“The Unpleasantness of Bombing”: The American Bombing of Bucharest in World War II

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Bucharest had a bad year in 1944. The capital of Romania was bombed by three of the greatest military powers in World War II and occupied by a fourth, all in the span of five months. Between April 4 and August 26, Bucharest was bombed sporadically by the American Fifteenth Air Force and the British No. 205 Group. After Romania surrendered to the Allies on August 23, Bucharest was bombed by the German Luftwaffe. Finally, the city was occupied by the Soviet Red Army before the end of August. The Romanian people had the ill fate of being caught between the Allies and the Axis during the war and suffering the wrath of both. Early in World War II, Romania's government and people chose to partner with Nazi Germany against the Soviet Union, which eventually put them at war with the United States. Needless to say, Romania chose the wrong side. It was devastated by the war and controlled by the Soviet Union for decades afterwards. The American bombing of Bucharest in 1944 contributed to the success of the Allied Combined Bomber Offensive in Europe but also caused a number of Romanian civilian and American military casualties.

Romania supplied and fought with Nazi Germany in World War II until Ion Antonescu's overthrow and the Soviet occupation at the end of 1944. One of its most significant contributions to the Axis war effort was economic. Romania provided Germany with indispensable shipments of oil and supplies that helped keep the German military running. It also offered significant military assistance to Hitler's forces during the invasion of the Soviet Union, not only as a frontline base but also with 464,000 troops.[1] Motivated by many of the same ideological beliefs as the Nazis, including anticommunism and antisemitism, the Romanian army proved itself to be Germany's most devout ally in both Operation Barbarossa and the Holocaust.[2] Although Romania did not support Germany for the entire war, it still played a major role in aiding the Axis economically and militarily.

In fact, Romanian oil production was so important to the German forces that the Allies decided to launch a major bombing campaign against it in 1943. The crude oil that Germany imported from Ploesti accounted for approximately twenty-five percent of its total oil supply during the war.[3] This obviously made Ploesti a large target for the Allies, and the Combined Chiefs of Staff approved Operation Tidal Wave at the Trident Conference in May 1943.[4] Their plan was to launch a massive bombing raid on Ploesti's refineries to cripple oil production. Operation Tidal Wave occurred on August 1, 1943. However, due to mistakes in both the planning and the execution of the raid, it failed to accomplish its objective of crippling Ploesti's oil production. Many targets were destroyed, but the refineries retained over half of their total production capabilities.[5] With Romanian oil continuing to flow to Germany and Romanian troops continuing to fight alongside the Wehrmacht, the Allies had more bombing to do in Romania. But first, they would have to agree on their target priorities.

In the early months of 1944, a disagreement in strategy emerged between the British and American leaders of the Combined Bomber Offensive in Europe. The argument involved the rival target priorities of the British "transportation plan" and the American "oil plan" ahead of the Allied invasion of Normandy. The transportation plan was created by British scientist Solomon Zuckerman and called for the bombing of Axis transportation targets like rail systems as a top priority. Supported by the Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force, Trafford Leigh-Mallory, the transportation plan argued that bombing rail yards would significantly disrupt Axis communications, troop transportation, and logistics.[6] Carl Spaatz, the Commander of the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe, vehemently opposed the transportation plan and ordered his planning committee to draft an alternative. The resulting oil plan proposed that the Combined Bomber Offensive focus on bombing Axis oil plants as the most important and

realistic targets. It criticized the prioritization of bombing rail systems for the length of time that that approach would take to be effective and the excess of potential transportation targets that were spread across Europe.[7] The question was temporarily settled on March 25 when the Supreme Allied Commander, Dwight Eisenhower, ordered Spaatz to execute the transportation plan.[8] This decision led directly to the first American bombing of the Bucharest marshalling yards, a type of rail yard where train cars are sorted and assembled, less than two weeks later.

