

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

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

APA/FFE/hob

25 March 1945

319.1

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 25 March 1945 forty (40) of forty one scheduled B-24 a/c took off beginning at 0755A hours to bomb the Prague Letnany A/D, Czechoslovakia. The forty (40) a/c formed into two (2) attack units of twenty (20) a/c each. The first attack unit was led by Captain William T. Black, Jr., Flight Leader, 776th Bombardment Squadron (H). The second attack unit was led by Captain Howard D. Brown, Flight Leader, 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

(a) One (1) a/c failed to take off:

A/C No 44-40401 had a defective No. 4 turbo which was not repaired in time to permit the a/c to take off.

2. Group form-up, assembly and line rendezvous were effected as prescribed and without incident.

3. One a/c was an early return.

A/C No 44-41337 turned back at (45°25'N-15°22'E) at 1045A hours due to a leak in the nose and flight deck oxygen system. This a/c returned its entire bomb load of 2.16 tons to this base. A/C landed at this base at 1240A hours.

4. One (1) a/c was a prior return.

A/C No 42-78472 turned back at (47°02'N-14°50'E) at 1112A hours due to an oil leak in No. 3 engine and a drop of oil pressure in the Nos. 3 and 4 engines. This a/c dropped 2.16 tons of fragmentation bombs on Klagenfurt A/D (46°39'N-14°15'E) at 1125A hours from 18,000 feet on a heading of 197°. A/C landed at this base at 1355A hours.

SECRET

Ltr 44-11433

A/C 44-11433 was the primary target of the attack over the primary target area (51° 11' N-11° 33' E) at 1215 hours.

5. Thirty-eight (38) a/c were over the primary target at 1215 hours (briefed target time 1215 hours) and dropped 28.42 tons of bombs. The bombs were from 23, 250 feet at an altitude of 2850.

Recapitulation of Bomb Damage

Thirty-eight (38) a/c dropped on target	32.42 tons
One (1) early return brought back to base	2.16 "
One (1) early return dropped on Klagenfurt A/D	2.16 "
One (1) a/c jettisoned	0.16 "
Total	36.4 tons

6. Bombing was done visually; both first and second attack units used C-1 automatic pilot on the how-rar.

7. Both strike photos show thirty-two (32) a/c destroyed and ten (1) others damaged on Letnany and Koely A/D's. The location of these aircraft is as follows: Fifteen (15) destroyed in a small area immediately north of the workshops and assembly shops on Letnany A/D. Six (6) others were destroyed and three (3) damaged at the north end of this landing round. One (1) aircraft was destroyed in front of the hangars at the west end of Koely A/D. Seven (7) additional a/c were destroyed and seven damaged off the east end of this A/D. Heavy smoke obscures probable damage to additional a/c at the south central edge of Letnany A/D. An excellent frag pattern was scored throughout the landing area of Letnany A/D, with other smaller patterns to the east. Several strings of bombs fell on Koely A/D.

8. S-11H flak was encountered at the primary target for a period of two (2) to three (3) minutes. Flak was of the tracking type.

9. Four (4) FW 190's were observed at (48° 00' N-14° 50' E) at 1145A hours. The enemy a/c displayed no aggressiveness, and remained beyond range of formation at all times. The FW 190's approached formation from above and to the rear, and passed beneath the formation on a heading of about 170.



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

Ltr Narr Miss Rpt contd

10. Rendezvous was made with thirty (30) to thirty-five (35) P-51's at 1118A hours at (47°12'N-14°14'E). Escort was first seen at (44°30'N-15°40'E) at 1445A hours. Excellent penetration, target, and withdrawal cover was thus provided.

11. Weather was generally clear at base at take-off, enroute to the target and at target, visibility 20 miles or better. On return, 3/10 to 5/10 cirrus early to west of course, increasing to 7/10-8/10 over Adriatic, based at 25,000 feet. 7/10 cirrus at base on return above 25,000 feet, visibility 25 miles.

12. Route was flown generally as briefed. Track chart of route as flown is attached.

13. Thirty-eight (38) a/c landed at this base between 1600A hours and 1717A hours. The latter a/c having landed first at Zora, Yugoslavia to gas up.

14. Nine (9) a/c attempted to tos. Selected print is attached.

15. Observations:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Alt</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1314A	(48°11'N-14°02'E)	22,000	Approximately 500 wagons in main M/Y.
1249A	(49°19'N-13°59'E)	21,500	300 cars in M/Y
1312A	(48°15'N-14°12'E)	22,000	10 SEP observed on A/D - much activity in hangar area
1219A	(50°07'N-14°33'E)	22,000	75 SEP observed on A/D
1118A	(47°12'N-14°48'E)	18,000	400 cars in M/Y

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

2 Incls
1. Track chart
2. Selected Print

FRANCIS F. ELDER
Major, AC
Intelligence Officer