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GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 4096)

Citation of Unit 1

SECTION I – CITATION OF UNIT

Under the provision of Circular No 433, War Department, 1943, and circular No 89, Headquarters NATOUSA, 10 July 1944, the following unit is cited for out-standing performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy:

464th BOMBARDMENT GROUP. For outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. On 7 July 1944, the Group was notified to prepare maximum aircraft to lead a Wing formation on a mission to attack and destroy the Florisdorf Oil Refinery and Marshalling Yards at Vienna, Austria. A successful completion of this mission would seriously reduce the production of vital oil products vitally needed to supplement the dwindling oil supply of the Axis and would interdict the important rail traffic to the Southern and Eastern Fronts. With the strategic importance of this mission clearly in mind, the ground crew, enthusiastically and sedulously, applied their greatest efforts so that all aircraft maintenance would be at peak efficiency and every available plane ready to participate. Operations and intelligence personnel, untiringly devoted their coordinated efforts to ensure that all combat crews participating would be prepared with exact and complete information necessary for the mission's successful accomplishment. On 8 July 1944, twenty-seven (27) B-24 type aircraft loaded with maximum bomb tonnage, took off, and successfully rendezvoused with other units participating in this operation, and, after assuming the lead of the Wing, set course for the objective. On the approach to and over the target, extremely intense, accurate and heavy enemy anti-aircraft fire was encountered, together with determined attacks from approximately sixty (60) highly aggressive enemy fighters, which made violent efforts to defend these vital installations under attack. Despite continued heavy enemy opposition, displaying outstanding courage and determination, the gallant crews battled their way through the enemy defenses to the target. Despite severe damage sustained by their aircraft, relentlessly and with unswerving determination, they led the Wing formation through for a highly successful bombing run, with the entire bomb load of their formation concentrated in the immediate target area, inflicting grave damage to vital enemy installations and supplies. Leaving the objective, their formation was under continuous attack from hostile fighters which were utilizing rockets, cannon and heavy machine guns, in an effort to break up and destroy their formation. For twenty-five (25) minutes the courageous crews repelled the vicious hostile attacks, and, during the ensuing aerial battle, eleven (11) enemy aircraft were destroyed, six (6) probably destroyed, and one (1) damaged. Through their highly effective defensive fire and ability to maintain a compact formation, the group held its own losses to a minimum of three (3) bombers. Though their remaining ships were severely damaged, they were successfully brought through for a safe landing at base. By the conspicuous courage, professional skill and leadership of the combat crews, together with the highly technical skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel, the 464th Bombardment Group has reflected great credit upon itself and the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

By command of Major General TWINING

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A TRUE COPY:
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