Eisenhower may have ruled in favor of the transportation plan on March 25, but it was the former Commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, Arthur Tedder, who persuaded him to do so. Tedder became Eisenhower's deputy and trusted advisor at the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces in January 1944 where he assisted with the preparations for Operation Overlord. Richard G. Davis notes in *Bombing the European Axis Powers* that Tedder supported the transportation plan and presented the arguments in support of it during the committee meeting on March 25. Eisenhower had already threatened to take "drastic action" if an agreement was not reached by the end of the meeting, and ultimately, he looked to Tedder as his "executive for air."[9] Tedder's opinion carried weight with the Supreme Allied Commander and influenced his decision.

Bucharest first became a target for the Allies because of its transportation and political value. Interestingly, Tedder was sent a letter about Bucharest on December 16, 1943 from the Office of the Minister of State in Cairo. The letter's writer, who signed only as "Forbs," had an extensive knowledge of Romania's rail network and industry. In the letter, the writer suggested Bucharest as a potential target for Allied bombing and described in detail the importance of the city's marshalling yards to the transportation of oil to Germany. The writer also speculated that the bombing of Bucharest would have a significant impact on Romanian government officials.

The letter said, "I think that the bombing of these yards would have a great political effect, since it would bring home to the ruling classes in Bucharest the *unpleasantness of bombing* [emphasis added] without giving them an opportunity of saying that we are not attacking military targets."[10] Assuming that Tedder read the letter, he was aware of Bucharest's value as a potential target months before the meeting that sealed the city's fate. Tedder would have clearly understood that by subjecting Romanian leaders to the "unpleasantness of bombing," meaning civilian casualties and widespread destruction in Bucharest, the Allies could pressure them to surrender. Although innocent civilians were never officially targeted, the Allied commanders knew that dropping bombs in and around a large city would result in civilian casualties that might work to their advantage.

The American bombing of Bucharest in 1944 was carried out by the Fifteenth Air Force and its B-24 Liberators. The Fifteenth Air Force was activated on November 1, 1943 with General James Doolittle as its first commander. It was initially comprised of groups from the Twelfth Air Force and eventually received additional groups transferred from the Eighth. Fully stationed in southern Italy by December, the Fifteenth became the strategic air force of the United States in the Mediterranean.[11] In January 1944, Ira Eaker was made Commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, and Nathan Twining replaced Doolittle as the Fifteenth Air Force's commander.[12] Even though Eisenhower had chosen the transportation plan, Spaatz never gave up on his mission to cripple the Axis oil industry. According to Barrett Tillman in *Forgotten Fifteenth*, Eaker and Twining were sympathetic to Spaatz's oil plan and coordinated with him to continue bombing oil plants off the record. They did this in Romania in April by designating the Ploesti and Bucharest marshalling yards as the official targets of their bombing raids while attributing any direct hits on oil refineries to bombing inaccuracy.[13] Leon Wolff takes

this theory a step further in *Low Level Mission* by claiming that Eisenhower secretly approved of Spaatz's oil plan and allowed him to continue bombing refineries as along as the British thought transportation was being prioritized.[14] Thus, the American bombing of Bucharest occurred at the intersection of the official transportation plan and the unofficial oil plan as pursued by Spaatz, Eaker, and Twining.

Even though Bucharest did not fit into Spaatz's oil plan as well as Ploesti did, the Fifteenth Air Force still had several good reasons to bomb targets in and around Romania's capital city. First, a study completed by the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces in April 1944 listed potential benefits for the Soviet Union of bombing specific targets in the Romanian transportation system, including Bucharest's marshalling yards. The report concluded that bombing the rail network would hurt the Wehrmacht by preventing German soldiers from entering the country as reinforcements or retreating to escape a Red Army offensive.[15] Second, bombing Bucharest would contribute to Spaatz's oil plan because the city had oil refineries and oil storage facilities and transported oil exports from its marshalling yards.[16] If successful, the bombing of Bucharest's marshalling yards and oil would benefit the upcoming Allied invasion of Normandy by restricting Romania's export of oil to Germany.[17] Third, targeting Bucharest would have the greatest effect on Romanian civilians and politicians who were weary of the war and wanted to abandon their alliance with the Nazis. One of Antonescu's government officials had already discussed possible terms of surrender for Romania with the Allies by April. This prompted an order from the Combined Chiefs of Staff on April 11 instructing that "maximum possible bombing effort on the Balkans until further notice should be concentrated on [Romania] where [the] German military position [is] weakest, German economic interests [are] greatest, and the Government [is] most shaken."[18] The best way for the Allies to further hurt the morale of the

