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HEADQUARTERS
464TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Intelligence Officer
APO 520 U S Army

MCK/rcm

319.1

12 July 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding Officer, 55th Bombardment Wing (H),
APO 520, U S Army
(Attn: A-2)

1. On 12 July 1944, 37 B-24 a/c of 39 a/c scheduled took off at 0615B hours to bomb the central 1/3 of Nimes M/Y (France) primary target. Two (2) a/c failed to take off due to Magneto Malfunctions. The 37 a/c formed two (2) attack units, the first unit being led by Major Elvin D. Goodyear, Commanding Officer of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H), and the second attack unit by Lt Colonel Charles F. McKenna III, Deputy Group Commander. One a/c returned early due to #2 supercharger going out and a high pressure oxygen leak.

2. Group rendezvous was formed seven (7) miles South of Corato and the two (2) group rendezvous was made with the 465th Group, two (2) miles South of Corato at 0725B hours this Group falling in behind the 465th Group.

3. The wing rendezvous was completed four (4) miles South of Spinazzola at 0734B hours. The route was flown as briefed over the French Coast to Marabeau. At that point turned left in close right echelon with the 465th Group. Followed the 465th Group to four (4) miles South of the I.P. at which time the 465th Group made a fifteen (15) degree correction to left and then turned sharply to right. Due to prop wash and close right echelon, the 464th Group made a left turn to avoid a collision. This Group then flew in a South West heading, passing to the left of Tarascon and over Arles sur Rhone, then sighted the primary target (Nimes). A right turn was made and the Group passing into the target on a 20° heading. In passing over Arles sur Rhone, some of this Group's Bombardiers thinking this was the target released, dropping 17½ tons of bombs. After bombing the Primary target this Group rallied left to the coast. From this point the Group headed for the Southern tip of Corsica due to bad weather conditions over the Mountains of Corsica. Then to the Briefed land fall on

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the Italian Coast where the Group broke up due to weather conditions and the a/c proceeded to the base individually.

4. Seventeen (17) a/c were over the target at 1134E hours (briefed target time 1110B hours) and dropped forty one (41) tons of 500 lb G.F. bombs (.1 nose and .01 and .025 tail fusing) from 19,000 to 20,500 feet. Two a/c jettisoned one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) tons; one a/c jettisoned at (43°00'N - 04°20'E) over water, due to rack malfunction at 1150B hours, the second jettisoned $\frac{1}{2}$ tons at (43°10'N - 04°20'E) over water, due to rack malfunction at 1152B hours. One (1) a/c returning early brought two and one half ($2\frac{1}{2}$) tons back to base. Fifteen a/c dropped bombs as follows:

<u>A/C</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Tons</u>
2	Bellegarde	1130B 1131B	19,300 20,400	5
2	St Giles	1131B 1130B	19,000 19,000	3 3/4
1	Aramon	1129B	20,000	2 1/2
7	Arles sur Rhone	1128B 1131B 1132B 1128B 1128B 1128B 1126B	19,000 22,000 20,100 19,920 19,900 20,300 20,000	17 1/4
1	43°35'N-04°48'E	1131B	20,000	2 1/2
1	43°30'N-04°25'E	1134B	19,000	2 1/2
1	Tarascon	1128B	20,000	2 1/2

Five (5) a/c have not yet returned to this base and twelve and one half ($12\frac{1}{2}$) tons of bombs are not accounted for. Of these a/c, one (1) is missing, one crashed near base and crew not as yet interrogated, and three (3) a/c landed at friendly fields. Disposition of bombs not accounted for will be forwarded as soon as returning crews can be interrogated. Due to the axis of attack and dropping of bombs prematurely bombing results were not as good as could be expected. There were numerous hits on shops at the South edge of the M/Y.

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with a near miss on the highway overpass. Seventeen (17) hits on eight (8) columns of freight cars at the East end of the M/Y. Several hits at the East edge and also adjacent to the South edge of a large rectangular building on the South side of the M/Y. Part of the area is smoke obscured. There are twenty four (24) hits in open fields. At Aries sur Rnone photographs show nine (9) hits in the M/Y at the East approach to the bridge and five (5) hits on the East bank approach to this same bridge. There were no photographs taken of the bombs dropped at other points.

