

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1947 O-481111

HEADQUARTERS  
165TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
APO 520 U.S. Army

WWE/1000

310.1

30 July 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

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

1. On 30 July 1944, 38 B-24 a/c of 39 scheduled took off beginning at 0730R hours to bomb Budapest Buna Aircraft Factory (Primary Target). The 38 a/c formed two (2) attack units, the first unit was led by Lt. Col Charles E. McKenna III, Deputy Group Commander, and the second unit by 1st Lt Robert H. Conlock, Flight Leader, 776th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. The group form-up and rendezvous with the 165th Bombardment Group were accomplished as ordered and without difficulty. For information relative to wing rendezvous and column enroute to and over the target see inclosure (Operations Statement).

3. a. One (1) a/c failed to take off because No 2 coil floor truck checked.

b. Three (3) a/c returned early for the following reasons:

A/c No 41-70417 - Generators 1, 2, and 4 inoperative.

A/c No 41-70301 - No 2 engine inoperative, run-down prop, excessive loss of oil.

A/c No 42-70336 - No 2 and No 3 engines were leaking gas, right waist gun and other portions of a/c were saturated with gas.

A. Thirty five (35) a/c were over the target at 1115R hours (briefed target time 1110R hours) and thirty four (34) a/c dropped eighty five (85) tons of 500 round ETV and GP bombs with .1 nose and .025 tail fusing.

One (1) a/c over the target was unable to set up sight and synchronize on the target in time to toggle, and

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returned two and one half (2 1/2) tons to base. One early return brought two and one half (2 1/2) tons back to base, and two (2) early returns jettisoned two and one (2 1/2) tons each at the following locations:

A/C No A1-20117 - 30 miles due east of Turletto, Italy.  
A/C No A1-20226 - At A19501N - 160251E.

Disposition of total bomb tonnage:

Dropped on target area	85
Returned to base	5
Jettisoned	5
Total tons carried	95

Limited bomb strike photo coverage, from the first attack unit only, shows the Buna A/C Assembly Plant partially smoke obscured and with no apparent hits. The main concentration of bombs photographed is approximately 1,000 feet northwest of the target and on the Tokol Airrome. Approximately 25 hits are on the airrome proper -- northeast of the runway and extending eastward between the flight hangar and the Assembly Shop. Of fifteen twin engine aircraft present on the airrome, two were destroyed and four were probably damaged.

5. A-5 was used by lead e/c of both attack units.

6. Flak at the target was M to IAF and was not encountered until immediately before bomb release line. Time in flak was reported as approximately three (3) minutes. Flak was observed at points enroute and return which are known locations and on which the crews had been thoroughly briefed.

7. Thirty (30) enemy a/c were observed, fifteen (15) ME 109s in the target area and seven (7) ME 109s in the Lake Balaton area. Eight (8) FW 190s at A7020'N - 17030'E.

Ten (10) ME 109s in target area started to attack our Group from 3 o'clock high but made a 90° turn right and attacked the group to our rear, three (3) abreast, high at 12 o'clock on Able Box diving through the formation. These e/a were immediately engaged by the escort which was observed to destroy three (3) in this area. Numerous dog fights were observed at the target and in the Lake Balaton area. The

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crews were all impressed by and praised highly the support of today's fighter escort.

All e/c were reported as black or dark and no outstanding markings.

Rockets were used by both P-47 and P-51 e/c from out of range of our guns.

Claims were one (1) P-47 destroyed as it attacked another group and came within range of our cannon. This claim is being held for further verification.

8. Rendezvous with fighter escort was made at 10:00 hours at 45°10'N - 12°10'E when 20 P-38 and 20 P-51 e/c were sighted. From that time until 12:50 hours at the Yugoslavian coast the fighter cover was continuous and very effective, 20/50 of both types being observed at short intervals in the vicinity of the formation and no opportunity was afforded e/c to engage the formation.

### 9. Weather

Base on Take-Off - 4/10 strato cumulus at 3500 feet, visibility 18 miles in light haze.

Route to Target - Scattered patches of strato cumulus generally 2/10 to 3/10 with line of cumulus at 7000 feet to the east of course. Visibility 15 miles in haze and slight surface stratus, to the Dinaric Alps over the Adriatic. Over the mountains 2/10 to 3/10 flat cumulus and strato cumulus, visibility 15 to 18 miles. Leaving the mountains, patches of alto stratus at 15000 feet, 5/10 until 9/10 to 10/10 from Lake Balaton area to edge of Budapest. Visibility 20 miles.

Target - 3/10 to 4/10 strato cumulus at 10000 feet. Visibility 12 to 15 miles in haze.

Route on Return - Strato cumulus at 12000 feet generally 3/10, occasionally reaching 5/10 over the lowlands with cumulo nimbus visible building to 25000 feet in scattered localities. Visibility 15 miles in light haze. Over the mountains 7/10 bulging and rapidly building cumulus bases 10000 feet to 16000 feet, some scattered cumulo nimbus beginning to develop. Over the Adriatic 2/10 flat cumulus or strato cumulus at 8000 feet, visibility 18 miles in disappearing haze.

Base on Return - 3/10 to 4/10 cumulus at 5000 feet bases. Visibility 20 miles.

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10. A/C No 12-51102 (E/U) failed to return and reports establish that it was lost at the target as a result of a direct flak hit or as a result of receiving direct hits from bombs dropped by our own a/c. Three chutes were observed.

Two (2) a/c received flak damage and one (1) of these will be inoperative for twenty-four hours.

No crew casualties were sustained.

## 11. Important observations:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Observation</u>
1006P	Jezero 44°20'N-17°12'E	20,000	Brown smoke, appeared to be smoke generators.
1202P	Brod 45°10'N-18°02'E	?	Effective smoke screen.
1141P	Mohac 46°00'N-18°42'E	22,000	Fifteen barges, five boats near power house and dispersed ammunition dump on Danube River.

12. Thirty four (34) a/c landed at this base from 1247B hours to 1415P hours.

13. Route was flown as briefed except for slight deviation in vicinity of IP.

14. Three (3) a/c attempted photographs. Selected print attached.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANCIS W. ELDER  
Major, AC  
Intelligence Officer

2 Inclosures  
Incl 1 - Operations Report  
Incl 2 - Track Chart  
Incl 3 - Selected print