Romanians would be to attack their largest population center and seat of government. With these strategic motivations, the Allies targeted Bucharest.

The Fifteenth Air Force first bombed Bucharest's marshalling yards on April 4, 1944 and returned on April 15, 21, and 24. The primary targets were the Grivita Marshalling Yard near Gara de Nord (North Train Station) on April 4 and the Chitila Marshalling Yard near Mogosoaia Palace on the next three raids.[19] Unfortunately, the bombers encountered bad weather and poor visibility for most of the month of April, which resulted in a high number of civilian casualties in Bucharest from stray bombs. Before April 15, the Fifteenth had relied on visual sighting, which was obviously difficult in poor weather conditions. However, Kevin A. Mahoney notes in *Fifteenth Air Force against the Axis* that even when the Fifteenth used radar bombing on the April 15 attack against the Chitila Marshalling Yard, "all bombs missed the target and landed in the city."[20] The Grivita Marshalling Yard was hit on April 4, but civilian casualties occurred as well. A diary from the 304th Bombardment Wing described that mission by saying, "Although the target was partially obscured by smoke, strings of bombs cut directly across the yards and many hits were seen on main-line trackage, rolling stock, railroad repair buildings and the round house. Warehouses, the railroad station and a power station were also hit."[21] The smoke referred to was likely produced by one of Bucharest's passive defenses, the chlorosulfite acid generator, that was used to obscure targets from enemy bombers.[22] Despite some direct hits scored on the rail complex, Jay A. Stout states in *Fortress Ploesti* that over 4,000 Romanian civilians were killed by inaccurate bombs on April 4 alone.[23] Casualties only increased as the weather took a turn for the worse throughout the rest of the month.

The raids on the Chitila Marshalling Yard on April 15, 21, and 24 were all impacted by bad weather or poor visibility. A report from the 461st Bombardment Group remarked that on

April 15, "bad weather built up…and there was nine-tenths cloud coverage in the target area. Bombs were dropped, but the results were unobserved."[24] Again, on April 21, the bombers were not able to properly see their targets or what they hit because of clouds. On this day, command ordered a recall due to poor conditions after some of the bombardment groups had already departed for Bucharest, but the groups did not receive it and proceeded to bomb the city.[25] The 461st reported that conditions on April 24 were hazy, and due to a temporary bomb rack malfunction in the lead plane, almost all of the bombers in the initial wave overshot their target.[26] However, the 304th claimed several direct hits that caused severe damage to the rail targets at the Chitila Marshalling Yard and did not lose any planes.[27] The common theme in April 1944 was that the 15th Air Force hit the marshalling yards occasionally but also hit unintended targets in the city due to bad weather, poor visibility, or malfunctions. Group diaries and mission reports from the 15th do not record the civilian casualties caused by their haphazardly dropped bombs. At the time, the American airmen of the B-24 crews were either unaware of or indifferent towards the destruction they caused in the densely populated capital of Romania.

However, the residents of Bucharest were painfully aware of the destruction and death that engulfed their city. *Universul*, a Romanian newspaper from the time, published the following on April 7:

> Bucharest, the peaceful capital of a small country which did not wish anything more than a free life, has become the scene of an unexpected tragedy; there are yet unknown all the tears that fell over the mangled bodies, over the blood rivers that flowed on the unrecognizable faces of the children, parents and all the beloved that remained forever still and deaf to the desperate calls of the survivors.[28]

On April 9, the newspaper reported that a witness said, "I have seen dead children! Lots of them…Some with missing parts of their bodies, others crushed…I have seen crazy mothers, running along streets without any destination." The editor, referring to the bombing of April 4,

wrote, “Almost for an hour, Death flew omnipotent, terrible, mad, on the streets of the Capital.”[29] Although Bucharest’s government was certainly not innocent in World War II, many of its residents were, and some of them became casualties of the horrific attack described by the newspaper.

