

GO 76

GENERAL ORDERS
No. 76

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON 25, D. C., 8 September 1945

BATTLE HONORS.-As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (sec. I, WD Bul. 22,1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (sec. III, WD Bul. 11, 1942), citations of the following units in the general orders indicated are confirmed under the provisions of section IV, WD Circular 333, 1943, in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction follows:

6. The *307th Bombardment Group (H)* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action on 3 October 1944. Having proved by a successful strike on 30 September 1944 that Balikpapan, Borneo, was highly vulnerable to our land-based bombers, the *307th Bombardment Group (H)* prepared again to hit at the 7,000,000-barrel high-octane gasoline and oil refineries at that heavily defended Japanese base. The ground echelon of this group worked tirelessly to perfect the tactical and technical planning of this second mission and to ready the B-24's for the long and hazardous flight. To reach Balikpapan the Liberator crews would have to fly 17 1/2 hours for a round-trip distance of 2,610 miles, farther than any mass daylight mission ever flown by B-24's previous to the 30 September raid. The normal ammunition supply would have to be cut in half and the bomb and fuel load would have to be the heaviest ever carried by B-24's in the Southwest Pacific Area, 12,000 to 13,000 pounds greater than the recommended load. The airplanes of the *307th Bombardment Group (H)*, together with the B-24's of another group, made a night take-off from Noemfoor Island, Netherlands East Indies. En route to the target, enemy interception was even stronger and more aggressive than had been anticipated, as hostile fighters ascended from a new strip situated between the Manggar airdrome and Balikpapan. For 1 hour and 15 minutes 30 to 40 Japanese aircraft pressed fierce attacks on the formation of the *307th Bombardment Group (H)*. Losing 7 of the Liberators, the group, fought through the fighter opposition and terrific antiaircraft fire and dropped its bombs throughout the target area. Several hits were made on the Pandansari refinery, and four strings of bombs dropped on Edeleanu refinery caused a large explosion and fire with yellow smoke rising to a height of 8,000 feet. This unusually long and daring-raid was a serious blow to Japanese production at Balikpapan and resulted in a disruption in the flow of oil and gasoline which had an immediate effect on the enemy's tactical operations. Credit for the success of the mission is due not only to the gallantry and skill of the air crews but also to the outstanding devotion to duty of the maintenance crews and other ground personnel, without whose determined efforts the strike could not have been made. The achievements of the *307th Bombardment Group (H)* have brought great honor to the armed forces of the United States. (General Orders 1073, Headquarters Far East Air Forces 7 June 1945, as approved by the Commander in Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific.)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:
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Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:
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