



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

Ltr Narr Miss Pat, 'cont'd

6. Decision to bomb alternate targets was made by the leader of each force because of weather conditions encountered.

a. HPL 10001 leader, Lt. Colonel William C. Sporn, Commanding Officer, 377th Bombardment Squadron (H), received a radio message from the Wing Leader, stating that target weather was 8/10ths to 10/10ths cirrus from 20,000/25,000 feet, with broken cirrus and vapor trails from 25,000/27,000 feet. Lt. Colonel Moore then advised the Wing Leader, requesting his plans. Reply was received to stay under the cirrus layer, and that weather contact would be affected. Shortly thereafter, the Wing Leader advised that he intended to attack 1100. A cc specified in Operations Order No. 104, Headquarters, 55th Bombardment Wing (H) 23 February 1945. Three (3) minutes prior to the IP for this alternate target, the Wing Leader was again heard over the radio when he called escort fighters and stated he was going to circle, try for altitude, and attempt to bomb the primary target. The Lt. Colonel, Bombardment Group Leader, however, decided to continue on and attack the planned alternate target, then close by.

b. HPL 10001 leader, Lt. Colonel James W. Gilson, Commanding Officer of the 370th Bombardment Squadron (H), encountered 10/10 cirrus at 20,000 feet. Hearing radio reports that the cirrus deck extended high, and other Groups stating that they intended to bomb the first alternate target, he decided because of his location, to bomb the second alternate target.

7. Bombing was effected as follows:

a. Twenty (20) s/c of HPL 10001 released forty (40) tons of 500 pound HX bombs, fused .1 nose and mixed .01 and .025 tail, at 1422A hours, from 19,800 feet, on an attack axis of 172°T, upon the first alternate target of the St. Volten W/V.

b. Twenty one (21) s/c of HPL 10001 released forty two (42) tons of 500 pound HX bombs at 1407A hours, from 20,000 feet altitude, on an attack axis of 276°T, upon the second alternate target of the Amstetten W/V.

c. The one (1) early return s/c of HPL 10001, jettisoned two (2) tons of bombs at 1338A hours at (42°35'N-16°30'E) to

RESULTS

Ltr Navy Miss Ent, cont'd

Wagner, the lead and to reduce the radar required from his own (a) operational carrier.

d. Bombing recapitulation is:

1st group

30 a/c dropped on St. Polten  
1 a/c ditched

40 tons  
2 tons  
42 tons

Total

2nd group

31 a/c dropped on Amstetten

42 tons

e. Bombing by both forces was accomplished by 30.

a. The lead a/c of 1st group reports that excellent reception was achieved enroute. Target sighted was 200 (50) miles away. Two (2) course corrections were made, the first of 20 left. Five (5) sighting angles were supplied, from 70° through 11°.

b. The lead a/c of 2nd group reports that for approximately one and one half (1 1/2) hours during the early portion of the night, set reception difficulties were encountered, of intermittent nature. The target was picked up twenty five (25) miles away. A cloud scene return was secured to the target, with six (6) sighting angles from 20° through 52°, and two (2) course corrections, the last of 5° left, being supplied.

c. Bomb results, as shown by photo marks, are:

a. 1st group photos show only sixteen (16) impacts, and these are in a forest located six and three quarters (6 3/4) miles northwest of St. Polten marshalling yard. Other photos taken by 1st group show bombs away at a point one and one half (1 1/2) miles northwest of the yard. The marshalling yard and the town of St. Polten are completely cloud covered, thus obscuring the remainder of the impacts.

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

1st Rear Miss Det, cont'd

b. 1st R. F. PHOTO plates show a ten-tenths (10/10) cloud cover at Winstetten marshalling yard. Neither aircraft nor terrain is visible on these photos.

10. Heavy flak was observed by both forces at 1308A hours at Gekovac (149214N-161261E). Intensity was scant to moderate, with the flak observed there, at altitude, not successfully avoided.

11. Air crews of 1st R. F. report sighting eight (8) to ten (10) unidentified a/c at approximately 1307A hours, in the vicinity of Urtenovac (149214N-160311E). These a/c, believed SWP, were at about 10,000 feet altitude, were sighted proceeding on a course similar to the Woster formation, which was then at 16,000 feet.

12. a. 1st R. F. first observed fighter escort, consisting of twenty (20) F-51s, at 1150A hours at (132241N-160421E). These a/c were identified as of the 232nd Fighter Group, and were last seen at 1604A hours at (142261N-160111E).

b. 1st R. F. observed, on just reported contact, three (3) F-51s at 1304A hours at (146011N-160301E).

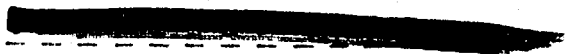
13. Weather was reported as follows:

Base at take off, 3-4/10ths cirrus at 22/24,000 feet. Visibility, 15/20 miles.

Route out, 4-5/10ths cirrus at 22/24,000 feet, over the Adriatic and Yugoslavias. Visibility, 20 miles, or better. At the Yugoslav, Austrian border, low stratocumulus with tops at 16/17,000 feet appeared from the northwest. Near the primary target, 10/10ths stratocumulus, tops to 16,000 feet, with visibility 20 miles. Cirrus was present in patches from 19/22,000 feet, with another layer at 22,000 feet.

Target, 10/10ths stratocumulus; tops to 16,000 feet, and 5-7/10ths cirrus from 20,000 to 24,000 feet. This layer was thin, with another layer above at 27,000 feet. Visibility, 15 miles in area.

Return, same as route out, with cirrus increased to 5-6/10ths. Base on return, 4-5/10ths cirrus at 23,000 to 24,000 feet. Visibility 15 miles.



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

Its Horn Miss Est, cont'd

14. Observations were reported as follows:

- a. Colvoco W/W - estimated six hundred (600) units, at 1310Z hours, from 20,000 feet.
- b. Sprothely W/W - completely full, and estimated at 1,000 units at 1328Z hours.
- c. Hiner Konstadt W/W's - both full at 1340Z hours from 20,000 feet.

15. A/C landed at this base as follows:

- a. One (1) early return a/c of sub 4050 at 1445Z hours.
- b. Twenty (20) a/c of sub 4010 from 1300Z hours to 1715Z hours.
- c. Twenty one (21) a/c of sub 4040 from 1500Z hours to 1740Z hours.

16. Bomb strike photographs were attempted by:

- a. Six (6) a/c of RED FORCE. A selected print is enclosed.
- b. Seven (7) a/c of BLUE FORCE. A selected print is enclosed.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS F. BLUM  
Major, Air Corps  
Intelligence Officer.

- Incls:  
Incl 1 - Track Chart - RED FORCE  
Incl 2 - Track Chart - BLUE FORCE  
Incl 3 - Selected print - RED FORCE  
Incl 4 - Selected print - BLUE FORCE