Mihail Sebastian, a Romanian-Jewish writer who was well known in Bucharest’s literary circles, expressed a similar sense of revulsion in his diary from 1944. On April 8, he wrote, “From the railway station to Bulevardul Basarab, not a single house was untouched. It is a harrowing sight. Dead bodies were still being dug up [yesterday], and groans could still be heard beneath the ruins. On one street corner a group of three women, pulling their hair and tearing their clothes, let out piercing wails over a carbonized corpse that had just been taken from the debris.”[30] He mentioned that the exact number of people who were killed by the April 4 attack was yet unknown, but he had heard someone say it was 4,200.[31] Sebastian also described the results of the April 15 raid in his entry the following day by referencing specific streets and buildings in the city center that were struck by bombs, including the University of Bucharest. He asked himself, “What were they aiming at? I don’t know. Maybe the telephone exchange. But in that case the bombing was very inaccurate.”[32] Sebastian’s theory about the bombers’ intended target was wrong, but his conclusion about their accuracy was not. The University of Bucharest was about eight miles from the Chitila Marshalling Yard. The perspective of Romanian civilians who suffered because of mistakes made by the Fifteenth Air Force adds much to the story of the bombing of Bucharest.

The Fifteenth Air Force continued to bomb targets in and around Bucharest sporadically during the summer of 1944. Returning on May 7 to damage both the Grivita and Chitila marshalling yards, the Fifteenth struck with overwhelming force. Davis provides an extremely

insightful analysis of the results of this attack, stating, “Ira Eaker reported that the Rumanians informed him that his attack killed 12,000 civilians. This was typical of the exaggerated losses often attributed to strategic bombing. The official report of the Rumanian air staff on the raid indicated only 231 killed, 28 wounded, and 1,567 dwellings destroyed or damaged.”[33] Davis cites a letter located in the Library of Congress that was sent from Ira Eaker to Hap Arnold on September 17, 1944, as well as a Romanian military report housed in the National Archives of Romania. If the civilian casualty numbers in these sources are accurate, then there truly was a large discrepancy between the official and unofficial reports concerning Romanian dead. According to a report from the 747th Bombardment Squadron, smoke once again obscured the intended target area on May 7, and the airmen were unable to see what they were bombing.[34] Ironically, the smoke screen from Bucharest’s passive defenses contributed to a higher number of stray bombs and civilian casualties. While the exact number of civilian deaths is unknown, there is no doubt that civilian lives continued to be lost as a result of inaccurate bombing in the summer of 1944.

In June and July, the Fifteenth shifted from targeting only Bucharest’s marshalling yards to also bombing its oil refineries and storage facilities. While Spaatz, Eaker, and Twining had officially followed the transportation plan in April, they had also unofficially targeted oil plan sites like Ploesti’s refineries. When Allied intelligence discovered that these efforts had significantly hurt the German military’s oil supply, the Fifteenth was given permission in early May to bomb refineries as “filler targets” when bad weather obscured transportation targets.[35] Then, Spaatz proclaimed on June 8 that the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe would target oil as its top priority.[36] The Fifteenth obligingly focused its raids on refineries in Ploesti and other Axis cities for the rest of the summer. It only bombed Bucharest once in June and

twice in July, and during those attacks, it primarily targeted oil refineries and oil storage facilities. According to reports from Mediterranean Allied Air Forces intelligence, the Fifteenth bombed the Titan Oil Refinery, the Prahova Oil Refinery, and the Mogosoaia Oil Storage facility in June and July.[37] Regarding the raid on June 28, a mission report from the 461st Bombardment Group noted dryly, "Bucharest traditions prevailed: bad weather, plenty of heavy but inaccurate flak, and not especially good bombing."[38] The raids on July 3 and July 31 had mixed results; some bombs hit their intended targets and caused moderate damage to the refineries and storage facilities while others went astray.[39] At this stage of Spaatz's oil plan, Bucharest was not a top priority.

