

HEADQUARTERS
FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520

2 October 1944

GENERAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER 3757)

Citation of Unit I

SECTION I - CITATION OF UNIT

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

451ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP. For outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. Notified to prepare their aircraft for a vital mission against the Markersdorf Airdrome, Vienna, Austria, in a counter air operation, the ground crews worked with enthusiasm to insure the mechanical perfection of their planes for the forthcoming mission. On 23 August 1944, twenty-four (24) B-24 type aircraft, heavily loaded with maximum tonnage, took off and set course for their destination. Enroute the formation was intercepted by numerous enemy fighters in a well coordinated attack, emerging from protective cloud covering six (6) to ten (10) abreast and employing twenty-millimeter cannon in their violent assaults. The highly aggressive enemy fighters made suicidal attempts against the bombers, in a desperate attempt to break up and destroy the formation, to prevent the successful completion of their vital mission. Displaying outstanding courage, professional skill and fortitude, the gallant crews battled their way through the overwhelming enemy opposition to the target, where, under continued heavy opposition, they completed a highly successful bombing run. Through their superior ability to maintain a tight protective formation and to direct heavy defensive fire against the fierce attacks of the enemy, the Group accounted for twenty-nine (29) enemy aircraft destroyed or damaged in the air. The excellent bombing pattern on the ground installations inflicted grave damage to important buildings and supplies, and twelve (12) enemy planes were destroyed on the ground. Throughout the aerial battle, the 451st Bombardment Group lost nine (9) heavy bombers, with others severely damaged by heavy enemy fire. Through this outstanding achievement a telling blow was struck at the fighter aircraft concentrations in the Vienna area, thus effectively and seriously crippling enemy operational efficiency at a time of great importance. By the outstanding courage, professional skill and unwavering determination of the combat crews, together with the superior technical skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel, the 451st Bombardment Group has upheld the highest traditions of the Military Service, thereby reflecting great credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

By command of Major General TWINING:

R. K. Taylor,
Colonel, GSC,
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

s/ J. M. Ivins
J.M. Ivins,
Colonel, AGD,
Adjutant General.

A TRUE COPY:

LYNN J. BARTLETT, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps