

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

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

HH/PTL/rom

319.1

6 November 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 6 November 1944, thirty three (33) scheduled B-24 type a/c took off at 0715A hours to bomb the Primary target designated in Operations Order #29, dated 5 November 1944. The thirty three (33) a/c formed into three (3) attack units. The first attack unit was led by Major William G. Moore, Commanding Officer, 777th Bombardment Squadron, the second unit by 1st Lieutenant Wayne G. Shearer, First Pilot, 777th Bombardment Squadron and the third attack unit by 2nd Lieutenant George H. Grotelueschen, First Pilot, 776th Bombardment Squadron.

2. Group form up, assembly, and two group rendezvous were made as prescribed, without incident. Due to adverse weather, arrival at the Wing rendezvous point was delayed four (4) minutes; however, the wing formation was complete upon reaching the Spur.

3. There was only one (1) early return, namely a/c #44-49146, which never completed assembly and landed at 0810A hours, because of inability to retract landing gear.

A/c #42-95332, a prior return, landed at 1305A hours, after leaving the formation at 47°15'N-14°40'E because of inability to maintain sufficient power when #4 turbo went out and remaining turbos overheated. This a/c attacked a target of opportunity on its return at 47°12'N-14°45'E at 1105A hours from 21,500 feet.

4. Bombs of the thirty three (33) a/c were disposed of as reflected by following capitulation, including the one early return and the one aircraft dropping on target of opportunity, both mentioned in paragraph #3.



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

Ltr Marr Miss Let, contd

| | M-17 | RD (1.17.01) | RD (delayed) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Dropped on target of opportunity | | 2.0 tons | 0.0 tons |
| Jettisoned | 3.5 tons | 0.0 tons | 0.0 tons |
| Returned to base | 29.0 tons | 33.0 tons | |
| Totals * | <u>37.5 tons</u> | <u>35.0 tons</u> | <u>0.0 tons</u> |

* a/c #42-52070 was not fully loaded and only carried 4 x 500 RDX (.1 x .01) and 2 RDX delayed bombs, aggregating 1 1/2 tons.

All jettisoned bombs, included in the foregoing capitulation were dropped in the Adriatic, with the exception of the following:

A/C 42-51760 was losing power and, to lighten load, jettisoned 4 M-17 at 1135A hours at 48°01'N-16°55'E.

A/C 42-50962 had a track malfunction and accidentally jettisoned 10 M-17s at 1125A hours at 48°10'N-16°55'E.

A/C 41-29394, with one engine out, jettisoned 10 M-17s in order to lighten load at 44°25'N-16°47'E at 1215A hours.

5. Bomb strike photos from the one a/c attacking target of opportunity shows several direct hits on a group of three buildings located at a road intersection one half mile north-east of the Zeltweg Airdrome.

6. This Group maintained its position in the Wing formation and did not drop its bombs on the primary target because the Wing lead did not drop nor did it fly over the target. No target of opportunity could be found without leaving the wing formation for as much as 50 to 60 miles.

7. Intense heavy flak was observed some 4 to 5 miles left of course, coming from the target area. Intense heavy flak was also observed at St Politen.

8. One (1) ME 109, with red checkered tail observed at 46°10'N-15°00'E at 1037A hours flying at 20,000 feet, about 2,000 feet below formation. Four (4) ME 109s observed at 47°05'N-17°05'E at 1145A hours, flying at 22,000 feet, about 3,000 feet off, were driven off by P-38s in pursuit.

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Ltr Merrick Lt, 'contd

9. Intercom. was made with thirty (35) to forty (40) P-38s at 0941A hours at 44°25'N - 15°28'E and with fifteen (15) to twenty (20) P-51s at 1110A hours at 47°12'N - 14°45'E. Withdrawal of both types of fighters was at approximately 1245A hours. Crews commanded the cover given by the escort.

10. 4/10 to 5/10 stratus and stratocumulus at takeoff, continuing to coast.

1/10 cirrus over Adriatic and 3/10 stratocumulus, tops 3000 feet.

Dinaries were clear except for stratus in valleys.

3/10 to 4/10 stratus and stratocumulus from mountains to vicinity of Pals, tops 8-10,000 feet. From Pals to the target 3/10 to 10/10 stratocumulus, tops 10,000 feet. Visibility was 20 miles.

On return, 3/10 stratocumulus from target to Salaton and 2/10 from here to Dinaries.

1/10 stratocumulus over Dinaries and Adriatic; and 3/10 to 4/10 stratus over base of Adriatic.

visibility 10 miles as per attached chart.

11. Thirty (30) a/c landed at this base between 1344A hours and 1425A hours.

12. A/c #42-51643 (Y/C) failed to return and is missing. Was last seen at 1110A hours when it dropped out of formation with #2 engine smoking, but apparently under control, at 47°56'N - 15°26'E.

13. Route was flown as briefed until about 2 miles short of IP, thence on a parallel, about 3 or 5 miles south of the briefed course, crossing lake to south of briefed rally point, thence on prescribed course to base. Track chart attached.

14. Selected print of photo taken by a/c dropping on target of opportunity is attached. No other a/c attempted photo.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AG
Intelligence Officer

2 Incls
Incl 1 Track Chart
Incl 2 Selected Photo