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

S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: March 15, 1945

MISSION NBR. 240

TARGET: Vienna, Austria - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery

I. CHRONOLOGY

Forty aircraft took off at 0900-0941 hours to bomb the Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria. Thirty-eight aircraft dropped 73.5 tons of 500 lb RDX bombs on the primary target at 1337-1340 hours from 23,500 - 26,000 feet. Two aircraft returned early due to engine failures, and jettisoned a total of 4 tons in the Adriatic at 41.30N-17.10E and 43.30N-15.30E. One aircraft had difficulty maintaining its position in the formation and jettisoned .5 tons at 44.48N-14.50E. Thirty-seven aircraft returned to base at 1626-1634 hours. One aircraft landed at a friendly field but has since returned to base. None lost. None missing. None at friendly fields.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

The rendezvous was effected as planned and the route flown as briefed. At the I.P. weather conditions made necessary a PFF run and the bombers attacked the target on an axis of 139/152 degrees. Bombing was to be by squadrons, but a malfunction of the PFF equipment in the second squadron necessitated its dropping with the lead squadron as an attack unit. A sharp right rally off the target was accomplished by all squadrons and the route to base was flown as briefed. 25-30 P-51's rendezvoused at 1325 hours at 48.45N-15.11E and withdrew from the formation at 1340 hours in the target area. There was a layer of 5-8/10 alto-cumulus up to 15,000' over the target while enroute the weather varied from 5-10/10 alto-cumulus up to 10,000'.

III. RESULTS

Due to weather conditions, bombs were dropped by the PFF method with the lead bombardier having an opportunity to make slight corrections just before bombs away. Crew report a good run and results are believed good. Photo cover reveals no bomb bursts because of clouds over the target, however, fires are seen in the northeast corner of the refinery.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None

B. Flak:

<u>Squadron</u>	<u>Tgt. time</u>	<u>Bombing Alt.</u>	<u>Flak Exp.</u>	<u>Lost at Tgt</u>	<u>Sev. Dam</u>	<u>Slight Dam.</u>
1st	1337	24,000	M I H	0	0	0
2nd	1337	25,000	S I H	0	0	1
3rd	1339	26,000	M I H	0	0	0
4th	1340	23,500	M A H	0	0	0

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IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

B. Flak: (continued)

On the approach to the target tracking type fire was encountered with 5 - 6 bursts appearing in the sky approximately every 20 seconds. The altitude was good but off to the right of the formation. On the rally the fire shifted to the barrage type which generally trailed the formation. The last squadron reported the flak to be accurate while all others reported it to be low and trailing. This fourth squadron was flying lower than any of the other squadrons and therefore may not have benefited fully from chaff dispensed by preceding aircraft. The sharp right rally proved very effective in avoiding the intense barrage which appeared to the left of the formation.

V. OBSERVATIONS

A total of eight unidentified aircraft were observed. At 1345 hours from 25,000' two unidentified aircraft with white wings and black fuselages were seen flying at about 4000' at Zeltweg (47.112N-14.45E). On the return route at 1350 hours six more unidentified aircraft were seen from 25,000' over Zeltweg. These six aircraft flew level and parallel with our formation for about 10 minutes but stayed out of range.

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Losses: None
- B. Damage: 1 aircraft sustained very minor flak damage.
- C. Casualties: None
- D. Victories: None

E. Radar Observations and Report: One operator experienced equipment failure, however, the other three operators report that the target appeared clearly on their scope and good bomb runs resulted.