been laid down by the Air Officer Commanding, R.A.F., 'IRAQ, under the directive received from H.M. Government in the U.K., and in broad terms are as follows :-

- (a) The neutrality of IRAN must be respected by our aircraft until after the land forces have entered IRANIAN territory.
- (b) No offensive action may be taken until and unless armed resistance is encountered by our land forces.
- (c) If force has to be used in the occupation of the province of KHUZISTAN, then air action is to be confined strictly to attacks on the IRANIAN Air Force and its bases in the province, giving close support to our land forces and to protect them against hostile air attack.
- (d) Limitations in detail for the types of aircraft employed are as follows :-
 - (i) Fighter aircraft are to be employed solely to provide cover against enemy air attack, and to straff enemy aerodromes and landing grounds. They may not be used for close support of the land forces and low straffing of enemy positions.
 - (ii) Bombers are to be used to attack enemy positions provided that definite targets can be indicated and pin pointed, enemy aerodromes and landing grounds, and, if necessary, strategical reconnaissance in the KHUZISTAN Area.
 - (iii) The Vincent aircraft can only be used provided enemy air activity has been overcome. These aircraft are slow and cumbersome and provide a perfect target for enemy fighters. If enemy air activity is neutralised, then these aircraft will be employed on normal Army co-operation, reconnaissance, etc.
 - (iv) The Bomber/Transport aircraft will be used only to convey troops from one sector of the operations to another as required, provided that the aerodrome or landing ground to which they are proceeding is definitely in our hands.

3. In the event of opposition being encountered by our land forces on their initial entry into IRAN, the operations of the Air Force on the first day will be as follows :-

(i) Standing fighter patrols from dawn to dusk will be over KHURRAMSHAHR/ABADAN Area (first patrol) and BANDAR SHAHPUR (second patrol).

(ii) Fighters will attack the aerodromes at AHWAZ and BANDAR SHAHPUR with the object of destroying the enemy aircraft on the ground.

(iii) The bombers will standby at "Readiness" to give support as required by the land forces and/or bomb enemy aerodromes if necessary, when the reports of the fighters engaged in strafing the enemy aerodromes are received.

(iv) The Vincents will standby for reconnaissance as required.

(v) The B.T. aircraft will standby for troops movement as required.

(vi) Should it be considered that air opposition had been overcome by the first sortie of the fighters, then the Vincents would be employed on reconnaissance (a) over the column attacking AHWAZ and (b) over ABADAN/KHURRAMSHAHR Area.

(vii) A fighter patrol will standby at "Readiness" for the defence of the BASRAH Dock Area, Airport and SHALBAH Aerodromes.

4. The foregoing indicate the preliminary role of the forces and air action from thence onwards must be guided by the turn of events on the ground.

(Sgd.) D.L. THOMSON

Group Captain,
Commanding, BASRAH Wing.

Wing H. Q.

DECLASSIFIED

SECRET.

ROYAL AIR FORCE, BASRAH WING HEADQUARTERSOPERATION ORDER NO. 1/1941.(In amplification of 'IRAQ Command Operation Order No. 25/1941, dated the 8th August, 1941).

- To :- O.C., R.A.F. Station, SHAIBAH.
(R)
O.C., No. 261 (Fighter) Squadron.
O.C., No. 34 (Bomber) Squadron.
O.C., No. 244 (General Purpose) Squadron.
O.C., No. 31 (Bomber Transport) Squadron.
The Force Commander (8 Div.).
S.H.C.P.G. G.C.C., 'IRAQ.
Air Headquarters.
Operations Record Book.
Spare - 6 copies.
- From :- Officer Commanding, R.A.F. Wing, BASRAH. Basra
- A. Form B1/1941.
- B. 11th August, 1941.
- C. Refer to 'IRAQ Command Operation Order No. 23/1941, dated 8th August, 1941.
- D. (1) To destroy the IRANIAN Air Force in the KHUZISTAN Area.
(2) To protect the Army and Naval Forces from air attack during the occupation of the province of KHUZISTAN.
(3) Strategic bombing of military objectives in close support of our ground forces and the destruction of IRANIAN aerodromes and air forces on the ground.
- E. Squadrons to be at "Readiness" at first light on the day D.1, to await the execution order "Go". It is to be clearly understood that with the word "go" will be given the specific tasks to be carried out at that particular time, and these will be indicated in the following manner :-

