

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

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

ACK/PRE/hou

319.1

19 January 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative mission report

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

1. On 19 January 1945, twenty four (24) scheduled B-24 a/c plus four (4) spares took off, starting at 0850A hours to bomb the primary target named in Operations Order No. 18; dated 18 January 1945.

The twenty eight (28) a/c formed into two (2) attack units, the first being led by major John W. Vance, Commanding Officer of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H), and the second by 1st Lt George H. Grotelueschen, Flight Leader of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Group form up and bomber rendezvous was made as planned without incident, being on course over Spinazzola at 1016A hours at 10,000 feet.

3. Two (2) a/c returned early:

(a) A/C No 42-51563 turned back at (42°00'N-16°00'E) as left landing gear would not stay in retract position. This a/c returned two (2) tons of bombs to base.

(b) A/C No 44-49696 turned back at (41°53'N-16°17'E) at 1035A hours due to No 4 prop feathering itself and loss of No 4 turbo. This a/c jettisoned two (2) tons of bombs at (41°53'N-16°17'E) in the Adriatic.

4. This Group turned back at 1151A hours at (45°30'N-15°10'E) after receiving orders from the Wing Air Commander of the 485th Bombardment Group (H), who advised that the 485th Group had been over the primary and both alternate targets and they were closed in.

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

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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

At the time this Group turned back they were approaching multi layer clouds with tops of 28,000 feet, with a low layer at 10,000 feet.

The twenty six (26) a/c returned their full bomb load of fifty two (52) tons of bombs to base.

One (1) early return jettisoned two (2) tons of bombs and one (1) early return returned two (2) tons to base. (See paragraph no 2 (a) and 2 (b) for reasons).

5. The weather was clear except for scattered strato-cumulus at take-off.

Over Adriatic increasing cumulus becoming 8/10 to 10/10 on Yugoslavia coast and continuing remainder of route. Tops were about 10,000 feet.

3/10 to 4/10 cirrus at 26,000 feet from Yugoslavia coast northward.

Weather conditions at point formation turned back were 4/10 cirrus and 10/10 stratocumulus, tops 10,000 feet. Visibility was 15 miles.

Little change on return. Scattered cumulus at base.

6. Twenty six (26) a/c landed at this base between 1340A and 1400A hours.

7. Route was flown as briefed with only slight deviations to avoid weather. Track chart showing route flown inclosed.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer

1 Inclosure - Track Chart