

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS 55TH BOMB WING (H)
APO 520 US ARMY

S E C R E T
Auth: CG 55BW
3 Mar 45
Init _____
E-5

3 March 1945

OPERATIONS ORDER
NUMBER #109

THIS IS PLAN BAKER

1.

a.

See Intelligence Annex.

b.

4 Groups of 304th Wing attack WIERNER NEUSTADT Main Sorting Sidings and Station Yard from 1240A to 1320A.

4 Groups of 5th Wing attack SOPRON East and West M/Y's & 2 Groups attack BRUCK M/Y from 1320A to 1345A.

4 Groups of 47th Wing attack HEGYSHALOM (Sic.) M/Y from 1350A to 1430A.

3 Groups of 49th Wing attack GRAZ M/Y from 1245A to 1315A

154 Wx Recon Sq. A/C provide target and wx recon at 1st light; Wx recon for early part of route will be provided by this a/c.

Fighters of 15FC provide PTW (Protect to Wing) escort for all Wings.

AIR FORCE ALTERNATE TARGETS:

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| AF# 1 - | ZAGREB WEST MY. | TCS 8-15. | (VISUAL) |
| AF# 2 - | ZAGREB EAST MY. | TCS 8-15. | (VISUAL) |
| AF# 3 - | CELJE MY. | TC 8-32-NA. | (VISUAL) |
| AF# 4 - | LJUBLJANA MY. | TC 8-100-NA. | (VISUAL) |
| AF# 5 - | BROD SOUTH MY. | TC 8-36-NA. | (VISUAL) |
| AF# 6 - | BROD MAIN MY. | TC 8-103-NA. | (VISUAL) |
| AF# 7 - | ST. VIET MY and STN. | MBC 14- 81. | (VISUAL or PFF) |
| AF# 8 - | ST MICHAEL. | MBC 14- 90. | (VISUAL or PFF) |
| AF# 9 - | OMITTED. | | |
| AF# 10 - | VILLACH MY'S. | MBC 14- 40. | (VISUAL or PFF) |
| AF# 11 - | KNITTELFELD LOCO REPAIR SHOPS | MBC 14-76. | (VISUAL or PFF) |

2.

Maximum effort (36 a/c plus spares) each group of 55th Wing bombing at 13 minute intervals (sic.) attack SZOMBATHELY SOUTH M/Y, 4 March 1945. This is Plan Baker.

ALTERNATE TARGETS: AF# 10, AF# 4, AF# 2.

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Opns Order #109, Hq 55BW, 3 Mar 45, Cont'd

PROFITABLE TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY: AF# 3, AF# 5, AF# 6, AF# 7, AF# 8, AF# 11.

RENDEZVOUS: Groups leave ANDRIA at 13 minute intervals at 11000 feet,
460th Leading at 0833A.

FIGHTER BOMBER RENDEZVOUS: To be signalled(sic) later.

ORDER OF FLIGHT: 2 columns of Wings: Right column - 304th, 5th, 47th.
Left column - 55th (460-485-465-464), 49th, 5th Wings.

ROUTE OUT: ANDRIA TO 4200N 1620E to Control Point ZARA (4407N 1515E) to
LIEZEN (4744N 1414E) to GAMING (4753N 1433E) to LUNZ (4752N 1501E)
to IP to Target.

Start Gradual Climb to Bombing Altitude at 4200N 1620E.

1st. Control Point Time: 0955A at 15000 feet.

INITIAL POINT: OBERASPANG (4733N 1606E).

AXIS OF ATTACK: 130 degrees.

1st. TARGET TIME: 1200A.

BOMBING ALTITUDE: 22000, 23000, 22500, 23500 feet respectively.

TARGET ELEVATION: 721 feet.

RALLY: RIGHT to ZALALOVO (4651N 1635E).

ROUTE BACK: ZALALOVO to bases.

3.

x.

Load 8 - 500# RDX bombs fused .1 nose and .01 tail.

Intervalometer Settings: 25 feet Visual Only.

Visual MPI's all Groups: 0.0-9.6, N.7-10.5, N.4-11.4 all on target chart 12-10-NA.

Employ PFF aircraft for navigational aid only. This is a planned visual mission.

Bomb by Boxes using A11 MPI's. POSITIVE identification of target must be made. No
targets within 100 miles of the RUSSIAN front lines will be bombed except those specified.