5. The weather at take off was 9/10 strato cumulus with visibility unrestricted. Over the Apennines 5/10 cumulus with tops at 12,000 feet. Along coast 3/10 alto cumulus. Scattered middle and high cirrus over water. Over Corsica 6/10 cumulus with tops at 12,000 feet. Generally clear to scattered to target. Visibility fifteen (15) miles. At target 2/10 alto stratus at 14,000 feet with visibility twenty five (25) miles. On the return, cumulus over Corsica had built up to 16,000 feet. Over the Apennines to base 9/10 cumulus with top of 18,000 feet, and alto cumulus with rain showers. At base on return 10.10 alto cumulus, scattered lower cumulus and rain showers.

6. Fifteen (15) e/a were observed, consisting of eight (8) ME 109's, six (6) FW 190's and one (1) JU 88 (one crew reported 30 ME 109s at $43^{\circ}49'N - 05^{\circ}17'E$) but this does not coincide with other observations in the same area and time). Enemy a/c were observed and encountered from 1106 hours until 1130 hours from $43^{\circ}35'N - 05^{\circ}51'E$ to the target. Majority of attacks were from 3 to 9 o'clock some high and some low. Some e/a attacks from 12 o'clock high diving down through the formation and coming up and attacking from rear of formation. Attacks were aggressive generally. There were 13 actual encounters, with our gunners giving an excellent account of themselves. Claiming seven (7) destroyed, two (2) probable, and three (3) damaged. Evaluation of these claims still pending. E/A were silver and dark colored.

7. Rendezvous was made with fighter escort at 1040 hours just off the coast of France, consisting of twelve (12) P-51 a/c - nineteen (19) P-38 a/c were seen at $43^{\circ}03'N - 07^{\circ}03'E$ passing by. Escort last seen at 1140 hours at $43^{\circ}30'N - 04^{\circ}30'E$. Returning combat crews advise that fighter protection was inadequate and in majority of cases the escort was not seen again after initial contact.

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8. Flak at the target was reported S.I.H. to M.A.H. Some crews reported no flak at the target. Flak was encountered at the following points:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
43°38'N - 04°55'E Salon De Provence	S I H	4 guns
43°37'N - 05°45'E Mirabeau	S I H	
43°48'N - 04°40'E Tarascon	I A H	
43°50'N - 04°53'E Cavailon	S I H	
43°58'N - 04°50'E Avignon	S I H to M A H	

9. Thirty one (31) a/c returned to this base between the 1450B hours and 1900B hours. Three (3) a/c landed safely at friendly fields.

10. One a/c is missing, B-24 a/c No. 41-28999 was last seen at 43°00'N - 04°20'E, thirty (30) miles off French coast, at 9,000/10,000 feet with #1 engine out. A/C was on heading of 180° when last seen. Crew roster is as follows:

<u>Duty</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>A.S.N.</u>
P	Harry A. Stroud Jr.	1st Lt.	0-725371
CP	Charles A. Rausch Jr.	1st Lt.	0-463899
N	Ralph D. Morey	2nd Lt.	0-685695
B	Harold (NMI) Kornich	F/O	T-122859
F	William R. Fayle	T Sgt	18009866
AG	Gordon W. Knowles	S Sgt	39104717
C	Harry L. Knowlton	S Sgt	11023544
G	Raymond P. Linneman	S Sgt	36475462
G	Dunlop C. Hollinger	S Sgt	18103973
RO	George T. Fain	S Sgt	34684118

11. One a/c No. 42-52357 crashed between Bari and this base after bailine cut by crew members. No further information is available regarding this a/c at this time.

12. Important observations made by crew members are listed below:

<u>TIME</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observations</u>
1130B	Lake Borrs	19,600	8 ships in lake, looked like cargo vessels
1145B	43°28'N - 04°26'E	20,000	six (6) tankers tied up

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<u>TIME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>ALTITUDE</u>	<u>OBSERVATIONS</u>
			near oil storage installation of 12 tanks near the docks.
1109B3	miles SE of Perleia on bank of river	19,400	A/D with 40/50 s/e a/c on field
1136B	Miramas	19,000	A/D with 6 a/c large number of barracks. 8 guns on a/d

13. There were no a/c damaged by enemy action. Nothing is known about the condition of the three (3) a/c landing at friendly fields.

14. Track Chart showing route briefed and route actually flown is inclosed.

15. Three (3) a/c attempted photographs, two took pictures. Selected prints inclosed.

For the Commanding Officer:

MAURICE C. KIELING,
Capt, Air Corps,
Actg. Int. Officer

2 Incls:
Incl - 1 - Track Chart
Incl - 2 - Selected Photos