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SI 11

7 July 1944

Subject: Narrative Mission Report

To: Commanding Officer, 65th Bombardment Group (M),
Wichita, Kansas

1. On 7 July 1944, B-24 Superfortresses of the 65th Bombardment Group were dispatched to attack the rail yard at Wichita, Kansas. The mission was successful and the aircraft returned to base without incident. The following information was obtained from the flight logs of the aircraft:

2. Aircraft No. 42-52511 - Fuel gauges failed to operate without incident. The aircraft returned to base without incident.

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9. Aircraft No. 42-52511 - Fuel gauges failed to operate without incident. The aircraft returned to base without incident.

6. Flak at the target area, with observed bursts, but bursts usually reported only.

Flak was encountered in the vicinity of the target area. It is believed to be in the vicinity of the target. There are said to be some of a kind that blisters at locations of the (1) target area. It is stated accuracy was reported as being twelve (12) to twenty (20) miles. It is reported that some reports on location on last mission to this target area on 22 July 1944. Route near location of this installation.

Flak was encountered at the following locations:

43°53'N-23°21'E (1 mile) OK
 43°55'N-23°17'E (2 miles) OK

Flak was observed at the following locations:

43°50'N-21°58'E (Belgrade) OK
 OK - could not observe accuracy.
 Mitrovica OK - could not observe accuracy.
 43°57'N-21°22'E (Cape) OK - could not observe intensity or accuracy.

7. Thirty-seven (37) e/c were observed, consisting of thirty-one (31) M 109s, one (1) M 210, five (5) P 190s. Thirty (30) M 109s, four (4) M 190s and one (1) M 210 were observed in the target area from 1025B hours to 1035B hours, one (1) M 109 was observed being shot down by a P-51 e/c near Craiova, the pilot of e/a bailing out at 1052B hours. One (1) M 109 observed at 1140B hours in Yugoslavia. Some M 109s were painted a yellow brown, some with silver top and black bottom. One M 190 painted black. Two (2) M 109s were observed shot down by P-51s and one (1) M 109 shot down by P-38 e/c. In the target area the M 210 made one pass at Able Box at 1032B hours at rally point, from 1030 o'clock low diving under the formation. Other M 109s came in from 7 o'clock and slid off to 5 o'clock without firing. E/A were for the most part flying very low, being reported at 3,000/12,000 and 17,000 feet.

This Group had no encounters.

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10. Narrative description of target, 0740B

10. Endeavour with 51 a/c escort was seen at 0740B hours with 51 a/c (50) to 51 a/c (60) at 12°15'N-17°51'W. Fifty-five (55) to sixty (60) a/c were contacted at 0820B hours at 43°00'N-19°40'W. Detail of coverage given on 10/10/44, over the target area. 11. A/c escort last observed at 1155 hours at the Yugoslavian Coast.

11. Weather at base on take-off was clear with visibility 20 miles. Over the Adriatic feathered clouds at 11,000 feet and visibility reduced to 10 miles in haze. 1/10 to 2/10 alto-stratus at 11,000 feet over the Dinaric Alps and valley stratus with visibility 15 miles in haze. 3/10 to 4/10 cumulus to 12,000 feet from Dinaric Alps to Banja with 2/10 cirrus at 25,000 feet.

Over the target 3/10 cumulus to 10,000 feet with visibility 15 miles in haze.

On return, 3/10 to 4/10 cumulus to 11,000 feet to Dinaric Alps with 2/10 to 3/10 cumulus to 14,000 feet over Dinaric Alps. 1/10 to 2/10 cirrus over the Adriatic with visibility reduced to 10 miles in haze. Base on return 2/10 cumulus, base at 4,000 feet tops at 10,000 feet and 3/10 alto-cumulus at 14,000 feet. Heavy cumulus over mountains to west.

12. Two of our a/c failed to return. A/C I/I No. 41-29275 exploded in midair over the target just before bombs away at 1020B hours, no chutes seen to crash.

A/C I/I No. 41-40197 was last observed flying at 16,000 feet at 44°10'N-22°21'W with left aileron and rudder gone and No. 1 engine feathered, apparently under control at 1120B hours. Two (2) chutes from this a/c were seen to open over the target when our a/c No. 41-29275 exploded. It is believed that damage done to this a/c was at least partially caused by the explosion of the other a/c.

Five (5) of our a/c were damaged, one (1) of which will be inoperative for more than twenty-four (24) hours.

There were no injuries to crew members.

11. The following observations were reported by returning crew members:

<u>TIME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>ALTITUDE</u>	<u>OBSERVATION</u>
1228B	42°30'N-18°30'E	12,000	Two (2) ships in cove on Yugo coast.

1. Narrative of flight report, 0010

Time	Place	Altitude	Observations
11:30	over	15,000 ft	air clear and level, no clouds observed.
11:45	11°40'N-21°20'W	15,000 ft	river and canal, 200 yards wide.
01:00	11°40'N	10,000 ft	2/3 site tree (1) - oil or gas storage tank.
11:20	11°40'N-21°20'W	15,000 ft	2/3 curbside on road, looked like either B-24 or B-17.
00:05B	11°42'N-21°25'W	15,000 ft	oil storage tanks.
11:15B	11°41'N-21°20'W	16,000 ft	10 barges on Danube River.
00:47B	11°35'N-21°20'W	20,000 ft	A/B with 10-12 5/16 a/c.
00:45B	11°40'N-21°25'W	20,000 ft	A/B 1 5/16 a/c dispersed, A revetments empty.

12. Thirty (30) a/c landed at this base from 1325 hours to 1350 hours.

13. Route was flown as briefed except for slight deviations to avoid briefed flak areas. Track chart showing route is inclosed.

14. Four (4) a/b attempted photographs. Selected prints attached.

15. While the target area was obscured by smoke, returning crews reported many smoke generators observed in the Ploesti area. The smoke screen appeared to have been going for quite some time. Eleven (11) to fifteen (15) generators were observed to the west of the north south marshalling yard. From eight (8) to twelve (12) in the area just south of the target area below the road that skirts the target on the south. Largest concentration believed on southwestern part of the city along the A/Y.

Ground wind was from the southwest and was

