

HEADQUARTERS 306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP
Office of the Intelligence Officer
United States Forces

AFO 557
19 March, 1945

SUBJECT: Intelligence Narrative
Mission: Molbis

TO : Commanding Officer, 306th Bombardment Group (H)

1. Narrative

The 306th flew 36 A/C, including 4 PFF, as 40th "B". Wing and Division assembly over France was as briefed: A-59 to C-1 to C-4. At about 1000E, Buckeye Red advised the Division leader that there was a dense haze in the Molbis area and that dense, persistent contrails would make visual bombing difficult, particularly for later groups. Division leader advised attacking Plauen.

This group followed the briefed course to 5015N - 1218E, 1351 hours, at 23,000 feet, made a 180-degree turn to the left south of Chemnitz; established new IP at 5037N - 1320E, 1407 hours, at 23,000 feet; target, Plauen PFF, 1425½ hours, at 23,000 feet; back on briefed course at 5025N - 0904E, 1511 hours, 22,000 feet; French coast at 5054N - 0142E, 1728 hours, 6,000 feet; Dungeness 1741 hours, 5,000 feet; Base at 1842 hours.

2. Fighter Opposition and Fighter Support

There was no fighter opposition. P-51s were picked up at 5008N - 0740E, 1257 hours. Due to contrails, close support was not possible, but the escort was observed in the area at all times. When "bandits" were reported on VHF, fighters closed in instantly. Red and black cowlings, with blue, red and orange tails were reported.

3. A.A. Gun Fire

There were approximately 6 scattered bursts after the turn off target, inaccurate on this group. Meager, inaccurate fire was observed from Mainz area on the way in. There was no damage.

4. Bombing

Due to persistent contrails and dense haze, lead, low and high squadrons made individual PFF runs. Only the high was able to make a 5-second visual correction, but both lead and low saw strikes after bombs away. The lead photos show considerable ground detail with strikes just north of visual aiming point. Strikes from the low squadron are probably at 042107/5. High squadron photos show no strikes, contrails obscuring all ground detail.

5. Nickels

A/C #116-T dropped 5 T-331 and 4 T-333 on Plauen.

6. Weather

10/10ths at take-off, tops 4,000 feet, and several layers above. Clear over France, except for ground haze. Over Germany dense, persistent contrails made formation flying difficult, and dense haze made visual identification of ground detail almost impossible except directly vertical. 2-3/10ths cloud over Germany, increasing to 10/10ths over Channel and England on return.

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7. A/C Landing Away

A/C # 840-Y, pilot MacDonald, landed at B-51 on return, short of gas.
The crew is safe.

A/C in Distress

None.

A/C Returning Early

None.

8. Observations

The M/Y at Fulda was well hit with black smoke up to 2,000 feet. Fires were also observed in the M/Y at Meiningen. On the route back, heavy traffic was observed east of the Rhine going east.

JOHN A. BAIRNSFATHER,
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MOLBIS
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