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

JCM/FE/nob

319.1

29 August 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding Officer, 464th Bombardment Wing (H),
APO 520, U S Army

1. On 29 August 1944, twenty eight (28) scheduled B-24 a/c and two (2) spare B-24 a/c took off at 0710B hours to bomb Moravska Ostrava South W/Y, Czechoslovakia.

The thirty (30) a/c formed into two (2) attack units, the first being led by Lt Col Charles F. McKenna III, Deputy Group Commander, and the second by Captain Arthur B. Robertson, Flight Leader of the 770th Bombardment Squadron (H). The Group Leader, Lt Col Charles F. McKenna III, led the Group until reaching the IP where due to failure of PFF equipment, he surrendered the lead to Major Weldon K. Burton, Group Operations Officer, who was First Deputy Leader. Major Burton led the Group over the target and on the return to base.

Two (2) spare a/c returned to base as briefed:

A/C No 44-41053 - turned back at 41°50'N-16°12'E, landing at Base at 0844B hours.

A/C No 41-29441 - turned back at 41°08'N-16°12'E, landing at Base at 0812B hours.

2. Form-up, line rendezvous with the 464th Group and Wing rendezvous were made as planned and without incident.

3. One (1) a/c returned early, A/C No 42-52537 turned back at 45°40'N-17°12'E at 0950B hours due to losing Nos 1, 3 and 4 generators and two (2) supercharges.

4. Twenty seven (27) a/c were over the target at 1114B hours (briefed target time 1112B hours) and twenty seven (27) a/c dropped sixty seven (67) tons of 500 lb GP bombs (.1 nose and .01 tail fusing) from 22,200 feet.

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One of the a/c over the target jettisoned one half (1/2) ton of bombs at 47°15'N-19°19'E at 12143 hours due to rack malfunction causing two (2) bombs to hang up.

The two (2) spare a/c and the a/c returning early, returned seven and one half (7 1/2) tons of bombs to base.

Recapitulation of bombs:

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Dropped on target | 67 tons |
| Jettisoned | 1/2 ton |
| Returned to base | <u>7 1/2 tons</u> |
| Total tonnage 30 a/c | 75 tons |

On the bomb run it was decided to bomb by PFF due to cloud coverage over the target and the first alternate target, the industrial area of Moravska Ostrava was bombed. The primary target was visible through the cloud cover just an instant before bombs were released, but it was impossible to change at that time.

Bomb strike photos show the first alternate target - the industrial area of Moravska Ostrava - almost completely obscured by a heavy undercast. Numerous impacts are discernible on railroad and industrial installations at the northeast corner of the first alternate target area. (Reference point J-25 on TC 15-15-NA). Several additional strikes are east of the Ostravice River at a point 4,000 feet northeast of the northeast corner of the designated alternate target area.

5. The leader of the first attack unit used both the C-1 Automatic Pilot and PFF. The leader of the second attack unit did not use C-1 Automatic Pilot as it was inoperative during the bomb run. This C-1 had been working erratically on the route out, and also on the route back.

6. Flak at the target was S to MH, with bursts all over the sky, mostly low with a few bursts high. Time in flak was estimated at two (2) minutes. Flak was observed at the following locations:

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Gyor (47°42'N-17°58'E) | SIH |
| Batrina (45°12'N-17°38'E) | SIH |
| Pocm (46°05'N-18°12'E) | SIH |

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7. One (1) e/a, an ME 110 was observed at 11145 hours in the target area flying in the opposite direction to our formation at 5,000 feet. This Group had no encounters with enemy aircraft.

