

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

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

BVB/PFE/hob

319.1

15 November 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 15 November 1944, five (5) scheduled PFF B-24 a/c, designated below, took off at the times listed to bomb the Linz Benzol O/R Buildings.

A/C No 42-52070, 1st Lt August H. Lechner, Jr, Pilot, at 0815A hours.

A/C No 42-50533, 1st Lt Forrest J. Robbins, Pilot, at 0817A hours.

A/C No 44-49028, 1st Lt Homer C. Mower, Pilot, at 0820A hours.

A/C No 44-49048, 2nd Lt Raymond E. Beaubieu, Pilot, at 0823A hours.

A/C No 44-49032, 1st Lt Franklin K. Lane, Pilot, at 0832A hours.

2. The a/c left the point of departure at the following times:

A/C No 42-52070, 0846A hours

A/C No 42-50533, 0850A hours

A/C No 44-49028, Unknown

A/C No 44-49048, 0847A hours

A/C No 44-49032, 0848A hours

3. A/C No 42-50333 returned early from 45°21'N-14°58'E having encountered severe turbulence at 20,000 feet which caused internal stress and the pilot deemed it advisable to return. The turbulence was encountered in the vicinity of 44°38'N-13°52'E at which point three (3) bombs were jettisoned (including two (2) with 6 to 72 hour long delay fuse) to lighten the load. Five (5) bombs were jettisoned at 45°21'N-14°58'E at 1041A hours.

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## Ltr Narrative Mission Report, contd

4. One (1) of the scheduled a/c was over the briefed target at 1140A hours and dropped two (2) tons of 500 pound RDX bombs, six (6) of which were fused with .1 nose and .01 and .025 tail fuses and two (2), with six (6) to seventy-two (72) hour long delay fuses. This a/c bombed from 24,400 feet on a true heading of 120 degrees. The PFF was not giving good results as the flux gate was out, however on the bomb run (North) did not fluctuate and the run was smooth with the last correction of two (2) degrees being made. The PFF navigator reports that, the city was identified in the scope as well as the Danube and Fraum rivers and that the bombing circle was placed between the two rivers and on the center of the city. The specific target could not be identified in the scope and was oriented by reference. The PFF navigator is of the opinion that the bombs may have fallen just short of the MPI.

B-24 a/c No 44-49032 dropped two (2) tons of bombs on a target of opportunity at Hieflau, 47°36'N-14°46'E at 1135A hours from 25,100 feet with unknown results. The PFF equipment in this a/c went out at the last TP and a run was made to the IP and to the target using DR Navigation with the expectancy that the PFF equipment might function. Then approximately seventeen (17) miles SE of Linz, the target was picked up in the scope with poor returns. The decision not to attempt a second run on the primary was made in view of the fact that the PFF equipment was giving poor returns over a short range and the additional factor, that of interfering with other a/c in the target area or on the bomb run.

B-24 a/c No 42-52070 unable to bomb the primary target because the PFF equipment went out forty five (45) minutes before the target, dropped one and one-half (1½) tons of bombs on Salzburg as a target of opportunity. This tonnage included one-half (½) ton of long delay fused bombs. One-half (½) ton of bombs due to a rack malfunction failed to release and were jettisoned at 46°56'N-13°45'E at 1202A hours. Bombing of this target of opportunity was by PFF with unknown results.

B-24 a/c 44-49028 with two (2) tons of bombs, the disposition of which is unknown, is missing.

## Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage

Dropped on target (primary)	2 tons
Dropped on Hieflau	2 tons

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Dropped on Salzburg	1.5 tons
Jettisoned by a/c bombing Salzburg	.5 tons
Jettisoned by Early Return	2.0 tons
Bombs carried by missing a/c	<u>2.0 tons</u>
Total	10.0 tons

No photographs were obtained of the bombing at the Primary Target. Photographs show bombs away from the two aircraft which reported bombing Salzburg and Hiefleu, respectively. It is impossible to estimate approximate areas of impact, as no terrain features are visible on the photos.

The a/c bombing the primary target used the C-1 automatic pilot.

5. The crew of the a/c which bombed Linz, report no flak at the primary target, while the crew of a/c No 44-49032 which made the bomb run by DR, reports MIH flak from Linz, the bursts being observed 1,000 feet to the left of the a/c. At Salzburg, SAH flak was encountered.

6. Weather was as follows: 6/10 to 8/10 stratocumulus and swelling cumulus at take-off, tops 9-10,000 feet with scattered showers.

Over Adriatic, 7/10 swelling cumulus and thin multilayer clouds to 20,000 ft which increased and thickened to north.

Tops of clouds rose to 26,000 feet and planes flew in clouds from 45000'N- to about 30 minutes from the target.

Over target 10/10 altocumulus, tops 20,000 feet. Visibility was 20 miles.

Same conditions on return except clouds were slightly more broken up in central and south Adriatic with heavy cloudiness to east of course.

8/10 stratocumulus at Base on return. Scattered showers over Spur.

Many thunderstorms were encountered over Dinarics and Eastern Alps. Moderate mixed icing was picked up in Fiume area at 17,000 feet. Moderate and occasionally severe turbulence was encountered in clouds.

7. Route was flown generally as briefed with minor deviations caused by PFF equipment failing to operate correctly. Track Charts of the three (3) a/c are attached showing individual routes flown.

8. B-24 a/c No 44-49028 last seen at time of take off is missing.

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9. Three (3) a/c landed at this base as follows:

B-24 a/c No 42-52070 at 1455A hours.  
B-24 a/c No 44-49032 at 1500A hours.  
B-24 a/c No 44-49048 at 1520A hours.

10. Performance of PFF equipment as experienced by individual navigators is described as follows. On a/c No 44-49048 which bombed the primary; the Flux Gate was out on take-off and the set did not give good returns. On a/c No 42-52070 which bombed Salzburg, the transmitter current jumped to 15 MA's, later returning to normal to the extent that the bomb run on the target of opportunity could be made by PFF. A/C No 44-49032 the PFF equipment went out and numerous adjustments resulted in no better than considerable interference and poor returns.

11. Three (3) a/c attempted photographs. Bombs away photographs from the a/c bombing at Salzburg and Hiefleu are attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

2 Inclosures:

Incl 1 - Track Charts  
Incl 2 - Selected photographs

FRANCIS F. ELDER  
Major, AC  
Intelligence Officer