

C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS
464TH BOMB/ENGINEER GROUP (H)
Office of the Intelligence Officer
APO 520 U. S. Army

FNB/ENI/hob

312.1

4 November 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 4 November 1944, thirty six (36) scheduled B-24 a/c plus one (1) assigned spare, took off at 0732A hours to bomb the Ling Benzol Plant Buildings. The thirty seven (37) a/c formed in three (3) attack units. The first unit was led by Lt. Colonel Clarence G. Poff, Commanding Officer of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H). The second attack unit was led by 1st Lt. Richard E. Price, Flight Leader of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H) and the third attack unit was led by Major John W. McNeely, Pilot of Headquarters Detachment, 464th Bombardment Group (H).

2. The Group form-up, line rendezvous and wing rendezvous were accomplished in a satisfactory manner.

3. Two (2) a/c returned early for the following reasons:

B-24 a/c No. 44-10028 left the formation at 41°26'N-16°32'E because the engineer received no indication of fuel being transferred while the system was in operation. Investigation revealed this engineer entirely at fault and he is being removed temporarily from combat flying for further instruction.

This a/c jettisoned one half (1/2) ton of bombs (delayed fusing) and one (1) ton of bombs (.1 nose and .9 tail fusing) at 41°33'N-16°51'E. This one (1) ton of bombs was accidentally jettisoned due to a rack malfunction which occurred as the delay fused bombs were jettisoned. One (1) ton of bombs were returned to base, the a/c landing at 1005A hours.

B-24 a/c No. 42-51563 left the formation at 44°00'N-13°00'E at 1019A hours because the fuel sight gauges were indicating 350 gallons low. The previous average fuel consumption rate on this a/c being high, the pilot chose to return.

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Ltr Narr Miss Bnt, cont'd

This a/c jettisoned one half (1) ton of bombs (delayed fusing) at 42°05'N-148°55'W. Two (2) tons of bombs were returned to base, the a/c landing at 1157A hours.

4. Thirty five (35) a/c were over the target at 1150A hours and thirty three (33) a/c dropped eighty two and one half (82 1/2) tons of BFX bombs from 21,000 feet. The eighty two and one half (82 1/2) tons included sixty six (66) tons of .1 nose and .01 tail fusing, and sixteen and one half (16 1/2) tons with six (6) to seventy two (72) hour long delay fuses. Two (2) of the a/c over the target with the formation failed to release on the target. B-24 a/c No. 44-41231 because the select lever had not been put in select and one attempt to salvo, lever would not go into stop. This a/c jettisoned one half (1/2) ton of delay fused bombs at 44°50'N-12°40'W and returned two (2) tons to base. B-24 a/c No. 42-78671, because the bomb bay doors would not open. This a/c jettisoned one half (1/2) tons of delay fused bombs in the Adriatic off Ancone, and returned two (2) tons to base.

The early returns disposed of five (5) tons of bombs as explained in paragraph No. 3.

Disposition of Bomb Tonnage

	.1 nose and .01 tail fusing	delayed fuse
33 dropped on target	66.0 tons	16.5 tons
2 a/c over target jettisoned		1.0 tons
Returned	4.0 tons	
Early returns jettisoned	1.0 tons	1.0 tons
Early returns brought back	3.0 tons	
	<u>74.0 tons</u>	<u>18.5 tons</u>

Bombing was by PFF. The first attack unit leader used C-1 automatic pilot. The leader of the third attack unit made the run manually. The leader of the second attack unit is down at a friendly field at the time of the writing of this report.

Bomb strike photos show a solid overcast at the time of bombs away. Photos show approximately sixty bombs away, but assessment of results is impossible. No terrain features are visible on any of the photos.

5. S A H to M A H flak was encountered at the target, the formation being in flak for three (3) to four (4) minutes.

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Mr. Herr Miss Bot, cont'd

Most of the flak encountered was before bombs away, the main concentration coming from to the right of the formation. Flak was reported as trailing the ground and continuing after all four (4) groups had passed over the target. Crews report the belief that the chaff was exceptionally effective as far as this particular group was concerned.

6. Escort of twenty five (25) P-51 a/c interceded the formation at 1213A hours at 47°30'N-14°20'E providing withdrawal escort, and was last observed at 1340A hours at 44°25'N-12°20'E. Thirty (30) P-38 a/c were observed at 1101A hours at 46°10'N-12°40'E and were reported at various times until 1341A hours at 44°25'N-12°20'E.

7. Scattered altostratus at take off, visibility 20 miles.

2/10 to 4/10 stratocumulus and swelling cumulus from base to coast with swelling cumulonimbus over Sour, tops 18,000 feet.

Scattered low clouds over Adriatic with cumulus built up. Along coasts 6/10 to 7/10 coverage.

Generally clear on northern Italian shore; over Alps 3/10 increasing to 7/10 low cumulus, tops 12,000 feet and Valley stratus.

Overcast stratocumulus other side of mountains, continuing to target.

At target 10/10 stratocumulus, tops 10,000 feet. Visibility 25 miles.

On return, 6/10 to 3/10 small cumulus had built up over Alps to 13,000 feet.

3/10 cumulus over Adriatic and 3/10 to 4/10 cumulus at base on return, base 4,000 feet, tops 8,000 feet.

8. The following observations were reported:

Time	Place	Alt.	Observation
1230	46°48'N-13°43'E	18,000	Active factory, five (5) visible stacks, located on side of mountain. Scarred earth or dump visible.

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Ltr Navy, Miss Post, contd

1245 46°16'N-13°05'W 18,000 A/T with either a/c or 1/1
 started irregularly on runs.

1250 46°07'N-12°55'W 19,000 Possible storeroom or ammunition dump,
 main road leading to site.

1255 46°00'N-13°00'W 18,000 A/T of one (1) strip appeared
 to be recently lengthened by
 300 feet.

9. The route was flown as briefed with the exception
 that the first TP was cut short to avoid weather, the formation
 flying directly from Seinazzola to Ancona. Track chart showing
 route flown attached.

10. Thirty four (34) a/c landed at this base between 1455
 hours and 1530A hours without incident. One (1) a/c is down
 at a friendly field.

11. Two (2) a/c received flak damage neither of which will
 be inoperational for twenty four (24) hours.

12. Three (3) a/c attempted photographs. Selected prints
 attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

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FRANCIS F. ELDER
 Major, AC
 Intelligence Officer

4 Incls:
 Incl 1 - Track Chart
 Incl 2,3,4 - Selected Prints

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