

HEADQUARTERS
FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520

23 October 1944

GENERAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER 4115)

Citation of Unit

SECTION I - CITATION OF UNIT

Under the provision of Circular No. 333, War Department, 1943, and Circular No. 89, NATOUSA, 10 July 1944, the following unit is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy:

461st BOMBARDMENT GROUP. For outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. On 12 April 1944, the Group was assigned the task of preparing maximum aircraft for an attack on the Duna Repulogepgyar Aircraft Components Plant at Budapest, Hungary. The successful destruction of this aircraft factory would greatly reduce the output of enemy aircraft which were sorely needed by the hard-pressed air force. Realizing the importance of this mission and the extreme hazards to be encountered on this operation, the ground crews worked arduously and enthusiastically to have their aircraft in the best mechanical condition to ensure the success of this attack. On 13 April 1944, thirty-eight (38), heavily loaded B-24 type aircraft were airborne and set course for their destination. Despite severe and adverse weather conditions encountered enroute, they maintained their compact formation and proceeded to the target. Deep within hostile territory, the Group, then unescorted by friendly fighters, was viciously attacked by aggressive waves of persistent enemy fighters, firing rockets, cannon and machine guns, in a desperate effort to break up and destroy the formation before it reached its vital objective. Under continued heavy attacks from enemy fighters, together with intense, heavy and accurate anti-aircraft fire encountered over the target, displaying outstanding courage and determination, the gallant crews maintained their tight formation and battled their way through the enemy defenses. Though their aircraft sustained severe damage from enemy fire, with outstanding airmanship they accomplished a highly successful bombing run, with the entire tonnage of bombs from the Group concentrated in the immediate target area. Numerous direct hits were scored on the seven (7) factory buildings composing the complex, with incalculable severe damage being inflicted from blast and near misses. Through their highly effective defensive fire, together with their superior ability to hold a compact formation under such heavy opposition, the Group was able to destroy three (3) enemy aircraft and probably destroyed (3), while their own loss was held to a minimum of three (3) bombers. The tremendous material damage inflicted by the Group on this vital enemy target, contributed greatly to the curtailment of the enemy's aircraft production at a most critical time. By the conspicuous gallantry, determination and professional skill of the combat crews, together with the superior technical skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel, the 461st Bombardment Group has reflected great credit upon itself and the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

By command of Major General TWINING:

/S/ R. K. TAYLOY,
Colonel, GSC
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

/S/ J. M. IVINS
Colonel, AGD
Adjutant General