Possible presence of RUSSIAN fighter aircraft in target areas necessitates care on part of
all gunners to prevent shooting down friendly aircraft.

DO NOT TAKE OFF UNTIL NOTIFIED.

FIRST ALTERNATE: AF# 10 - VILLACH M/Y's (Visual or PFF).

INITIAL POINT: REMNWEIG (4702N 1338E).

AXIS OF ATTACK: 159 degrees.

RALLY: Right to NALOGU (4623N 1345E).

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Opns Order #109, HQ 55BW, 3 Mar 45, Cont'd.

ROUTE BACK: NALOGU to SKRAD (4527N 1455E) to bases.

Use MPI as shown on target chart.

INTERVALOMETER SETTINGS: 25 feet Visual, 75 feet PFF.

SECOND ALTERNATE: AF# 4 - LJUBLJANA M/Y (Visual Only)

INITIAL POINT: ST. ANDREJ (4626N 1432E).

AXIS OF ATTACK: 180 degrees.

RALLY: Left to V. LASCE (4550N 1438E).

ROUTE BACK: V. LASCE to bases.

Use MPI as shown on target chart.

INTERVALOMETER SETTINGS: 25 feet Visual Only.

THIRD ALTERNATE: AF# 2 - ZAGREB EAST M/Y (Visual Only)

INITIAL POINT: LEPOGLAVA (4612N 1602E).

AXIS OF ATTACK: 179 degrees.

RALLY: Left to TUROPOLJSKI (4536N 1612E).

ROUTE BACK: TUROPOLJSKI to bases.

Use MPI as shown on target chart.

INTERVALOMETER SETTINGS: 25 feet Visual Only.

4.

No Change.

5.

a.

Assigned Group Command Frequency and VHF Channel "B" for communication within the Group.

VHF Wing Channel "C" for Group to Group within the Wing.

VHF Channel "A" for Bombers to Fighters and Wing to Wing.

b.

Bomber Call Sign: 5th Wing (Attacking SOPRON) - GREENHERD, 47th Wing - CARTLOAD, 49th Wing - RECKLESS, 304th Wing - MOSES, 55th Wing - JETBLACK, 460-JETBLACK 1, 485th-JETBLACK 2, 465th-JETBLACK 3, 464th-JETBLACK 4. (Attacking SZOMBATHELY) 5th Wing(atkg BRUCK)- ROASTLAMB.

c.

Fighter Call Sign: 5th Wing (Attacking SOPRON) - FOOTHOLD, 47th Wing - HOusetop, 49th Wing - SHAPELY, 55th Wing- FRONTROOM, 304th Wing - SADLER.

5th Wing Attacking BRUCK - DOLCIS.

d.

Recall Signs: 5th Wing - DOGFACE, 47th Wing - PANHANDLE, 49th Wing - POORBRED, 55th Wing RUMRUNNER, 304th Wing - CALIFORNIA, 15FC - BARFLY.

x.

Radio discipline must be enforced. Standard bombs away signals will be observed. Employ Chaff, Panther, and Carpet per S.O.P. (Standard Operating Procedures)

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ACHESON:

DISTRIBUTION: "C"

DALE S. SEEDS,
Lt Col, Air Corps, A-3.

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HEADQUARTERS 55TH BOMBARDMENT WING (H)
APO 520, US Army

D/JDB/2

3 March 1945

INTELLIGENCE ANNEX NO. 109

TO OPERATIONS ORDER NO. 109

This is Plan Baker.

Maps: GSGS No. 4072 Europe Air (GRAZ and FIUME Sectionals) 1:500,000

Target and/or Briefing Charts:

No. 12-10-NA (SZOMBATHELY) No. 8-100-NA (LJUBLJANA)

No. 14-44-NA (VILLACH) No. BCS 8-15 (ZAGREB)

No. MBC 14-40 (VILLACH)

Photographs: No. 5052 (SZOMBATHELY), showing POW Camp

No. 5017 (LUBLJANA)

"H" Report No. 86 (Annotated Mosaic, SZOMBATHELY)

HC-667, 6 Sept 44 (LJUBLJANA), HC-253, 7 Mar 44 (VILLACH)

1. Plan Baker directs attacks against rail lines emanating from VIENNA and passing to HUNGARY and YUGOSLAVIA. More importance is given these targets in that they are so located that traffic may reach the Hungarian and Yugoslavian fronts without originating in VIENNA. WIERNER NEUSTADT M/Y acts as a sorting center to move traffic eastward to HUNGARY and southward to GRAZ. The GRAZ M/Y has been heavily damaged by repeated attacks, and it is intended to destroy rolling stock primarily. SZOMBATHELY, SOPRON and HEGYESHALOM M/Y's are key communications points in HUNGARY.

