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HEADQUARTERS
450TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF
APO-520 US ARMY

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: February 13, 1945

MISSION NBR. 216

TARGET: Vienna, Austria - Southeast Goods Depot

I. CHRONOLOGY

Eighteen B-24 type aircraft took off at 0845-0856 hours to attack the SE Goods Depot, Vienna, Austria. One aircraft turned back at 44.59N-15.13E at 1147 hours because of engine failure. Seventeen aircraft were over the target at 1300 hours. Sixteen aircraft dropped 30.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs from 25,000 - 25,500 feet. One aircraft jettisoned 2 tons two minutes before the target due to an accidental release. The aircraft returning early jettisoned 2 tons in the Adriatic at 43.45N-15.20E. 2 bombs (.5 ton) were jettisoned in Adriatic by one aircraft in order to keep up with formation. Seventeen aircraft returned to base at 1545 hours. None lost, none missing, none are friendly fields.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Due to local weather conditions Group assembly was executed at remote assembly point (Pelagosa). Rendezvous with other groups was effected at remote assembly point on course to Key Point at 1027 hours at 12,000 feet. Briefed route was flown to I.P. The Group ahead overran I.P. approximately 5 miles. In order to avoid a collision course on the bombrun the 450th followed and turned on the target on a heading of 110 degrees T.C. Considerable drift was experienced on this heading and the course was known to be slightly right at the bomb release point. A sharp right rally was executed to avoid flak to the NE and the prescribed course flown to base. Constant drift caused slight deviation enroute to base and the formation passed over Nagykanizsa (46.27N-16.59E) at which point intense, accurate flak was experienced and several ships holed. Escort of 25-35 P-51's contacted the formation at 46.00N-14.50E at 1155 hours and provided penetration, target and withdrawal cover to Nagykanizsa where they departed at 1330 hours. The escort was at varying levels when initial contact was made ranging from 20,000 - 25,000 feet. About one minute before bombs away a number of P-51's flew directly below the formation. It is not know whether these were a part of the Wing escort. Weather enroute was generally 5/10 scattered cumulus with average tops at 6000 feet. Density decreased to approximately 3/10 at target with unlimited ceiling. Haze in the target area contributed a further obstacle to visual conditions.

III RESULTS

The bombrun was executed by boxes in trail, each box dropping individually. The lead box found the target smoke obscured and dropped by off-set method. Vertical photos show bombs hitting in built-up area 1600 feet south of the SE Goods Depot.

The second box dropped by synchronous PFF method. Bombs fell long, hitting approximately 2000 feet west of the Winterhofen Oil Storage.

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S-2 Narrative Report (Continued)
Mission Nbr. 216 Date February 13, 1945
Target: Vienna, Austria - Southeast Goods Depot

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No encounters. Two aircraft were seen in the target at 1304 hours at approximately 30,000 feet. Very short vapor trails (2 each aircraft) were observed indicating possible ME-262's.

B. Flak: Moderate to intense, accurate flak was experienced at the target. The lead ship reported that flak was intense on approach to target area but cut off suddenly about a minute before bombs away. Following aircraft in same box reported that flak was moderate and accurate from right and rear. The second box reported intense, accurate flak two minutes before bomb release point and inaccurate tracking fire on the rally for 1½ minutes. Large red bursts were reported. Nine aircraft received minor damage but it is not definitely known whether all were hit at the target.

Enroute to base the formation passed over Nagykanizsa and experienced intense, accurate flak. Formation was at 19,000 feet on a 220 degree heading.

Target was partially blanked by smoke from positions on either side of target area.

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1323 hours 6 miles NE Brux from 19,400 feet four or five chutes were seen in the distance. They seemed to blend into the sky and were seen for only a minute.

At 1108 hours from 15,500 feet a convoy of 3 large and 5 small boats were observed heading south at 44.00N-15.15E. Large vessels resembled destroyers.

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Losses: None
- B. Damage: 9 ships received minor holes from flak. Not definitely known whether all were at primary target or some at Nagykanizsa.
- C. Casualties: None
- D. Victories: None

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S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION NBR. 217

MISSION DATE: February 13, 1945

TARGET: Zagreb, Yugoslavia - West Marshalling Yard

I. CHRONOLOGY

Eighteen B-24 type aircraft took off at 1030-1054 hours to bomb the West Marshalling Yard at Zagreb, Yugoslavia. Three aircraft returned early. Seven aircraft dropped 13.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the primary target at 1417 hours from 25,000 feet altitude. Seven aircraft dropped 13.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the West Station Marshalling Yard at 1417 hours from 25,500 feet altitude. This latter was attacked as target of opportunity because the lead bombardier of one box could not locate the primary until too late because of smoke covering the target. All bombing was by visual method. Three aircraft jettisoned six tons of 500 lb RDX bombs in the Adriatic; two in making early returns caused by engine failure, and the other because bombs failed to release over the target. One aircraft returned two tons of 500 lb RDX bombs to base in making an early return caused by engine failure. Fifteen aircraft returned to base at 1605 hours.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

After making rendezvous with the 449th Bombardment Group over Manduria the formation departed on course at 1141 hours at 12,000 feet altitude. The route was flown as briefed to the initial point Krako (45.59N-15.29E) from which point the target was attacked on an axis of 115 degrees T. A right rally was made off the target and withdrawal route was flown as briefed. The target was attacked by two boxes in trail. "Chaff" and "Jamming" devices were employed. Twelve P-51 escort aircraft made rendezvous at 1300 hours near Vis Isle at 10,000 feet altitude and withdrew in Zagreb area at 1417 hours at 26,000 feet altitude.

III. RESULTS

Bomb strike photos show: Box 1, placed heavy concentration of bombs across the center of the West Station Marshalling Yard, at Zagreb, bursts being observed among rolling stock. Fires were started. Box 2, several bursts on the West Marshalling Yard and a very heavy concentration of adjacent warehouses and stores buildings. Fires were started.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None
B. Flak: Moderate to intense, accurate, heavy at target. Five aircraft received minor damage. No route flak received.

V. OBSERVATIONS

At 1437 hours, from 20,000 feet at 43.56N-15.45E: Possible message trapped out in snow, P-E and possibly another E, in a valley, on sloping side of river bank.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: None
B. Damage: 5 aircraft holed by flak (Minor)
C. Casualties: None
D. Victories: None