By the end of July, Sebastian and Romanian government officials in Bucharest were extremely weary of the war in general and the bombing of their city in particular. Sebastian asked his diary on July 28, "What is the point of these air raids? Are they the prelude to a Russian offensive? Are they an attempt to shift Romania from its alliance with the Germans, now that the front in Poland has collapsed and the internal German front is tottering?"[40] His guesses happened to be exactly right. The raids were intended to benefit the rapidly advancing Red Army and simultaneously break the morale of Romania's political leaders. A Turkish diplomat stationed in Bucharest in 1944 observed, "The bombings destroyed the spirits of the people, the opportunity of which had been the cue for Germans to create enmity in Romanian hearts against Anglosaxons. In vain. In spite of all the destruction the air attacks had given, the people's warm feelings for Anglosaxon pilots were never less."[41] Instead of strengthening the alliance between Romania and Germany, the Allied bombing of Bucharest contributed to its collapse. The average resident of Bucharest, like Sebastian, may have felt helpless and confused, but King Michael and his group of followers did not. They deposed Antonescu and overthrew his regime on August 23,

surrendering to the Allies just before the Soviets entered Romania. The Americans would return to bomb Bucharest one last time shortly thereafter.

On August 26, the Fifteenth Air Force supported the Soviets against the Germans in Bucharest by bombing the Otopeni Airdrome and German army barracks near Baneasa. The Luftwaffe was using the small airfield at Otopeni, about ten miles north of Bucharest, to land reinforcements and launch aerial raids on the city. The 461st Bombardment Group, assigned to target the Otopeni Airdrome, got extremely lucky. Even though they mostly failed to hit their intended target with an abysmal 4.6 percent bombing accuracy, their bombs happened to destroy the German "headquarters, the transportation equipment, the heavy guns, and a great deal of the personnel and munitions concentrated by the enemy in the area covered by our bombs."[42] In addition, other bombardment groups successfully damaged multiple runways and six German planes at Otopeni.[43] Meanwhile, the 304th Bombardment Wing was assigned to target Wehrmacht barracks near Baneasa, about five miles north of Bucharest. With 120 Liberators, this force of four bombardment groups reported that "a good concentration of bombs was secured in the target area."[44] Mahoney elaborates that the 304th destroyed at least fifteen German planes and twelve barracks near Baneasa.[45] The Fifteenth Air Force contributed to the Red Army's expulsion of German forces from Romania by bombing both Luftwaffe and Wehrmacht targets on August 26. This was the last American bombing mission near Bucharest.

In a final assessment, the American bombing of Bucharest hurt the Axis by severely limiting the transportation of exports and military forces between Romania and Germany. Repeated strikes on Bucharest's marshalling yards, especially, impacted the Nazi war machine through a reduction in the amount of oil that was able to be sent to Germany. A study conducted by the United States Army Air Forces at the end of 1944 concluded that between January and

May of 1944, Romania's total exports to Germany decreased by more than half. In January, Romania sent 148,377 metric tons to Germany, but by May it only sent 64,876 metric tons.[46] Bucharest was only one city, and the Allies targeted many others throughout Romania, but its large marshalling yards processed an above average amount of exports. The bombing of marshalling yards in Bucharest and other Romanian cities also hurt Germany by restricting its ability to transport troops and supplies to the Eastern Front.[47] As a result, the Soviet Union was able to drive the German forces back and eventually occupy Bucharest by the fall of 1944. Although it was primarily the Soviet threat that convinced King Michael to surrender to the Allies, Luke Truxal argues in "Bombing the Romanian Rail Network" that Allied bombing also played a role.[48] The Romanians lost their faith in Germany's ability to protect them as they suffered relentless air attacks throughout the summer of 1944. Ultimately, the Fifteenth achieved its objectives in the bombing campaign against Bucharest.

