

HEADQUARTERS 484th Bomb Group (Heavy)

28 February 1945

ESCAPE STATEMENT

Mission 134

Florisdorf Oil Refinery

PILOT - PARKS, RALPH E. 484th B.G.
824th B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD 25 Feb. 1945
Missions-7

CO-PILOT - BOVARD, WILLIAM F. 484th
B.G. 824th B.S.

MIA 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb. 1945
Missions-6

NAVIGATOR - NESBY, JAMES B. 484th
B.G. 824th B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb. 1945
Missions-6

(NO BOMBARDIER - MAY BE RALPH
DENLINGER - FROM HENDRICKSON'S
INFORMATION SHEET)

ENGINEER - VOBRADZ, RICHARD E.
484th B.G. 824th B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb 1945
Missions-6

RO GUNNER - HENDRICKSON, HAROLD
N. 484th B.G. 824th B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb. 1945
Missions-6

BALL GUNNER - KOCH, WILLIAM 484th
B.G. 824th B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb. 1945
Missions-6

NOSE GUNNER - SNODJASS, RAY S.
484th B.G. 824th B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb 1945
Missions-6 Now in hospital. Not inter-
rogated

UPPER GUNNER - ALBERT, HERBERT B.
JR. 484th B.G. 824 B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb. 1945
Missions-6

TAIL GUNNER - PARTBAIN, LEONIDER P.
484th B.G. 824th B.S.

MIA - 7 Feb. 1945 RTD - 25 Feb. 1945
Missions-7

Mission was to Vienna, Austria, 7 February 1945. On the bomb run intense and very accurate flak knocked our #1 and #2 engines, punctured gas tanks and shot out control cables, so that even C-1 would not give proper control. Pilot headed for safe territory behind Russian lines, flying through heavy clouds and as soon as they felt they were in safe territory the pilot ordered his crew to bail out. All parachutes opened successfully and the crew landed over about a fifteen mile area, the center of which was approximately 35 miles north of Budapest. This territory was principally occupied by what they believe were Hungarian Cossaks, since most of them wore a yellow insignia rather than the regular Red Russian star with hammer and sickle.

Three men were shot at by tommy guns, fired by mounted Cossaks, as soon as they landed and one man, the nose gunner, Ray S. Snodjass, was hit and wounded severely in the right leg. He is in a hospital in Bari and has not been interrogated. Although they made no motion toward their own weapons and kept their hands up, most of them were roughly treated by the soldiers and almost all of them were roughly treated by the soldiers and almost all of them were robbed of some or all of their possessions. All crew members agree that as soon as officers of the Russian Army arrived, their treatment was satisfactory, and shortly after landing, they were brought together and officers took over the handling of them. Some attempt was made by these officers to recover some of the property that had been taken from them, but this was not entirely successful. Considerable difficulty was experienced in establishing the fact that they were American Airmen, but this was assisted by an AGO card carried by the co-pilot. The co-pilot also found it assisted him in the treatment received from the Russian soldiers when he repeated several times that he was an officer, which they seemed to understand.

In charge of a Russian officer, they were taken to the town of CSOD (which is not marked on available maps) and thence to ASZOD, Hungary (47° 39'N - 19° 30'E). The treatment was excellent while in the hands of the Russian officers, and transportation was arranged to Bucarest, where the American Mission was informed of all details including the location of their crashed aircraft.

Cpl. Albert landed in a tree, and found that a pocket knife, which the undersigned instructed all crew members to carry, was valuable in enabling him to cut himself out of his shroudlines. Some of the crew members followed briefing instructions and carried toothbrushes which they found important, and sulfa guanadine tablets, another recommended escape aid, assisted one man suffering from the GI's. Two crew members also followed instructions by carrying extra socks and shorts, which were appreciated. Halozone tablets from aid box were used, since water from well was unsanitary.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Crew members believe that the new kits containing razors should be issued as promptly as possible.
2. Emphasize no discussion of political or religious nature.
3. Believe new "passport" will be helpful when issued, but recommend big American Flag painted on jackets.
4. Do not talk with civilians in occupied territory.
5. Recommend carrying flashlight or candle.
6. Recommend carrying chapstick. Some crew members had badly chapped lips and cold sores.

JOHN F. HOLSTIUS.

Captain, A.C.
Escape Officer