" "GO" Tasks G.I, II, IV, VII". NO repeat NO other tasks are to be undertaken until prefixed with the word "GO".
- F. (a) No. 261 Squadron - 13 Hurricanes, 6 Gladiators.
(b) No. 34 Squadron - 12 Blenheim Bombers.
(c) No. 244 Squadron - 4/6 Vincents.
(d) No. 31 Squadron - 6 Douglas / Valentia.
- G. (i) To maintain a standing fighter patrol of 4 Hurricanes over ABADAN and KHURRAMSHAHR.
(ii) To maintain a standing fighter patrol of 2 Hurricanes alternating with 3 Gladiators over BANDAR SHAHPUR.
(iii) To attack with 2 Hurricanes, aerodromes and landing grounds likely to be occupied by the enemy, i.e. DORQUAIN, KUT ABDULLAH, AHWAZ and BANDAR MASHUR.
NOTE: DORQUAIN and KUT ABDULLAH are A.I.O.C. L.Gs. which might possibly be used by the IRANIANS.
(iv) To have standing-by at SHAIBAH, 1 Gladiator at "Readiness" and 2 "Available" to provide a measure of defence for the BASRAH Dock Area, Airport and SHAIBAH Aerodrome. Basra
(v) One flight of 3 Blenheims to destroy the enemy aerodrome at AHWAZ and any enemy aircraft found dispersed thereon.

- (vi) One flight of 3 Blenheims to attack the Naval Barracks at KHURRAMSHAHR and the Military Barracks at ABADAN.
- (vii) One flight of 3 Blenheims to gun positions at KHOSROWABAD.
- (viii) All available Vincents to stand-by for reconnaissance over the AHWAZ Column and over ABADAN and KHURRAM-SHAHR.
- (ix) Six B.T. aircraft to stand-by on call for any troop carrying as required by the Army.

H. Only as specifically called for.

J. Assessment of damage done and reports of enemy aircraft or movement of ground forces, location of gun positions etc.

K. As per standing instructions for BASRAH Airport and SHAIBAH.

- L. (i) The A.I.O.C. have 3 D.H. 86 (Rapides) which normally are at ABADAN. These aircraft are not repeat not to be attacked either in the air or on the ground under any circumstances.
- (ii) In view of the fact that, in some cases, the maps in use by all arms of the forces may not be the same reference and scale, indications of target may be given by using the "Clock" code and the name of the place, i.e. a gun position 4 miles south of ABADAN would be shown as "Gun 4 miles ABADAN 6 o'clock".

- M. (i) For G (v) - Load 3.
- (ii) For G (vi) - Load 4.
- (iii) For G (vii) - Load 4.

N. As per signals instructions attached.

O. Acknowledge.

P. T.O.O. 0800 hours G.M.T.

NOTE: The date of D.1 will be notified later.

(Sgd.) D.L. THOMSON.

Group Captain,
Commanding, BASRAH Wing.

Wing H.Q.

SIGNALS INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPERATION ORDER NO. 1.

1. Personnel.

- (a) Advanced Unit (261 Squadron).
1 Sgt., 1 Cpl., 4 A.C. W/T. Operators.
- (b) Base Unit (261 Squadron).
1 Sgt., 3 W/T. Operators.
- (c) R.A.F. W/T. Lorry (to accompany 8 Div. H.Q.).
2 Cpl. W/T. Operators.
- (d) Battery Ground Sets (receiver only).
2 A.C. W/T. Operators in readiness to proceed from
SHAIBAH in transport to be supplied by the Army and
to accompany H.Q. 25th Brigade.

2. Equipment and Location.

(a) No. 261 Squadron Advanced Unit.

One R/T. Pack Set	}	At present embarked H.M.S. SEA BELLE.
One W/T. Pack Set, and Receiver R.1084.		
Two Charging Sets.		

(b) No. 261 Squadron Base Unit.

One W/T. Pack Set.	}	Situated Dispersal Point, R.A.F. Station, SHAIBAH.
One Charging Set.		

(c) R.A.F. Lorry.

One W/T. Pack Set.	}	In readiness at R.A.F. Station, BASRAH.
One Charging Set.		

