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HEADQUARTERS
450TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF
APO-520 US ARMY
S-2 NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION DATE: December 29, 1944

MISSION NBR. 204

TARGET: Brenner Pass, Italy - Railroad Loop

I. CHRONOLOGY

Twenty-seven B-24 type aircraft took off at 0900-0918 hours to bomb the railroad loop in the Brenner Pass at 46.58N-11.25E. There were no early returns. Sixteen aircraft dropped 48 tons of 1000 lb G.P. bombs on the target at 1328 hours from 21,000 - 22,000 feet. Seven aircraft of the lead box jettisoned 19.5 tons G.P. bombs short of the target when the Group leader rapidly lost altitude after being severely damaged by flak. The deputy lead was also hit and this box split up after following the Group lead down to 19,000 feet and jettisoned to keep altitude and speed in getting out of the area. One aircraft jettisoned full load of 3 tons of bombs just east of the target area in the mountains when these bombs did not release over target. One aircraft jettisoned full load of 3 tons of bombs to keep altitude after losing two engines. One aircraft jettisoned full load of 3 tons of bombs in the Adriatic when bombs failed to release over target. One aircraft turned back before the target from (47.03N-11.30E) at 1248 hours, and this aircraft has not been heard from. Seventeen aircraft returned to base at 1645 hours. Two aircraft lost. Two aircraft missing. Six aircraft at friendly fields.

II. ROUTE AND ASSAULT

Rendezvous was effected as briefed and the prescribed route flown to the keypoint. Although interrogation disclosed that the course to the next turnpoint (Campo Tures) was flown as briefed, there is evidence that indicate the formation turned short of this point and approached the target from southeast. Moderate, accurate flak was received on this leg and the lead box broke up and was scattered over a wide area. This box did not execute a bombrun. The second, third, and fourth boxes continued to the west and circled to pick up the Initial Point from where a run was made on approximately the briefed heading of 34 degrees. Varing observations of from 7-20 P-51's were observed in the target area at 1300 hours.

III. RESULTS

Photo coverage shows a good concentration on the tracks with 3 to 4 direct hits on tracks.

IV. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None

B. Flak: Moderate to intense, accurate, and heavy at target.

V. OBSERVATIONS

One B-24 aircraft (now missing from this Group) turned back from 417.03N-11.30E at 1248 hours.

One B-24 aircraft hit mountain and exploded at target at 1325 hours - 2 to 8 chutes seen.

One B-24 aircraft crew bailing out at 45.55N-12.20E at 1335 hours.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Losses: 2 B-24's to flak. 2 B-24's missing.

B. Damage: 4 B-24's - Major damage. 8 B-24's - Minor damage.

C. Casualties: One officer killed, one officer wounded, caused by flak.