Incomplete reports of ground intelligence indicate that the sustained attacks by the Fifteenth Air Force during February were highly successful. It is believed that this long series of missions has caused the enemy severe irreparable damage.

2. ENEMY SITUATION

a. FLAK

(1) SZOMBATHELY: Refer to Map 2, 25 Feb 45. Scant to moderate accurate flak may be expected.

(2) VILLACH: Refer to Map 14, 28 Feb 45. Scant to moderate flak may be expected.

(3) LJUBLJANA: Refer to Map 4, 28 Feb 45. Present information indicates no flak at this target.

(4) ZAGREB EAST: Refer to Map 12, 26 Feb 45. Moderate to intense accurate flak may be expected.

b. ENEMY AIRCRAFT: No appreciable change in the fighter appreciation of the enemy capabilities from the VIENNA area. Crews will be briefed in reference to the increased likely hood of accidental attacks by small formations of enemy fighters.

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55BW Intelligence Annex No. 109, 3 Mar 45 (cont'd)

These formations may consist of tactical aircraft making patrols, and they constitute a threat to unescorted bombers or stragglers. It is recommended that special time in gunners' briefing be devoted to the recognition of Russian aircraft which may be operating in the general area of targets or route.

c. SIGNIFICANCE OF TARGETS

(1) SZOMBATHELY: This M/Y is one of the most active rail centers in HUNGARY at the present time. Quite a few secondary and primary routes converge here, and thus SZOMBATHELY serves a wide area on the HUNGARIAN front. The yards are located on the east side of the town, with mostly open areas adjoining the east side of the target. The target is long and narrow running north and south. Considerable facilities are present for repair, sorting and storing of supplies. All six of the lines emanating from SZOMBATHELY are steam operated. Reconnaissance of 2 March showed 430 units including 12 tank wagons present. Due to constant turnover, the content may be more or less than the preceding quoted figure.

(2) LJUBLJANA M/Y has double track steam operated connections with GRAZ, CELJE, TRIESTE, FIUME as well as secondary connections to less important towns in YUGOSLAVIA. The yards situated on the NE portion of the city and the sorting section form an "L" shaped target. The M/Y includes west reception, east reception, sorting sidings, storage yards and main station. Reconnaissance (Sic.) of 1 March showed the following content: north sidings, 90 mixed units; loco depot, 90 mixed units; main station, 450 mixed units.

(3) VILLACH M/Y, located on one of the main N-S routes into the UDINE area has also provided a profitable alternate target. A successful attack will destroy car content and temporarily sever a vital communications route. Reconnaissance of 1 March showed 86 wagons in the loco depot and 273 units in the north yard.

(4) ZAGREB EAST: The entire yards in ZAGREB represent the focal point of distribution of traffic in NE YUGOSLAVIA. Since the enemy is evidently facing a dangerous situation north of SARAJEVO, he must have supplies and material as well as maintain lines of evacuation. On 1 March, a total content of well over 2,000 units were present. The photos and reports indicate much of this stock will be moved soon, which shows the extreme rapid turnover at ZAGREB. The east yard on the same date had 393 wagons and coaches, a third of which had just arrived. This is a very profitable alternate target.

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55BW Intelligence Annex No. 109, 3 Mar 45 (cont'd)

3. FRIENDLY SITUATION

a. COORDINATION OF ATTACK

- (1) 5th Bombardment Wing (2 Groups each) attacks SOPRON EAST, SOPRON WEST and BRUCK M/Y's.
- (2) 47th Bombardment Wing (4 Groups) attacks HEGYESHALOM M/Y.
- (3) 49th Bombardment Wing (3 Groups) attacks GRAZ MAIN M/Y
- (4) 304th Bombardment Wing (4 Groups) attacks WIENER NEUSTADT Main Station and Sorting Sidings.

b. The XV Fighter Command will provide escort for penetration, target cover and withdrawal for all wings.

C. Intelligence briefing officers will carefully brief the present RUSSIAN front line so that all crews will have knowledge of the proximity of operations as well as for use in the selection of any alternate targets in conformance with current operations directives.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ACHESON:

James D. Book,
Major, Air Corps
Asst A-2

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C O N F I D E T I A L

Mission Weather Report.
Operations Order #109.
04/03/45.