3. Intention.

- (a) Advanced Unit will communicate with fighter aircraft by R/T., and with Base Unit by W/T.
- (b) SHAIBAH Main Station will keep watch on these frequencies to act as link, if necessary.
- (c) R.A.F. W/T. Lorry will communicate with SHAIBAH as detailed by Officer Commanding, Wing Headquarters.
- (d) Battery Ground Set Operators will receive their instructions from Brigade Commanders.
- (e) SHAIBAH Main Station will effect communication with all W/T. aircraft operating from BASE.
- (f) SHAIBAH Main Station will maintain watch with H.M.S. SEA BELLE.

4. Codes.

- (i) Transposition Code Key words for the month of August have been issued to 2 (a), 2 (b) and 2 (c) above.
- (ii) Transposition and a pre-arranged system of aircraft code words will be used by No. 261 Squadron Advanced Unit and No. 261 Squadron Base Unit W/T. Pack Sets.

5. Call Signs and Frequencies.

6GY	HOFMA	W/T. 4860 Kcs.	261 Sqn. Base Unit Dispersal Area.
Q9T		W/T. 4860 Kcs.	261 Sqn. Advanced Unit.
-	HILLY	R/T. 5350 Kcs.	261 Sqn. Advanced Unit.
-	TOPIC	R/T. 5350 Kcs.	261 Sqn. aircraft.
DK7		W/T. 4860 Kcs.	W/T. Pack Set fitted in lorry. (Officer Commanding, Wing H.Q.).
C7T		W/T. 4290 Kcs.	SHAIBAH Bomber aircraft operational frequency.
GES7		W/T. 6500 Kcs.	SHAIBAH aircraft non-operational frequency (also D/F. Ground Station).
6KM		W/T. 4300 Kcs.	SHAIBAH with H.M.S. SEA BELLE.
MD6		V/T. 4930) Kcs. 4800)	244 Sqn. ARTY/R. Operational aircraft frequencies.
MD6		V/T. 4700) Kcs. 4420)	244 Sqn. TAC/R. Operational aircraft frequencies.

15th August 1941.

DECLASSIFIED

MOST SECRET.

ROYAL AIR FORCE WING HEADQUARTERS, BASRAH, Basra
OPERATION ORDER NO. 3/1941.

- To :- O.C., R.A.F. Station, SHAIBAH.
O.C., No. 31 Squadron Detachment.
O.C., No. 261 Squadron.
Force Commander, No. 8th Division.
- A. Form B.3, 1941.
- B. 21st August, 1941.
- C. British Indian Women and Children are being evacuated from the scattered areas around M.I.S. to a concentrated area in HAFT KEL. To cover this evacuation, troops will be landed as below.
- D. It is the intention of the Force Commander to land troops on the HAFT KEL aerodrome for the purpose of escorting evacuees British and Indian Women and Children from M.I.S. to HAFT KEL. Transport for these troops is being arranged by the Field Management of the A.I.O.C. Limited. These troops will then protect the occupied area in HAFT KEL until relieved by ground forces.
- E. From first light on the day D until completion of the operation
- F. (i) All available Valentia aircraft of No. 31 (B.T.) Squadron Detachment.
(ii) Two Long Range Hurricanes of No. 261 (F.) Squadron.
- G. Nil.
- H. Nil.
- J. As called for.
- K. Direct route SHAIBAH - HAFT KEL, but skirting the town of ANWAZ via minimum of 20 miles to the South East.
- L. The emplaning of the troops at SHAIBAH will be arranged between O.C., R.A.F., SHAIBAH, and the O.C., the Troops concerned (Baluch Regiment). Aircraft will leave the ground at a time suitable to allow the landing to be effected at HAFT KEL at 0700 hours. The fighter escort, which is to accompany and protect the Bomber Transports, will not land at HAFT KEL during the period that the Bomber Transport aircraft are on the ground. On the completion of the deplaning of the troops, the Bomber Transport aircraft will immediately return to base, again accompanied by the fighters, using the same route as for the outward journey. Prior to the landing of the Bomber Transport aircraft at HAFT KEL, the fighter escort will investigate the aerodrome and its vicinity to ensure that no opposition is likely to be encountered. The Bomber Transport aircraft will not attempt to land until they have received the appropriate signal from the Leader of the Fighters to say that the aerodrome is clear. If it is discovered that opposition will be encountered whilst effecting landing, the echelon is to return to Base immediately.