8. Rendezvous with fighter escort was made at 10508 hours at $48^{\circ}35'N-18^{\circ}05'E$ with twenty (20) P-51 a/c, identified as the 332nd Fighter Group. Some P-51 a/c from the 52nd Fighter Group were also observed during the mission. Eight (8) P-38 a/c were observed at 10368 hours at $48^{\circ}53'N-18^{\circ}02'E$, it being impossible to identify this particular Group. P-38 a/c during the flight were identified with red nose and tails, and red tails and red wing tips. Crew members were generally of the opinion that fighter cover on this mission was not up to the usual standard. P-51 a/c were last observed at 13308 hours at $44^{\circ}11'N-17^{\circ}06'E$, and P-38 a/c observed last at 13208 hours at $44^{\circ}29'N-17^{\circ}13'E$.

9. Weather was generally clear from Base to about 40 miles south of the target, except for patches of cirrostratus and altocumulus.

In the east Brno Region, these clouds increased to 2/10 cirrostratus, base 24,000 feet and 1/10 altocumulus, base 15,000 feet.

In the target area, 5/10 cirrostratus, Bases 24,000 feet and 7/10 altocumulus, base 15,000 feet, tops 18,000 feet. The latter cloud cover obscured the target. Air-Ground visibility was 20 miles.

Over the Carpathians on return, 4/10 altocumulus, tops 18,000 feet and from there to Base only widely scattered middle and high clouds. Visibility was in general 20 miles.

10. One of our a/c is missing. A/C No 42-78248 was last seen at $46^{\circ}35'N-18^{\circ}45'E$, its No 4 engine had been feathered and the a/c was falling back and losing altitude. At 13158 hours a voice similar to that of the Pilot of this a/c was heard over the radio saying that he was going to bail out his crew. At this time the listening a/c was 50 miles from the Hungarian-Yugoslavian border. Where a/c sending the message was located at this time was unknown.

One (1) crew member suffered major flak wounds.

There were no a/c damaged by enemy action.

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

| <u>Time</u> | <u>Place</u> | <u>Altitude</u> | <u>Observation</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1035B | 47°44'N-18°03'E | 20,000 ft | Forty (40) barges moored on both sides of Duna River. |
| 1018B | 46°42'N-17°31'E | 20,000 ft | Air strip with several buildings. No a/c observed. (Near Lake Balaton). |
| 1226B | 46°32'N-18°55'E | 19,000 ft | Bridge under construction. |
| 1037B | 47°45'N-18°08'E | | M/Y with more than 500 wagons. |
| 1212B | 47°27'N-19°15'E | 20,000 ft | A/D with 7/8 T/E A/C. |
| 1220B | 46°55'N-19°40'E | | A/D with 10/15 large a/c - either bombers or transports. |
| 1018B | 46°31'N-17°29'E | 17,000 ft | Two (2) landing strips under construction running NNE and SSW. |
| 0906B | 42°47'N-16°34'E | 11,000 ft | Three (3) Naval vessels with large wake, heading 350°, type undetermined. |
| 1024B | 47°05'N-17°57'E | 18,000 ft | Lengthening runway about 1/3 of original length, and adding another strip running NE and SW, making an X. |
| 1217B | 47°09'N-19°07'E | 18,000 ft | Doubling length of runway. |
| 1135B | 48°45'N-19°09'E | 21,000 ft | Large industrial plant in active operation. |
| 1210B | 47°25'N-19°16'E Vecses | 19,500 ft | A/D near Budapest with 20/30 S/E and T/E a/c. |
| 1204B | 47°40'N-19°40'E Hatvan | 20,200 ft | Two (2) M/Y both over half filled - approximately 500 wagons -- photo attached. |
| 1220B | Budapest | 18,000 ft | Circular A/D with 15/20 S/E A/C dispersed around field. |

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12058 47°40'N-19°50'E 20,000 ft Large column of black smoke
up to 10,000 ft - looked
like oil smoke.

09128 43°42'N-16°40'E 14,000 ft Six (6) large transport a/c,
sing. looked like C-47s.

12. Twenty six (26) a/c landed at this base from 14458
hours to 15078 hours.

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

14. Five (5) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print
inclosed.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

3 Inclosures:
Incl 1- Track Chart
Incl 2- Selected bomb fall plot
Incl 3- Photograph of M/Y

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