900 Fortresses Rain Bombs, Incendiaries on Rail Center

Continuing their offensive against Nazi communications, 900 Fortresses of the 8th Air Force, attacking in two giant waves, thundered over Germany yesterday to shower the city's huge railway yards and locomotive repair shops with more than 11,000 high explosive bombs and some 50,000 incendiaries.

The huge yards of repair shops, the later stretching out in a thin line for almost a mile, were ripe for the blow. Photo reconnaissance four days ago showed the yards steaming with activity, close to 3,000 cars jamming the rails. The city is a main switch-over for both fronts, north and east-West Germany.

The aerial sledgehammer fashioned by bombers of the 8th and 15th Air Forces and the RAF fell on German communications and fuel supplies for the fourth day in a row yesterday as 1,150 Fortresses and Liberators of the 8th hit rail yards, airfields, an oil storagedepot and a tank plant while Lancasters of the RAF bombed a synthetic oil plant near Dortmund and the 15th's heavies attacked communications at Linz, Austria.

The big target for the 8th yesterday was Munich, a focal point in the German railway system, where Fortresses rumbled over in two giant waves to hit the terminal rail station and marshalling yards in the eastern and western parts of the city. Over 2,000 of Fortresses pounded yards at Ulm while Liberators attacked the yards and a tank assembly plant at Aschaffenburg, and airfields at Gielsbach and Schweich-Hall, west of Nuremberg. Fortresses also hammered an underground oil storage depot hidden in the woods outside Aschaffenburg.

Two hours before the three-pressed air offensive, which took place chiefly after noon, a small force of heavies attacked a strong road bridge across the Rhine at Aachen in the northwest corner of the Reich.

Big Air Mission Means 622 Million in Planes

EIGHTH AF HQ, England, Dec. 7---This is what is involved in a single mission by the Eighth Air Force - 1,600 Fortresses and Liberators, carrying by more than 900 Mustangs and Thunderbolts comprised the bulk of approximately 3,500 warplanes of the U.S. Strategic Air Forces hurled against German targets Monday.

Manned by 15,890 airmen, more than 2,400 heavies and pursuits of the Eighth flew across the Rhine to smash rail centers in western Germany, while upward of 1,000 heavy bombers and fighters of the 15th, based in Italy, blasted rail and industrial objectives in Vienna and Austria.

Early unofficial reports indicated the Eighth lost 12 bombers and two fighters. Unopposed by enemy fighter opposition.

Nazi Rails Target For 1,400 Planes

After two days of operations limited by severe weather conditions heavy bombers of the 8th Air Force swung back into large-scale action over the weekend as they dropped crushing loads on Nazi lines of communications.

Over 900 Fortresses and Liberators were out yesterday with an escort of 500 American and 850 British fighters - the second largest force ever dispatched.

German Desperation

The “hunch” was right. The Germans hurled about 400 fighters against the 8th, the heaviest deserved action. This is believed to be the greatest force of German fighters disposed against the skies over the Reich.

The most furious fighting for the Americans developed over the vast marshalling yards at Bielefeld and near Leipzig—the same targets as on September 11, when the previous record was set up.

Anticipating fierce opposition, the Americans sent more than 1,150 American - and British fighters—the second largest force ever dispatched.

Americans also attacked the marshalling yards near Aschaffenburg and Hanover; damaged five city buildings and five radio stations.

Incendiaries on Rail Center

The attacks on Heilbronn, 25 miles north of Stuttgart and Mannheim, key Rhine port, completed a one-two punch for the 8th, Saturday’s force of 750 Fortresses and Liberators having numbered among its targets the Heilbronn yards and a road and railroad bridge at Mannheim. Third announced target for Saturday was a rail center at Rehow, just north of Munster.

Aschaffenburg, and airfields at Gielsbach. Bombers of the 8th Air Force swung back to shoot up airfields and rail yards.

The attacks on Heilbronn, 25 miles north of Stuttgart and Mannheim, key Rhine port, completed a one-two punch for the 8th, Saturday’s force of 750 Fortresses and Liberators having numbered among its targets the Heilbronn yards and a road and railroad bridge at Mannheim. Third announced target for Saturday was a rail center at Rehow, just north of Munster.

The aerial sledgehammer fashioned by bombers of the 8th and 15th Air Forces and the RAF fell on German communications and fuel supplies for the fourth day in a row yesterday as 1,150 Fortresses and Liberators of the 8th hit rail yards, airfields, an oil storage depot and a tank plant while Lancasters of the RAF bombed a synthetic oil plant near Dortmund and the 15th’s heavies attacked communications centers handling traffic to the Saar sector were hit. It was the 8th’s 16th attack on German supply lines in the last 17 days.

The attacks on Heilbronn, 25 miles north of Stuttgart and Mannheim, key Rhine port, completed a one-two punch for the 8th, Saturday’s force of 750 Fortresses and Liberators having numbered among its targets the Heilbronn yards and a road and railroad bridge at Mannheim. Third announced target for Saturday was a rail center at Rehow, just north of Munster.

The 8th’s Fortresses and Liberators, operating under a cover of 200 Mustangs, took off in a snowstorm and gale gales and had to battle more snow and sub-zero weather over the Continent. Solid clouds once more made bombing by instrument necessary.

Aschaffenburg, and airfields at Giebelstadt and Schwebisch-Hall, west of Nuremburg. Fortresses also hammered an underground oil storidden in the woods outside Neuber between Munich and Nuremberg.

The biggest target of the day was fixed at the huge yards at Hamm, where it is usual for 10,000 railroad cars to be handled daily along the 30 miles of tracks. Rail lines servicing the Ruhr, at Essen, Duisburg, and other cities with heavy industries are located, and at Coblenz were also hit.

Raid Sets Mark; 15th Air Also Out

December 7---This is what is involved in a single mission by the Eighth Air Force: 1,600 Fortresses and Liberators, carrying by more than 900 Mustangs and Thunderbolts—comprised the bulk of approximately 3,500 warplanes of the U.S. Strategic Air Forces hurled against German targets Monday.

Manned by 15,890 airmen, more than 2,400 heavies and pursuits of the Eighth flew across the Rhine to smash rail centers in western Germany, while upward of 1,000 heavy bombers and fighters of the 15th, based in Italy, blasted rail and industrial objectives in Vienna and Austria.

Early unofficial reports indicated the Eighth lost 12 bombers and two fighters. Unopposed by enemy fighter opposition.