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

FER/ATA/ja

319.1

16 March 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 16 March 1945, twenty (20) of twenty one (21) scheduled B-24 a/c, comprising the Red Force, took off beginning at 0745A hours to bomb Korneuburg O/R, Vienna, Austria.

(a). One a/c No 42-51556 had a defective magneto which was not repaired in time to permit the a/c to take off.

(b). Red Force was led by Lt. Colonel James H. Gilson, Commanding Officer of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Form-up and assembly were accomplished without incident. However, due to adverse weather conditions, much difficulty was encountered in effecting the wing line rendezvous. Over Andria 464th Bombardment Group (H) was in its proper position behind the 460th Bombardment Group (H) and the 485th Bombardment Group (H). However, as the Spur was reached overcast conditions were encountered through which the 464th Group Leader climbed on course. Having climbed above the overcast the 464th Group Leader found himself leading the wing formation a position which was maintained to the target and return.

3. One (1) a/c returned early:

A/C No 42-51553 turned back at (4130N - 1630E) when its No 1 magneto went out and No 1 prop governor began throwing oil. A/C landed at 1002A hours. This a/c returned its entire bomb load of two (2) tons to this base.

4. Nineteen (19) a/c were over Korneuburg O/R, Vienna, Austria at 1144A hours and dropped thirty eight (38) tons of 500 pound RDX bombs (.1 nose and mixed .01 and .025 tail fusing) from 23,500 feet on 169° heading.

Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage:

Nineteen (19) effective sorties dropped on target	38 tons
One (1) early return brought back to base	2 "
Total	<u>40 "</u>

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5. Bombing was done by offset method due to extremely heavy conditions at the target. Group leader used C-1 automatic pilot on the bomb run.

6. Red Force photos show numerous hits in the area inside the railroad fork, 1,000 feet west of Korneuburg refinery. There were direct hits on tracks of each fork. A fairly large explosion occurred---probably among rolling stock---on the tracks 1,200 feet west of the center of the refinery. Majority of the impacts are obscured under the clouds which border the west and southwest edges of the refinery.

7. Flak at the target was H to IAA and of the tracking type. Formation was in flak for a period of two (2) to three (3) minutes. SH flak was observed at (462E - 1640E) at 1242 hours.

8. Rendezvous was made with twenty (20) or thirty (30) P-38 a/c at 1049 hours at (464E - 1645E); escort was last seen at 1300A hours at (4530E - 1622E).

9. Due to adverse weather conditions deviations to right of course were made over Adriatic until Zara was reached. From Zara to the target and return the course was flown as briefed. Track chart showing route flown is attached.

10. Seventeen (17) a/c landed at this base between 1450 hours and 1605A hours.

11. Two (2) a/c are missing.

A/C No. 44-19409 was last observed at (4604E - 1630E) at 1253A hours dropping behind formation with No 4 engine feathered. Pilot called over the radio that he was going to Zara.

A/C No. 42-78613 was last seen at (4626E - 1643E) at 1243A hours with No. 2 engine feathered. Pilot called over the radio that he was going to Zara.

12. Five (5) a/c suffered minor flak damage.

13. The Blue Force, consisting of twenty one (21) scheduled a/c took off beginning at 0805A hours to bomb the same Primary Target as assigned to Red Force. The Blue Force was led by Lt Colonel William G. Moore, Commanding Officer of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H).

14. The Group form-up and assembly were made without

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incident. However, the "line" rendezvous was hampered by adverse weather which was encountered south of the Spur. As the Group leader climbed through the overcast conditions over the Adriatic he became separated from the other groups of the Wing, and found it necessary to circle about in the vicinity of (4300N - 1630E) before proper Wing position could be assured.

15. Two a/c were early returns.

A/C No. 42-51736 turned back at (1403N - 1512E) at 1047A hours due to an oxygen leak at the No. seven (7) stations. A/C landed at this base at 1215A hours returning all two (2) tons of its bombs.

A/C No. 42-25255 turned back at 1108A hours at (1530N - 1513E) due to the loss of its No. three (3) engine. A/C jettisoned its bombs at (4320N - 1530E) at 1145A hours to lighten its load. A/C landed this base at 1310A hours.

16. Nineteen (19) a/c were over Amstetten M/Y, Austria, at 1229A hours and dropped thirty eight (38) tons of 500 pound BDX bombs (.1 nose and mixed .01 and .025 tail fusing) from 22,700 feet on a heading of 1930.

Recapitulation of Bomb Tonnage	
Nineteen (19) effective sorties dropped on target	
	23 tons
One (1) early return brought back to base	2 "
One (1) early return jettisoned	2 "
Total	<u>27</u> "

17. Blue Force photos show a heavy concentration of hits on the east choke point of the east marshalling yard at Amstetten. These strikes are visible between two sections of trackage bombed by earlier groups.

18. Rendezvous was made with twenty (20) to thirty (30) P-38 type a/c at 1136A hours at (4710N - 1440E). Escort was last seen at 1230A hours at Amstetten, (4807N - 1453E).

19. Weather at base 6/10-8/10 altocumulus, base 11,000 at take-off continuing to coast and over Adriatic, with tops 13,000. Cloud deck broke over Dalmatian coast to clear. Visibility was 15 miles.

Clear over Dinarics except for east slopes where there was 3/10 to 4/10 thin altostratus, top 16,000 feet.

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Clear from Dinarics to target (Vienna) except for occasional small patches of low and middle clouds.

At target (Vienna) 2/10 to 3/10 stratus, top 8,000 ft. Visibility 15 miles. Cirrus to north at 25,000 feet.

On return, similar conditions except there was an 3/10 - 10/10 altocumulus deck over the Dinarics top 14,000 feet. Large patches of stratus over the Adriatic, top 7,000 feet. Visibility 10 miles.

At base 6/10 to 8/10 cumulus and stratocumulus, base 4,000 feet. Visibility 10/12 miles.

At target, Amstetten, clear; visibility 20 miles.

20. Bombing was done by visual method; Group leader used C-1 automatic pilot on the bomb run.

21. Route as flown was to right of briefed course enroute over the Adriatic due to adverse weather conditions, on course as briefed from Zara to (4800N - 1510E).

At (4800N - 1510E) formation left the prescribed route and flew to (4815N - 1500E) to (4815N - 1450E) then to IP, (4835N - 1458E), and thence back on a reciprocal course. Track chart of route as flown is attached.

22. Nineteen (19) a/c landed at this base between 1507A hours and 1615A hours.

23. Six (6) a/c attempted photos. Selected prints are attached.

24. Observations -

Time	Place	Alt.	Observation
1151	(4825N - 1657E)	23,000	25 SEF parked near fighter strip
1225	(4715N - 1709E)	19,000	300-400 cars in M/Y.
1145	(4712N - 1455E)	22,000	300-400 cars in M/Y.

Smoke pots observed in operation at Linz and Moosbierbaum.

For the Commanding Officer:

- 4 INCLS;
- Incl 1, 2, Track charts
- Incl 3, 4 Selected photos

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 Major, AC  
 Intelligence Officer