

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

CONFIDENTIAL (S)
170 500

100 100/100

310.1

Reference: 100

TO : Executive Director

FROM : Commanding General, 55th Bombardment Group (M),
170 500, H. S. [unclear]

1. On 3 February 1945, thirty six (36) scheduled B-24 a/c, plus six (6) assigned a/c, took off from [unclear] at 0930 hours to bomb the Vienna Florisdorf A/F. (The last a/c was off at 1020 hours). The forty two (42) a/c formed in six (6) groups, the first of which was led by Colonel John A. Conarty, Deputy Group Commander, and the second, by Colonel A. L. Scorscher, Group Commander of the 46th Bombardment Group (M).

2. The Group formation was affected nine (9) miles above the base above the overcast. Rendezvous with one (1) group of the 46th Bombardment Group (M) was made over the base at 13,000 feet at 1104 hours.

3. Four (4) a/c returned early for the following reasons:

B-24 a/c No 42-50533 returned from the formation area, both inverters having failed after take-off. This a/c landed with two (2) tons of bombs at 1000 hours.

B-24 a/c No 44-13880 unable to locate the formation after having proceeded as far as (43°45'N-15°28'E) at 1120 hours, returned with two (2) tons of bombs landing at 1337 hours.

B-24 a/c No 42-35332 having lost No. 2 engine returned from (43°03'N-16°10'E) at 1145 hours landing at 1342 hours. This a/c jettisoned bombs to lighten the load.

B-24 a/c No 44-49837 lost No. 2 engine and returned from (47°13'N-14°42'E) at 1332 hours landing at 1535 hours. Two (2) tons of bombs were jettisoned by this a/c to lighten the load.

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Intr Heavy Miss Exp, cont'd

1. Thirty-seven (37) a/c were over the target at 1100Z hours and thirty-six (36) a/c dropped seventy-one and three quarters (71 3/4) tons of 500 pound HX bombs (.1 tons and sizes .01 and .005 tail casing) from 25,000 feet.

B-21 a/c No. 42-78603 was one (1) bomb hung up at time of release and jettisoned one quarter (1) ton of bombs five (5) minutes after bomb's ejection.

B-21 a/c No. 41-10072, after losing No. 2 engine, jettisoned two (2) tons of bombs at 1100Z hours to lighten the load. Bombs are believed to have hit on outskirts of Vienna.

B-21 a/c No. 41-10734, after a late take-off was unable to locate the formation and joined the 140th Bombardment Group (H). This a/c dropped two (2) tons of bombs on Trieste harbor with a/c of that Group.

Two (2) early returns jettisoned four (4) tons as follows:

B-21 a/c No. 42-95322, two (2) tons at (41°50'N-16°13'E) at 1215Z hours.

B-21 a/c No. 41-10527, two (2) tons at (47°13'N-14°42'E) at 1323Z hours.

Two (2) early returns brought back four (4) tons of bombs.

Recapitulation of bomb tonnage disposition

Thirty six (36) a/c dropped on target	71.75 tons
One (1) a/c of those over target jettisoned	.25 "
One (1) a/c jettisoned near Vienna	2.00 "
One (1) a/c bombed Trieste	2.00 "
Two (2) Early returns jettisoned	4.00 "
Two (2) Early returns brought back to base	4.00 "
Total	<u>84.00 "</u>

Bomb strike photos were returned from Able Group only and show the target free of bomb hits. These photos show approximately four dozen hits in open country two (2) miles northwest of the Florisdorf refinery. Two dozen additional hits were on the east bank of the Danube river, in a residential sector located 3,000

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Ltr Narr Miss Ext, contd

feet northwest of the refinery. Four (4) other hits fell in the residential area 2,000 feet northwest of the oil plant. Seven (7) more strikes were in a suburban residential district one and one-half miles (1½) miles southeast of the refinery.