Bases on takeoff:

6 to 9/10 cumulus, bases at 3 to 4000', tops at 12000' with scattered snow showers. Visibility 20 miles. Moderate turbulence to 15000'.

Route out:

Base conditions to central Adriatic, with cumulus tops increasing to 15000' over Adriatici (Sic.). Cloud amount decreased to 1 to 3/10 cumulus over east Adriatic and along Yugoslav coast. Over Dinarics 6 to 8/10 swelling cumulus with tops to 15000'. Cumulus decreased to 3 to 5/10 over Plains. From Drava River north to IP, 10/10 altocumulus/altostratus, tops 15000' to 18000' with few breaks. Villach and Klagenfurt areas clear. Patchy thin cirrus to cirrostratus at 25000' over Austria. Visibility 20 miles.

Target:

3 to 5/10 altostratus, tops 14000' with increase in clouds to south and decreasing to north. Visibility 20 miles. Target not snow covered.

Return:

No change.

Base on return:

No change.

Winds and temperatures:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------------|----------|------------------|
| Bases | 12000' | | | minus 24 deg. C. |
| S. Adriatic | 17000' | fm. 020 deg. | 60 knots | |
| Cntrl. Adriatic | 16000' | | | minus 32 deg. C. |
| N Yugoslavia | 22000' | fm. 350 deg. | 62 knots | minus 38 deg. C. |
| Target | 23000' | fm. 356 deg. | 62 knots | minus 38 deg. C. |
| Target | 21000' | fm. 025 deg. | 70 knots | |

Remarks:

Thin persistent contrails from 18 to 23000' over Yugoslavia and south Austria.
Rime icing (White Frost) in showers over Adriatic and Italian mainland. Marked temperature inversion over Yugoslavia, base 15000', top 18000'.

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S E C R E T

OPERATIONS ORDER #109
WEATHER ANNEX

3 March 1945

BASE: Sky: 6-9/10 low and middle clouds, base 2500' MSL tops
9-10,000', with patches of thick valley stratus.
Air-Ground Visibility: 10-15 miles, except 0-4 miles in
local areas of low stratus.
Upper Data: 5,000' fm. 030 deg. 20 knots minus 05 C.
10,000' fm. 010 deg. 30 knots minus 11 C.
15,000' fm. 360 deg. 35 knots minus 20 C.

ROUTE: Sky: Base conditions breaking to generally clear along the Yugoslav coast, except for heavy cumulus, tops 15-17,000' over western and central Adriatic. 7-9/10 heavy cumulus over Yugoslave mountains, tops 8-12,000', increasing over northern slopes of Alps to 8-10/10 with tops to 12-15,000', breaking to 4-6/10 over target area with tops 12,000'. Probable heavy and persisting contrails from 23-26,000' over northern half of route.

Air-Ground Visibility: 15-20 miles.
Upper Data: 10,000' fm. 360 deg. 35 knots minus 12 C.
15,000' fm. 360 deg. 40 knots minus 20 C.
20,000' fm. 350 deg. 55 knots minus 30 C.
25,000' fm. 350 deg. 65 knots minus 41 C.

Target: Sky: 4-6/10 low clouds, tops 10-12,000' and few high clouds from 22-25,000'.

Air-Ground Visibility: 15-20 miles.
Surface Winds: North 10 miles per hour.
Upper Data: 15,000' fm. 350 deg. 50 knots minus 21 C.
20,000' fm. 350 deg. 60 knots minus 31 C.
25,000' fm. 350 deg. 70 knots minus 42 C.
30,000' fm. 340 deg. 75 knots minus 51 C.

RETURN: Similar to route out, except for slight build up of cumulus activity over land areas with scattered rain and snow showers over south Italy.

ALTERNATE FIELDS: Lecce and Manduria areas should be the best alternates.

