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HEADQUARTERS
EIGHTH BOMBER COMMAND BOMBARDMENT WING (H), 8AF H-A-2
Office of the Operations Officer

APO #557
7 May 1944

SUBJECT: Report on Planning and Execution of Operations on Mission, 7 May 1944, Berlin, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officers, 42nd Bombardment Group (H), 8AF, APO #557.

1. Comment on Planning and Execution.

a. The bomb loading for this operation was received from Headquarters, 40th Combat Wing by Lt. Hamilton at 2700 hours, 6 May 1944. The order called for eighteen (18) plus three (3) spare B-17's to be loaded with 9 X 1000 GP bombs each with 1/10 second nose fuse and 1/40 second tail fuze plus 3 X 100 IB's also, twelve (12) plus three (3) spare B-17's to be loaded with Incendiary M47 IB's.

b. The Field Order was received from Headquarters 1st Bomb Division by Lt. Hamilton at 0347 hours, 7 May 1944. Flight plans were briefed at this time completed, briefing being set for 0500 hours and take-off time 0555 hours.

2. Tactical Narrative.

a. High Composite Group (40th Combat Wing).

(1). Take-off was accomplished by eighteen (18) B-17's and three (3) spares from the 42nd Bomb Group, beginning at 0555 hours. These aircraft assembled over the 40th Combat Wing assembly at 10,000 feet to form the lead and low squadrons of the High Composite Group in the 40th Combat Wing. Six (6) aircraft from the 306th Group joined the formation over the number two high squadron.

(2). The formation departed the assembly point at 0707 hours (see diagram "A") as high composite group and rendezvous was completed with the lead group along the Combat Wing assembly line. The English Coast was departed at 0747 hours, altitude 17,500 feet and the course to the enemy coast was followed according to the flight plan, and crossed at 0850 hours, 25,000 feet. The I.P. was reached at 1000 hours and the lead group made a sharp right turn which forced the high group to cross to the left of the lead group and the low group on the right. Bombs were released in Combat Wing formation at 1100 hours on a magnetic heading of 317 degrees from 24000 feet over the Primary Target. The assembly deviated slightly from the flight plan due to a change in winds. The enemy coast was departed at 1307 hours and the English Coast at 1347 hours. The formation reached the base at 1457 hours and the aircraft fully landed at 1555 hours.

b. High Group (40th Combat Wing)

(1). Take-off was accomplished by eighteen (18) B-17's plus two (2) spares from the 42nd Bomb Group, beginning at 0555 hours. These aircraft assembled over Hillsborough at 10,000 feet to form the high squadron of the 40th Composite Combat Wing. The formation departed Splasher #4 at 0748 hours and rendezvoused in position with the lead group leaving the Combat Wing assembly line.

(2). The English Coast was departed at 0747 hours, 17,500 feet and the enemy coast crossed at 24,000 feet, 0850 hours. There was an increase of 1/10 clouds all the way to the I.P. which was reached at 1000 hours. The bombs were released over the Primary Target in Combat Wing formation at 1102 hours from 27,500 feet on a magnetic heading of 317 degrees. The lead group dropped

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[illegible] coast which they departed at [illegible] hours. The English Coast was crossed at 1335 hours and the formation reached the base at 1430 hours. The lead ship landed at 1431 hours.

c. Heavy accurate flak was encountered [illegible].

d. Fighter opposition was nil.

e. Fighter escort was good.

f. V.H.F. Communication was satisfactory.

3. Aircraft not attacking.

a. Thirty (30) B-17's and nine (9) spare aircraft from the 92nd Bomb Group took off.

b. Two (2) aircraft #42-37797 and #42-37755 turned back to base becoming disabled.

c. Three (3) aircraft, #42-[illegible], 42-[illegible] and 42-31877 returned before becoming dispatched. These aircraft were unused spares.

4. Aircraft Lost.

None

5. Statistical Summary (No FFF A/C included)

	LEAD GP.	2CND GP.	TOTAL
a. Number of A/C taking off	20	15	35
b. Unused spares	0	3	3
c. A/C taking off less unused spares	20	12	32
d. Number A/C dispatched	18	12	30
e. Number of sorties	18	12	30
f. Number of A/C attacking	18	12	30
g. Number of A/C not attacking	2	0	2

Number of Aircraft Lost.

None.