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HEADQUARTERS
464TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
APO 520 U. S. ARMY

MCK/FFE/hob

319.1

24 August 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding Officer, 55th Bombardment Wing (H),
APO 520, U. S. Army

1. On 24 August 1944, twenty-eight (28) B-24 a/c, and three (3) spare B-24 a/c took off at 0732B hours to bomb Pardubice Oil Refinery, Czechoslovakia.

The three (3) spare a/c returned to the base as briefed as follows:

A/C No. 42-78521-Turned back at 0934B hours at
(42°54'N-15°40'E)

A/C No. 42-78514-Turned back at 1026B hours at
(44°41'N-15°00'E)

A/C No. 42-52522-Turned back at 0930B hours at
(43°00'N-15°45'E)

The thirty-one (31) a/c formed into two (2) attack units. The first attack unit was to be led by 2nd Lt. John T. Welch, Flight Leader of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H), but due to the air speed indicator and C-1 automatic pilot not operating correctly, Lt. Welch surrendered the Group lead to the first Deputy Leader, Captain Myron E. Mershon, Operations Officer of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H). The second attack unit was led by 1st Lt. James L. Mumaw, Flight Leader of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Form up and line rendezvous was made as briefed, it being noticed that the 460th Group came through the 464th area slightly below Able box. The rendezvous was made approximately two (2) minutes later, and this Group caught up with the Wing over the Adriatic.

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Ltr Narrative Mission Report, contd.

Bomb strike photos show numerous hits on the hangars and adjacent buildings. There are direct hits on all four of the main hangars and numerous hits on the probable administration buildings and workshops behind the hangars. Light single-engined fighters and one twin-engined fighter were destroyed on the ground, and three single engined fighters were damaged. Present on the airfield at the time of bombing were fifty five single engined fighters and two twin engined fighters.

4. No fiak was encountered and the observed fiak was as follows: SIH at (49°18'N-16°30'E).

5. Fighter escort was excellent. Twenty eight (28) P-51 a/c first observed at 0953B hours in the vicinity of 45°35'N-18°12'E and eighteen (18) P-38 a/c observed at 1120B hours in the vicinity of 49°20'N-17°35'E both types of a/c gave target cover and withdrawal cover to 44°10'N-15°10'E at 1315B hours.

6. Two (2) ME 109 a/c were observed at 1132B hours at 49°10'N-16°50'E.

7. The weather at take off was 3/10 stratocumulus, bases 5,000 feet, tops 8,000 feet. Visibility was twenty-five (25) miles. 1/10 to 2/10 altocumulus over Yugoslavian coast and mountains, tops 12,000 feet. Generally clear from Dinaric Alps to target. At target, 1/10 altocumulus, tops 12,000 feet, visibility twenty (20) miles. On return, 4/10 cumulus over mountains, tops 15,000 feet or less. 1/10 cumulus at base on return, visibility twenty (20) miles.

8. One of our a/c No 41-29351 piloted by Lt Lawrence N. Kalgreen, of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H) radioed immediately after rally and stated his a/c only had a gas supply of three hundred (300) gallons and he would get as far as possible before bailing out his crew. At 1220B hours in the vicinity of 47°22'N-14°26'E ten chutes were seen from this a/c and the a/c spiraled to the ground.

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Ltr Narrative Mission Report, contd

9. Observations of importance as follows:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observations</u>
1033	47°09'N-19°03'E	17,500	A/D runway being lengthened.
1127	49°23'N-17°23'E	20,000	2 M/Ys. Total 1200 wagons
1207	48°07'N-14°52'E	18,000	1M/Y, 800 wagons.

10. Twenty three (23) a/c landed at this base between 1436B hours and 1455B hours.

11. Route was flown as briefed. Track chart inclosed.

12. Six (6) a/c attempted photographs. Selected strike photograph inclosed.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

2 Inclosures
Incl 1 - Track chart
Incl 2 - Selected photograph

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