NOTE: Severe icing in clouds from 3-15,000'.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ACHESON:

ALTON BUNDICK,

1st Lt, Air Corps,
Asst Wing Wea. Office

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

HEADQUARTERS 55TH BOMB WING (H)
APO 520 US ARMY

MISSION SUMMARY NUMBER #181

SZOMBATHELY M/Y, HUNGARY

OPERATIONS FOR: 4 MARCH 1945

| | <u>460th</u> | <u>464th</u> | <u>465th</u> | <u>485th</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| MISSIONS: | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| A/C* ASSIGNED: | 52 | 58 | 53 | 56 | 219 |
| A/C OPERATIONAL: | 29 | 49 | 34 | 34 | 146 |
| A/C SCHEDULED: | 28 | 42 | 30 | 28 | 128 |
| A/C DISPATCHED (SORTIES): | 28 | 42 | 29 | 28 | 127 |
| NON-EFFECTIVE SORTIES: WEATHER: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| OTHER: | 0 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 8 |
| EFFECTIVE SORTIES (A/C BOMBING): | <u>a.</u> 28 | <u>b.</u> 40 | 25 | 26 | 119 |
| TONNAGE DROPPED: | 55 | 76.75 | 50 | 52 | 233.75 |
| LOSSES: FLAK: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| E/A:** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| OTHER: | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| MISSING: | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | <u>SEVERE / SLIGHT</u> | | | | |
| BATTLE DAMAGE: | 0/3 | 1/3 | 1/5 | 0/3 | 2/14 |
| E/A ENCOUNTERED: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| E/A DESTROYED IN AIR: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PROBABLE: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| DAMAGED: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| E/A DESTROYED ON GROUND: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| DAMAGED: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*A/C = Air Craft

**E/A = Enemy Aircraft

a. - 1 a/c dropped 2 tons on Ljubljana M/Y

b. - 1 a/c dropped 2 tons on Graz South East M/Y

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

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

MISSION SUMMARY NUMBER #181 cont.

55TH WING OPERATIONS TO DATE

| | <u>460th</u> | <u>464th</u> | <u>465th</u> | <u>485th</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| MISSIONS: | 169 | 151 | 155 | 152 | 627 |
| A/C* DISPATCHED (SORTIES): | 5,432 | 5,083 | 4,964 | 4,779 | 20,258 |
| NON-EFFECTIVE SORTIES: WEATHER: | 511 | 566 | 635 | 503 | 2,215 |
| OTHER: | 655 | 657 | 508 | 540 | 2,360 |
| EFFECTIVE SORTIES (A/C BOMBING): | 4,266 | 3,860 | 3,821 | 3,736 | 15,683 |
| TONNAGE DROPPED: | 9,468.9 | 8,568.55 | 8,464.05 | 8,373.25 | 34,874.75 |
| LOSSES: FLAK: | 28 | 34 | 24 | 26 | 112 |
| E/A:** | 7 | 26 | 15 | 12 | 60 |
| OTHER: | 30 | 21 | 11 | 24 | 86 |
| MISSING A/C: | 51 | 41 | 48 | 16 | 156 |

| | <u>SEVERE / SLIGHT</u> | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|
| BATTLE DAMAGE: | 40/877 | 64/522 | 81/626 | 80/766 | 265/2,791 |
| E/A ENCOUNTERED: | 336 | 299 | 448 | 241 | 1,324 |
| E/A DESTROYED IN AIR: | 56 | 85 | 75 | 62 | 278 |
| PROBABLE: | 24 | 43 | 17 | 41 | 125 |
| DAMAGED: | 16 | 21 | 32 | 37 | 106 |
| E/A DESTROYED ON GROUND: | 18 | 20 | 11 | 24 | 73 |
| DAMAGED: | 24 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 52 |

*A/C = Air Craft

**E/A = Enemy Aircraft

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

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

55BW Mission Summary No. 181, 4 March 45 Cont'd.

1. General Summary. On 4 Mar 45, 127 a/c (128 a/c scheduled) of the 55th Bombardment Wing took off from 0735-0810A to attack the SZOMBATHELY M/Y. There were 119 effective sorties and 8 non-effective sorties.
From 1242-1326A 117 a/c were over the SZOMBATHELY M/Y and from 22000-23500' dropped 229.75 tons of 500 lb. RDX bombs. Bombing was accomplished visually. Flak encountered ranged from SAH/MAH.*** Flak at LJUBLJANA M/Y was MAH.
One a/c from the 464th Bomb Group attacked the M/Y at LJUBLJANA. One a/c from the 464th Bomb Group dropped 2 tons on GRAZ M/Y.
Escort of 30-40 P-51's were first observed at 1000A at 4153-1520, 15-20 P-38's were observed in the target area. Escort was last observed at 1430A at 4400-1530.
Weather: At take off was 8/10 stratocumulus and cumulus with tops up to 12000'.
Scattered snow showers in area.
8-10/10 cumulus over ADRIATIC, top 14000' and breaking along DALMATIAN Coast to 3-4/10.
8-10/10 cumulus over DINARIC Alps and in DRAVA River area 10/10 altocumulus, top 18000'. Both layers broke in vicinity of the IP to scattered.
At target, 3/10 altocumulus tops 18000', visibility unlimited.
On return, low cover averaging 8/10, tops 12,000-14000'
8/10 stratocumulus and cumulus at base on return, at 3000'. Visibility 20 miles.
One a/c of the 464th Bomb Group was lost just after take-off. One a/c of the 465th Bomb Group is listed as missing.

