

HEADQUARTERS 55TH BOMBARDMENT WING (Hv)
APO 520 US ARNY

6 August 1944
1300B

INTELLIGENCE ANNEX NO. 145)

TO OPERATIONS ORDER NO. 145)

Maps: GSGS No. 4072 EUROPE Air (PRAHA) 1:500,000

Target Chart No. 13-33-NA (BLECHHAMMER, North)

Briefing Chart No. 13-33-NA (BLECHHAMMER, North)

Pathfinder Charts No. 23 GERMANY, 1:250,000

 No. 239,23 Supplement

Target Photochart No. TP 13-2 (BLECHHAMMER) GERMANY, 1:63,360

Illustration No. 1(a)(iii)43/1,2,3,4

Target Information Sheet No. GQ 1561, 13 June 44

Photographs No. 5018; 5019 60PR/324/15 Apr 44

H(I) Reports No. 185,232,258 (BLECHHAMMER)

1. ENEMY SITUATION

a. FLAK: BLECHHAMMER North, according to E Section Map No. 2009, issued 15 July 44, sortie 8 July, is now defended by 2 X 6 and 3 X 4 batteries of Heavy Guns. Map shows 1 X 6 battery unoccupied. Total of 24 Heavy Guns indicates capability of Intense flak. Chaff will be dispensed by fighters, which may lessen accuracy. S-2 will make careful study of axis ordered, note proximity of flak at BLECHHAMMER South and nearby points, and brief accordingly. GLEIWITZ-HINDENBURG-KATOWICE area must be avoided.

b. No smoke screen at BLECHHAMMER North has been reported. It is not probable that smoke screen at BLECHHAMMER South will affect visibility of North Refinery. See Essential Elements of Information.

c. ENEMY AIRCRAFT

(1) 125 SEF (including 35 from MUNICH area) plus 30-40 TEF will probably be airborne in VIENNA-BUDAPEST belt, establishing contact South of LAKE BALATON to VIENNA-GYOR line. Some of these will follow formations toward target.

(2) In target area 40-50 SEF and 25-30 TEF are to be expected.

(3) Second sorties on return in VIENNA area will occur.

(4) 15-20 ME-109s from ZAGREB will probably be airborne for attacks on stragglers on return.

(5) It will be noted that enemy capability of TEFs is reduced from number encountered on earlier attacks.

(6) The attack by the 47th wing will be an aggressive diversionary effort, to flush e/a in VIENNA-BUDAPEST area, causing e/a to be airborne 30 minutes before BLECHHAMMER formations reach this area, with result that when formation passes many of these e/a will be grounded for refuelling. This tactic has uniformly succeeded in previous attacks, and should substantially reduce opposition of which enemy is capable.

(7) It is expected that Eighth Air Force will operate in Southern and/or Eastern GERMANY on 7 August 1944. If operations are executed this will considerably reduce e/a effort, especially in VIENNA area.

d. SIGNIFICANCE OF TARGET: Fifteenth Air Force Intelligence Annex advises that recent reports indicate increasing reliance of GERMANS on gasoline output of synthetic plants with high 70 octane gasoline output probably increased by use of crude oil now in fairly abundant supply. There are four major synthetic plants, of which LEVNA and POELITZ have temporarily been put out of action by Eighth Air Force, while BRUX was severely damaged by Fifteenth Air Force in recent attack. This leaves the North and South BLECHHAMMER plants as the last major producing center, giving these targets highest priority. They produce one-third of total synthetic production, and with constant attacks hindering, if not completely stopping extensive production, and with production at PLOESTI reduced while RUSSIANS are steadily approaching POLISH plants, the strategic effect of successful attack will be very great. Objective of this attack is the short-term stoppage of production, not necessarily complete destruction. If both BLECHHAMMER plants are knocked out of production, and the PLOESTI plants are destroyed, the bulk of the GERMAN armies will be virtually immobilized within two months.

2. FRIENDLY SITUATION

a. Coordination of attack:

(1) 5th Wing: 5 Groups attack BLECHHAMMER South synthetic oil plant. 1 Group stands down.

(2) 47th Wing: 2 Groups frag ALIBQNAR A/D (4505N2058E), 1 Group attacks NOVI SAD O/S, 1 Group stands down. See Operations Order for route and timing of 47th Wing as part of the tactical plan referred to above (Paragraph 1,b,(6)).

(3) 49th Wing: 3 Groups attack BLECHHAMMER South Synthetic Oil Plant.

(4) 304th Wing: 3 Groups, attack BLECHHAMMER South Synthetic Oil Plant, 1 Group stands down.

b. 306th Fighter Wing, 7 Groups, provides by maximum effort, penetration, target, and withdrawal cover and will have chaff dispensing a/c in target area.

c. S-2 Briefing Officer will point out in detail the tactical effort of the 47th Wing in this operation.

d. It is expected that the Eighth Air Force will operate in Southern and/or Eastern GERMANY on 7 August 1944.

e. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION: If smoke screen has been installed at BLECHHAMMER North, crews will be briefed to observe effects, extent, location and number of generators. Effect of smoke screen at South refinery on area of North, if any, will be reported. Full detail of e/a seen or encountered will be noted and reported, especially tactics.

f. Escape Intelligence briefing, whether by Escape Intelligence Officer or S-2, will cover all areas on route and include latest escape information.

g. Intelligence Officers will brief all missions relative to shipping in ADRIATIC and MEDITERRANEAN Seas. No shipping whether in harbors or at sea will be attacked unless specifically ordered.

h. No report on shipping sightings need be made by radio or telephone since the bulk of traffic may be construed to be friendly.

By order of Colonel ACHESON:

DONALD W. RIDDLE,
Major, AC,
A-2.

DISTRIBUTION:

1 cy ea CG, A-2 Duty O, Fifteenth AF
1 cy CG, 306th Fighter Wing
1 cy ea CO, A-2, A-3, PI, 55th Bomb Wing
3 cys ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing.