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

BVD/TTE/hob

319.1

27 August 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 27 August 1944, twenty seven (27) of twenty eight (28) scheduled B-24 a/c and two (2) spares took off to bomb Blechhammer South Synthetic Oil Plant.

One of the scheduled a/c crashed on take-off when No 3 engine failed.

The twenty nine (29) a/c formed in two attack units. The first attack unit was led by Major William H. Reddell, Commanding Officer of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H) and the second attack unit was led by 1st Lt Harold E. Kline, First Pilot of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. The Group form-up was hindered to some extent by low cumulus in the form-up area. The line rendezvous was as prescribed however the Wing rendezvous was about one (1) minute late because this group was forced to execute a steep left turn in order to maintain wing formation position behind the 465th Bombardment Group (H). The 460th Bombardment Group (H) flew right echelon until requested by the lead Group to assume their proper position.

3. Five (5) of the scheduled a/c were early returns. One (1) a/c returned from the form-up area, landing at 1102B hours because of the interphone system was entirely out. One (1) a/c returned from 45°00'N-17°03'E with No 2 engine feathered because of the loss of the prop governor, and landed at 1220B hours. One a/c returned from 45°10'N-17°00'E because No 1 supercharger was out, excessive oil leak in No 2 engine, erratic manifold pressure, and because five (5) guns were out. This a/c landed at 1145B hours.

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One a/c returned from Andria landing at 0900B hours because of a rip in the up-and-lock line of the hydraulic system. The gear could not be locked in the "retracted position." One (1) a/c returned from 46°20'N-17°15'E because of a gas leak in No 4 engine and oil leaks in No 3 and No 4 engines. This a/c landed at 1225B hours.

4. Twenty three (23) a/c were over the target at 1216B hours (briefed target time was 1213B hours) dropping fifty seven and one half (57½) tons or 500 pound GP bombs (.1 nose and .025 tail fuse) from 23,000 feet. One (1) a/c jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs at 50°18'N-18°17'E at 1211B hours when after the loss of No 4 engine it was impossible to stay with the formation. This a/c cut south of the target and rejoined the formation on the rally. Three (3) early returns brought back seven and one half (7½) tons of bombs). One (1) early return jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs at 45°00'N-17°03'E to lighten the load in order to maintain altitude on three (3) engines. Another early return jettisoned two and one half (2½) tons of bombs at 41°35'N-16°20'E because of the safety factor involved in landing with a bomb load considering the broken hydraulic line.

~~Recapitulation of bomb disposition information:~~

Dropped on target	57.50 tons
Jettisoned	7.50 tons
Returned	7.50 tons
In a/c which crashed on T/O	<u>2.50 tons</u>
	75.00 tons

Bomb strike photos show the bomb pattern running into heavy smoke from earlier bombing in the vicinity of the injector house and compressor house. A large concentration of hits borders the compressor house on the north. Bomb strikes start one mile northwest of the briefed MPI and continue southeast across the labor camp and towards the compressor house which is smoke obscured. Several hits were on the hydrogenation stalls adjacent to the injector house. Numerous additional hits are probably in the smoke obscured area covering the gas generating and purification plants.

5. -The C-1 automatic pilot was used by the leader of the first attack unit. The A-5 automatic pilot was not used by the leader of the second attack unit because it had

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not been previously checked and the pilot did not set it up.

6. The flak at the target was IAI and lasted for a period of about five (5) minutes, commencing at 1213B hours. The greatest concentration was encountered just after bombs away. SAII flak consisting of about three (3) bursts, described as white, was encountered at 49°15'N-18°45'E. Scant and heavy flak was observed from Gyor. No e/a were observed or encountered.

7. Escort consisting of twenty (20) P-51 a/c were first observed at 1110B hours at 47°45'N-17°48'E, of which four (4) P-51 were identified as belonging to the 332nd Fighter Group. Fighters of the 52nd and the 31st Fighter Groups furnished target cover. Twelve (12) P-38 a/c were observed at 49°10'N-18°00'E at 1240B hours and furnished withdrawal cover. The escort departed at 1332B hours at 46°40'N-17°20'E. The escort was described as poor on return from the target.

8. The weather was clear at the base on take off with visibility twenty (20) miles. There were patches of cumulus at 3,000 feet on the east Italian coast. The Adriatic was clear with visibility 15 to 20 miles. Overland to the target a few scattered cumulus with visibility generally 20 miles. From Gyor north to the target there was 2/10 scattered cirrus at 28,000 feet. The target was clear with visibility well over 20 miles. The surface winds were southwesterly at 10 mph. On the return route only occasional small cumulus with visibility 20 miles. 1/10 to 2/10 cumulus confined to the mountains to the west, with visibility 20 miles at the base on return.

9. One (1) a/c is missing. B-24 a/c No 42-50796 is reported by members of two (2) crews to have left the formation at 1052B hours at 46°55'N-17°40'E having reported a gas leak in No 4 engine. B-24 a/c No 41-29450 is reported to have landed at Vis.

The crash of B-24 a/c No 42-95348 on take off resulted in the death of two (2) crew members. Two (2) other crew members received injuries which necessitated hospitalization. Six (6) others were treated for minor injuries.

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10. Four (4) a/c received flak damage. One of these a/c will be inoperational for more than twenty four (24) hours.

11. The following observations were reported:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1109	Gyor	19,000	2 SEF on L/G at Gyor which were not there on return.
1326	47°05'N-17°52'E	17,000	Runways at Veszprem are being lengthened by the addition of concrete on one end. The runway completed will be 8,000 ft. in length.
1216	Target	23,000	Smoke pots in the target area to the west, though in operation were very ineffective and did not obstruct visibility.

12. Twenty two (22) a/c landed between the hours of 1524B hours and 1823B hours. B-24 a/c No 42-78336 landed at Chieti (Gallon Tower) for gas at 1552B hours and returned to base landing at 1823B hours.

13. Route was flown as briefed. Track chart showing route as flown is attached.

14. Six (6) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

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

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