2. 460th Bomb Group. Due to local weather conditions assembly and wing rendezvous were not accomplished as ordered. The 460th Bomb Group assembled by boxes Southwest of the field and finally departed from XXXX at 0917A. From here the Group flew to ZARA, arriving there at 1035A forty minutes late. From ZARA a briefed course to the target was flown. The mickey operator furnished the lead navigator with about 20 fixes enroute to the target. Visibility was good most of the route however clouds and haze restricted the visibility in the area of the ALPS. In this area PF fixes were used to avoid known flak areas. Low cloud conditions would not permit a visual run from the briefed initial point and a turn was made to approach from another point. Due to trouble encountered enroute this Group bombed third rather than second as scheduled.

When the Group turned over the IP there was another Group already on the bomb run. The leader of the 460th Bomb Group decided to make a 360 degree turn and try another run. At the start of this run the PFF operator was asked to assist the bombardier. As the ground speed was very high the PF operator was unable to make any course correction. When the target became visible, it was seen that a bombing from that position would be inadvisable, again the leader turned off the bomb run and took his formation to another IP. This IP was chosen as it made the bomb run a visual run from the start. As the run was being made, the leader contacted his boxes and told them to change the aiming point and use a very prominent building as the aiming point. There were no malfunctions of the bombing equipment.

27 a/c at 1324A from 22000' dropped 53 tons on a heading of 181 degrees. One a/c which became separated from the Group attacked the LJUBLJANA M/Y. From 22000' at 1325A this a/c dropped 2 tons.

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

Photos show: Approximately fifteen hits are visible in the M/Y south of the overpass amongst freight cars and tank wagons causing fires; there was one direct hit and several near misses in the RR overpass. The locomotive shed received one direct hit. (Note: Second wave over the city @ 13:24 PM.)

3. 464th Bomb Group. Bad weather at base hindered the assembly of this Group. The 464th Bomb Group finally departed on course for ZARA at 0932A. An unexpected wind shift drove the Group 20 miles to the left of course across the ADRIATIC. Two turns were necessary to get by ZARA. Shortly after the last turn point it became necessary to dog leg to the left to avoid another wing coming in. Up to this point pilotage and dead reckoning had been possible, but from here PFF was relied on. The Group continued on course to the IP. The Group was last over the target. The turn over the IP was made in a satisfactory manner with the boxes spacing for individual runs. Shortly after leaving the IP the target area was picked up but smoke from previous bombing made identification of the briefed MPI difficult. All the lead bombardiers reported the same trouble. Three of the boxes made their runs using the auto pilot but the other box leaders had trouble. There were six malfunctions reported in the Group.

39 a/c were over the target at 1330A. From 23,500' on a heading of 110 degrees, 74.75 tons of 500 lb. RDX were dropped. One a/c which was a late take-off was unable to join the Group formation and proceeded to GRAZ. At 1259A from 22,000' this a/c dropped 2 tons with another Wing of the Air Force.

Photos show: One bomb strike in the center of the yard directly on a locomotive causing a huge explosion. Remainder of the bombs were dispersed and caused no visible military damage. (Note: Third wave over the city @ 13:29 PM. Mission Report records a course of 140 degrees).

4. 465th Bomb Group. The 465th Bomb Group departed from XXXX sixteen minutes late. A course was set directly for the control point to make up time which was lost in assembly due to bad weather. The Group passed over ZARA eighteen minutes late and at the scheduled altitude. The remainder of the route was flown as briefed but timing was not as briefed due to wind drift. The Group turned three miles to the West of the IP to make their bomb run. Visual navigation was used enroute except in the area of the ALPS where an undercast caused the unit to rely on PF.