Signals between Fighter and Bomber Transport aircraft are to be arranged mutually between the leaders of the two flights.

- M. Nil.
- N. Wireless silence is to be observed except in emergency.
- O. Acknowledge.
- P. T.O.O. 1100 G.M.T. 21/8/41.

(Sgd.) D.L. THOMSON

Group Captain, Commanding,
Wing Headquarters, BASRAH.

Wing Headquarters.

DECLASSIFIED

MOST SECRET.

ROYAL AIR FORCE WING HEADQUARTERS, BASRAH
OPERATION ORDER NO. 4/1941.

Basra

To :- O.C., R.A.F., SHAIBAH.
O.C., No. 244 Squadron.
Force Commander, 8 Division.

Cancel Operation Order No. 2 and substitute Operation Order No. 4/1941.

- A. Form B.4.
- B. 21.8.41.
- C. 25th Inf. Bde. is proceeding from TANNOOMAH to QASR SHEIKH (H. 39 G & M. D. 1, 8), during the night of D minus 1/D. 1 to engage enemy troops reported to be in that area.
- D. To carry out a reconnaissance over the area in the vicinity of QASR SHEIKH. Observe ground signals and if necessary summon one flight of No. 84 (B) Squadron from SHAIBAH to give support to our troops by bombing.
- E. From 1st light.
- F. One Vincent aircraft of No. 244 Squadron.
- G. Nil.
- H. Nil.
- J. Usual Recco. Report.
- K. Direct.
- L. Nil.
- M. Nil.
- N. Nil.
- O. Acknowledge.
- F. T.C.O. 1100 G.M.T.

(3gd.) D.L. THOMSON.

Wing Headquarters.

Group Captain, Commanding,
Wing Headquarters, BASRAH.

APPENDIX "P".

SIGNALS REPORT ON OPERATIONS IN IRAN.

The following are brief comments on R.A.F. communications during the recent operations in IRAN which, however, were of such short duration that very little can be said.

1. W/T. POINT TO POINT COMMUNICATION.

- (a) Normal R.A.F. W/T. point to point communications functioned satisfactorily.
- (b) The ^{operational} special W/T. point to point channel operated by No. 261 Squadron functioned very satisfactorily and was, in fact, used for other purposes and by other services for clearing traffic.
- (c) The two W/T. tenders allotted for use with R.A.F. Liaison Officers with the Army functioned satisfactorily from a wireless point of view but from a mobile point of view were seriously handicapped owing to the greater speed of the army vehicles with which they travelled. This resulted in a certain amount of delay in clearing signals as the wireless tender was frequently left behind in the earlier stages. However, this stresses the point that arrangements for the provision of wireless stations, either mobile or immobile, for R.A.F. on army purposes, must be made well before they are required as signals arrangements have to fit in with an organisation which cannot be prepared at a moment's notice (as occurred in this case) and produce the best results.

2. AIRCRAFT W/T. COMMUNICATION.

Limited use was made of this by bomber aircraft and results obtained were unsatisfactory. However, this can be attributed to inexperience in operators which at the moment is a common cause of aircraft W/T. failures throughout the R.A.F. An intensive training scheme for aircraft W/T. operators and all signals personnel is about to be commenced in this Command.

3. AIRCRAFT R/T. COMMUNICATION.

Only one fighter squadron was involved but results obtained were very satisfactory. In one particular instance a range (ground to air only) of 250 miles was obtained between a M.P. ground station and a Hurricane fitted with a T.R.9 D. A fairly constant range of 70 - 80 miles two-way R/T. was also obtained using T.R.9 D. (crystal controlled), pilot using an E.M. microphone.

4. LANDLINE COMMUNICATION.

No remarks, as there were no landlines of importance all R.A.F. landline requirements are at the moment in course of being installed.

5. GENERAL.

A gross misuse of priority on signals occurred during these short operations both by the Army and the R.A.F. The highest priority, that of "MOST IMMEDIATE", the use of which cannot be delegated, was used many times where it should not have been used. The matter has been taken up separately with departments concerned.

(Sgd.) J. THOMPSON.

Squadron Leader,
Chief Signals Officer.

5th September, 1941.