

## **THE DISASTROUS OPERATION “APHRODITE” THAT KILLED JFK’S BROTHER**

### **THE STRATEGY CREATED BY THE AMERICANS TO SPEED UP THE ALLIED VICTORY IN WW2**

**498**



**THOUGH NOT PROVEN OR CONFIRMED – THIS IS SAID TO BE KENNEDY’S PLANE  
TAKEN FROM A COMPANION PLANE**

After the Normandy Invasion, the US troops encountered a secret network of German bunkers in the French region, these bunkers were built specifically as last-stand points in case an invasion such as Normandy would ever take place. This network of bunkers has been built-in good geographical strategic points that were easy to defend and permitted the placement of anti-aircraft guns. At the same time, the bunkers have been heavily reinforced in case the Allies tried to bomb them.

This means that to destroy them by air, which would seem most effective, they would need to get close enough to accurately drop heavy bombs that could destroy the network of bunkers. In theory, it sounds easy, but because of the anti-aircraft guns that have been set in place, it was nearly impossible. The high-altitude bombing was simply too inaccurate for this specific target. Therefore the US Air Force came up with a very simple yet what seemed (in theory) effective solution.

**The idea was to fill up a bomber with as much munition as possible and crash it into the bunkers.**

The pilots were meant to arm the explosives whilst above the English channel (before entering France) and bail out to land in the sea where they would be picked up by search parties. The bomber was full of explosives that would be controlled via a radio control system and crash the bomber directly onto the target producing a massive detonation big enough to make the reinforced bunker crumble.

During the short period of training for this operation, new information came from the Western front stating that some of the bunkers housed V2 rockets that were ready to be fired. This made the mission so much more important and despite some bodies within the US Air Force saying this is a very bad idea the mission was a go. At the start of August, multiple bombers were transported to England where they would be able to launch the operation.

Once the bombers reached England they were loaded with Torpex, a British High explosive 50% more powerful than TNT. Two P-38 Lightning fighters have been instructed to escort the bombers to a certain checkpoint where they would have to return home.

Operation Aphrodite ran for 14 missions where only 1 was kind of a success as it only caused damage to the bunker but hasn’t destroyed it. The rest haven’t even managed to hit their target due to the inaccurate radio control.

#### **A MISSION TO BE REMEMBERED**

On the other hand, one of the missions caused casualties even before reaching the target.

On the 12th of August 1944, the 7th mission was planned who had assigned by two famous pilots, Lieutenant Wilford John Willy, and Joseph Patrick “Joe” Kennedy Junior.

One of the pilots was, in fact, future President John Kennedy’s older brother. The pilots were given a BQ-8 bomber (a converted B-24 Liberator) full of explosives. The explosives were armed by the pull of a single pin.

What is more interesting is that on that same mission, the escort received some reinforcements in the form of a British Mosquito piloted by Colonel Elliott Roosevelt, son of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. On the mission, there would be also a B-24 Liberator which would control the BQ-8 to the target after the two pilots bailed out.

As the planes approached France Kennedy received the order from his Lieutenant to arm the explosives by pulling the safety pin. Once the safety pin was pulled, Kennedy sent the code “Spade Flush” to the other bomber letting them know that the explosive had been armed and their task is complete. ***Sadly, these would be the last words of Joseph P. Kennedy Jr.***

After a few moments, the plane exploded with the two pilots on board. Historians speculate that it may have been turbulence that shacked the plane and detonated the explosives.



*Last-known photograph of Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., taken before he boarded a modified Consolidated B-24 Liberator in August 1944*

Despite the death of such a high-profile pilot, many more missions were flown before Operations Aphrodite and Anvil were shut down. On January 27, 1945, Gen. Carl Spaatz sent a dispatch to Doolittle, saying, “Aphrodite babies must not be launched against the enemy until further orders.”

**Those further orders were never given.**

Between August 1944 and January 1945, more Allied crews were killed than enemy combatants, and more damage was done in the UK than anywhere they targeted. Numerous flaws with the aircraft modifications essentially led to the failures. That isn’t to say, however, that Aphrodite’s targets were never destroyed. Many were taken out by the bunker-buster bombs created by the British.



*Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., U.S. Navy (1942)  
2 years before his death*



**DISCLAIMER**

**PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT EVEN THOUGH THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM  
WHAT APPEARS TO BE AUTHENTIC WEBSITES I CAN NOT ENSURE THAT ALL THE DATA  
IN THIS ARTICLE IS ACCURATE AND CORRECT.**