The 465th Bomb Group was third in the Wing formation. The lead navigator turned the formation over the IP and the bombardier was able to pick up the target. The cross winds which were present forced the bombardier to kill more drift than had been present in the sight. This was the only difficulty encountered by the lead bombardier. As the formation didn't fall into boxes in trail at the IP there were only two leaders sighting for course. The auto pilot of one lead a/c was not operative so a manual run was made. Two a/c reported malfunctions.

25 a/c were over the SZOMBATHELY M/Y at 1306A at 22,000'. on a heading of 105 degrees these a/c dropped 50 tons of 500 lb. RDX bombs.

Photos show: The pattern of bomb strikes were immediately short of the M/Y with five or six strikes extending into the yard amongst the freight cars, and cutting tracks. Two direct hits are observed on the South tracks converging choke point. (Note: Fourth wave over the city and followed the 464th Bomb Group @ 13:29 PM. Time over the target is probably an error.)

5. 485th Bomb Group. This Group lead the Wing formation. The Group had extreme difficulty in assembly and finally departed on course for ZARA at 08:25A. The Group passed over the control point at 1020A, twelve minutes late. From ZARA the Group continued to a point thirteen miles to the South of Liezen, where it turned and paralleled the briefed course South of RAMING (Sic). The group flew along the briefed course until five miles away from the target when the target was spotted somewhat to the right. PF was used enroute as an aid to navigation due to partial cloud coverage. Fixes were given to the lead navigators every ten minutes and then were transmitted to the Group every half hour.

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

The briefed IP was not identified as there was a heavy cloud cover in the area. The turn onto the bombing run was made on ETA and when the target became visible it was 30 degrees to the right. By the time the turn was completed a very short run of 45 seconds or less was all that remained. The lead bombardier reported a fair run but the other box leaders were confused by the turns made by the leader. These boxes didn't have sufficient time to make a good run and as a result they dropped their bombs before synchronization was completed.

26 a/c dropped 52 tons on Szombathely M/Y at 12:42A, from 23,500' on a heading of 150 degrees.

Photos show: Approximately 20 strikes are located in the freight yard causing considerable damage to freight cars and trackage. Remainder, totaling seven bombs, fell in an open area with no military damage visible. (Note: This was the first wave of the day @ 12:42PM. No information as to damage in the city).

Fighter Escort

325th Fighter Group

Mission: To provide route cover on PTW for B-24s of the 55th Bomb Wing attacking SZOMBATHELY M/Y, SZOMBATHELY, HUNGARY.

Statistics: 47 P-51s took off from XXXX A/D at 0842A. 44 effective sorties, 3 non effective sorties, 3 mechanical, 44 P-51s down at base at 1445A.

Narrative Description: 44-P-51s R/V with B-24s of the 55 Bomb Wing at 1238A 23,000', at 4740-1630. The R/V was late because of strong head winds and an overcast North of the R/V point which extended along route to target area. 44 P-51s provided target cover for bombers from 1240A to 1305A at 23,000'. Last 12 P-51s left bombers at 1326A, 20,000, at ZAGREB area.

Enemy Aircraft: 6 SEF were seen making a head on pass at a B-24 straggler headed East, in the area 4555-1645, 15,000' at 1330A. When the P-51s started to intercept, the e/a disappeared in the clouds. Later the B-24 was observed headed East toward Russian held territory.

Flak: None.

Observations: At 1230A, 15,000' at Topolca (sic.) A/D (4653-1727) 20 SEF were observed. At Papa A/D, 1245A, from 18,000', 40 SEF were observed. At 1100A, 18,000', 75 - 100 box cars and a long train headed South East were seen in the Ljubljana M/Ys.

Radio Security: Satisfactory.

Friendly A/C in Trouble: At 1315A in the area 4638-1546, B-24 was seen going down enveloped in smoke. One chute was observed. The B-24 had been hit by flak in the target area.

*A/C = Aircraft

**E/A = Enemy Aircraft

Flak: Enemy Fire from German anti-aircraft guns.

***Flak Values: S-Scant, M-Moderate, H-Heavy, A-Accurate, I-Intense

A/D: Air Drome.

IP: Initial Point

MPI: Main Point of Impact

PTW: Protection to Wing

RV: Rendezvous

SEF: Single Engine Fighters

Cloud Cover: 10/10 - Full Cloud Cover

1/10 - Minimal Cloud Cover

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

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Army Air Force Documents 1945, AFHRA, Maxwell AFB

Small font add for clarification by transcriber.