5. Able Group Leader used the C-1 automatic pilot and the bomb run was by PFF. Baker Group Leader used the C-1 automatic pilot and the bomb run was started using PFF; however just before bombs away, the bombardier was able to identify the target through the smoke screen and look over, the bombs being released visually. (Baker Group was over the target six (6) minutes after Able Group and released bombs at 1413A hours, at which time the smoke screen could be penetrated sufficiently to permit identification of the target. Able Leader was unable to identify the target through the smoke screen).

6. Flak at the target was reported as very intense and accurate and lasting for a period of from five (5) to seven (7) minutes. Crews report that the flak appeared to be tracking the formation.

Flak was observed at (46°26'N-16°55'E) and described as six (6) bursts of heavy flak. Scant, heavy flak was observed at (46°20'N-16°30'E).

7. At 1248A hours, two (2) ME 100 e/c light or silver colored were observed at (46°00'N-14°50'E) at 23,500 feet. One (1) e/c came from high at twelve o'clock in what appeared to be an attack on Baker Group, however the e/c leveled off above the formation and passed over without opening fire. The second e/c skirted the formation at a distance. At this time P-38 e/c approached in pursuit of the e/a. Another crew reports that five (5) ME 100 e/c were observed at (45°50'N-14°56'E) at 1245A hours at 23,000 feet. These e/c, described as rusty brown in color, made no effort to attack and appeared to be looking for stragglers.

Two (2) possible FW 190 e/c were observed at a distance making what appeared to be passes at a lone B-17 at about 1435A hours at (47°37'N-17°15'E) from 22,000 feet.

One (1) crew reports seeing ten (10) contrails at 1424A hours from 23,000 feet in the Vienne area and at a distance of fifteen (15) miles from the formation.

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Ltr Navy Miss Ent, cont'd

8. Fifteen (15) to twenty (20) B-26 a/c were observed at 1612A hours at (16°03'N-17°50'E) and passed on to the rear of the formation. No escort was observed then until after the target and then only occasionally until 1634A hours at (13°43'N-16°26'E) when the escort was reported as leaving the formation.

9. Weather at take-off, 8/10 to 10/10 strato-cumulus and cumulus, base 3,500 feet, tops 10,000 feet with scattered cum at 1,000 feet. Heaviest clouds and greatest coverage were to south.

Over Adriatic, scattered low clouds along coast becoming 8/10 to 10/10; then decreasing to 3/10 on Italian coast. 3/10 to 5/10 thin clouds at 17,000 feet.

Clear over Dinarics except for few patchy strato-cumulus and alto-cumulus clouds.

North of Dinarics, in Czer area, 8/10 cirrus clouds, base 24,000 feet which thinned off to clear to east. Below was 10/10 altostratus, top 15,000 feet. Near IR these layers thinned and disappeared.

At target, clear; visibility 20 miles.

Approximately similar conditions on return. 8/10 strato-cumulus and cumulus at base. At 4,000 feet on landing.

10. The following observations were reported:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1620A	(13°27'N-17°01'E)	24,000	Eight (8) BFF dispersed on I/C
1630A	Bruck N/Y	34,500	N/Y full of e/sons - 500 estimated.

All crews report that Vienna was covered by a very effective smoke screen and that the location of the generators could not be determined.

11. The route was flown generally as briefed. Track chart showing route as flown is attached. Navigation was by IR and PFF. The PFF equipment was reported as having worked in a satisfactory manner.

12. Thirty-five (35) a/c landed at this base between 1625A hours and 1715A hours. The a/c that bombed Trieste landed at this base at 1350A hours.

One (1) B-26 a/c is down at a friendly field.

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Ltr Narr Miss Rpt, contd

13. One (1) B-24 a/c is missing. B-24 a/c No. 42-50752 was last seen at (47°32'N-17°15'E) flying eastward several thousand feet below the formation. This a/c appeared to have No. 4 prop windmilling. As the formation came off the target on a/c believed to be the missing a/c called over the radio that it was going to Russia.

14. Seven (7) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

2 Incls:
Incl 1 - Track Chart
Incl 2 - Selected Print

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Major, AC
Intelligence Officer