



8TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)

12 JUNE 1944

MISSION NARRATIVE

8TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)  
3RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)  
Office of the Intelligence Officer

RWB/hfe

AFG 565,  
12 June, 1944.

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report - FFO 163E-5,310; 11/6/44; 8th Bombardment Squadron (L).

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Air Force,  
Attention: A. O. of S., A-2,  
AFG 925.

1. 3 planes of this Squadron and 2 of the 89th Squadron, escorted by 4 P-38s, were ordered to conduct a search for barges and other enemy shipping along the south and west coasts of Biak and Soepiori Islands. Take-off was at 0758/K and all 5 planes landed safely at 1250/K. The flight went direct to Cape Sambersbari and then north along the west coast of Biak Island.

2.a. The 3 planes of this Squadron made one dry run and then 2 strafing passes over a very large and heavily camouflaged barge, moored in a very difficult position at an angle to the south shore at a bend about 50-100 yards up the Wardo River from Jemborwei Village. Tracers and blue nose were seen to hit barge on third pass.

Search was continued by all three planes along coast to Fransari and by one plane around entire coast of Soepiori Island, with nil attack.

One plane made a later single bombing and strafing run on barge in the Wardo River, dropping 2 X 250 lb. bombs. Planks and much debris were seen thrown into the air and one thick high black smoke and one smaller white smoke resulted. Barge believed hit but actual results impossible to observe because of steep terrain.

b. After receiving instructions from Gintment, all three planes made two bombing and strafing runs from east to west down south side of Borokoe A/D. Assigned target was evenly covered with 4 X 250 lb. demos and 20 X 100 lb. para demos, effect not determinable.

3. 6 X 250 lb. 4-5 sec. delay fuse demos and 20 X 100 lb. para demos were dropped. 10 X 100 lb. bombs returned to base. 3400 X .50 cal. were expended in strafing.

Photos were taken with one K-22 and one K-17 cameras on strafing and bombing runs.

4. There was nil enemy A/A or M/G fire and nil interception.

5. Weather en route, scattered cumulus at 7000 ft., 2-3/10 cover. Hazy. Over target, CAVU. On return, scattered cumulus, chiefly overland, at 5000 ft., 2/10 cover, visibility unlimited, clouds lowering.

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report (Continued).

6. Sightings - A pile of supplies, about 20 X 15 ft. and 10 ft. high, covered with green tarpaulin, was observed on end of jetty at Bransfari. Boxes were seen under edges of tarpaulin. The bows of the two barges sunk on 23/5/44 were seen jutting out of water nearby.

A possible camouflaged lugger was seen in cove north of Soerdori River (north central coast of Soepiori Is.). Inlet between Soepiori and Risk Islands appeared large enough for barge traffic.

4-5 suspicious looking bundles of brush, possibly covering bunkers, were seen at northeast corner of Borokoe A/D. 2 serviceable flat bed trucks, on road just south of east end of Borokoe strip. 2 steamrollers 10-15 ft. off strip 2/3 way from east to west. Tram cars and narrow guage railway near west end of strip. 3 huts were seen along south side of strip.

An U/I crashed plane, probably burned, was seen in middle of Sorido strip. An uncamouflaged, possibly serviceable barge beached opposite west end of Sorido strip.

Accurate bombardment of Borokoe A/D by B-24s as Squadron left target.

7. The photographs exactly bear out much that was reported. Photo No. 3-0-16 (? No. is indistinct) taken from plane 479, shows the tarpaulin covered supplies. No. 1-0-1, from plane 389, shows the only bombing of the camouflaged barge. It illustrates the extremely difficult position it was in and bears out the gunner's statement of a black and a white blast with much debris, indicating a direct hit. Photos 3-0-21, plane 479 and 1-0-4, plane 389, show the piles of brush which, as reported, look suspiciously like coverings for bunkers, pill boxes or some kind of installation.

8. The left engine of the flight leader started to cut out at the psychological moment just as the planes neared the jetty at Bransfari. On signal to take over, the second plane veered from path and pilot did not see supplies on jetty. At one time the flight leader considered making a water landing. The third plane of this Squadron accompanied the flight leader and these two circled off Sorido A/D for 15 minutes while asking for secondary target and waiting for others to complete search. Instructions given by "Cintment" (ground station on Risk Island) were very clear and explicit. The strike along Borokoe A/D was crowded in by Cintment with a short time limit as the B-24s approached.

As the planes first approached Cintment's area and checked in, it called, "Mustang, are you for us?" The flight leader signalled, "No, we are on a barge hunt first". Cintment replied, "If you are searching to the west of Borokoe A/D, look sharp. There are indications of targets". It is believed that a more careful search and more persistent, which would have been made had it not been for the partly disabled plane, <sup>would have revealed other shipping</sup> such search as was made from Bransfari on, was too fast and superficial to have found camouflaged barges unless cut from shore. In fact, the reported possible lugger was not investigated. Also no other plane followed the deputy flight leader in on the last run on the camouflaged barge.

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