However, as in so many other campaigns during World War II, the strategic gains taken from Romania's capital came at a high cost. Regardless of the fact that not as many lives were lost in the bombing of Bucharest as in other area bombing campaigns during the war, the loss of life is always tragic and must be acknowledged. The exact number of civilians killed by the American and British bombing of Bucharest in 1944 is unknown, but Romanians today estimate that it was between 5,500 and 6,500 people.[49] Undoubtedly, more were injured and left destitute from the destruction of their homes and property. There were potential discrepancies at the time between official and unofficial casualty reports in Bucharest, but given the eyewitness testimony of Sebastian and undisputed inaccuracy of the Fifteenth's bombing, it is not hard to imagine that many Romanians were killed. As previously established by the mission reports of various bombardment groups, bad weather and poor visibility frequently resulted in stray bombs missing

their intended targets in and around Bucharest. In fact, a study on bombing accuracy undertaken by the United States Army Air Forces in 1945 found that weather was the factor that affected bombing accuracy the most in both combat and training. In April 1944, the Fifteenth Air Force scored an average of only 7.8 percent of hits within six hundred feet of the assigned targets.[50] Given that the Fifteenth encountered so much bad weather and poor visibility on its missions to Bucharest, it is hardly surprising that bombs went astray. Sadly, this bombing inaccuracy near a large city caused the loss of civilian lives and unintended destruction.

Additionally, some American military casualties resulted from the bombing of Bucharest. All of the following were losses from missions flown specifically to Romania's capital. According to Mahoney, the Fifteenth Air Force lost twenty-four B-24 Liberators, five P-38 Lightnings, and three P-51 Mustangs in April. It lost three Liberators and one Lightning in May. In June, three Liberators were lost. It lost three Liberators and four Mustangs in July. Finally, in August, the Fifteenth lost another three Liberators and one more Mustang.[51] In total, the Fifteenth reported losing thirty-six Liberators, six Lightnings, and eight Mustangs as casualties of the bombing of Bucharest in 1944. Describing Liberator crews, Stout writes, "A typical [bomber] crew might consist of a pilot, co-pilot, bombardier, navigator, flight engineer, radio operator, turret gunner, ball gunner, two waist gunners, and a tail gunner—anywhere from eight to twelve men. The numbers could go up or down depending on how many, and what type, of crewmen were available."[52] Therefore, given that B-24 crews could consist of eight to twelve men, the Fifteenth lost between 302 and 446 airmen as casualties on the Bucharest bombing missions alone. The campaign took an exacting toll on the United States Army Air Forces, but the sacrifice made by each and every serviceman was not in vain.

Despite chronic inaccuracy and casualties on both sides, the American bombing of Bucharest still helped the Allies defeat the Axis in Europe by successfully reducing transportation between Romania and Germany and pressuring Romanian leaders to surrender. Bucharest was a valuable target for the Combined Bomber Offensive's transportation plan because of its large marshalling yards that processed many exports and facilitated the movement of German troops and supplies. Allied commanders also knew that bombing targets in and around Romania's capital would result in collateral damage, including civilian casualties and widespread destruction. If the "unpleasantness of bombing" caused Romanian leaders to betray Germany, then it would be all the better for the Allies. Civilians in Bucharest were never officially targeted by the American Fifteenth Air Force, but thousands were killed while working at the city's marshalling yards and refineries or by stray bombs during the campaign from April 4 to August 26, 1944. A pattern that developed for the Fifteenth at Bucharest was bad weather, poor target visibility, and inaccurate bombing. However, despite the loss of fifty planes and hundreds of American airmen, the Fifteenth's bombing of Bucharest successfully restricted the Axis movement of troops and supplies in Romania and "destroyed the spirits of the people," which contributed to the country's capitulation. Although their country chose the wrong side in World War II, the residents of Bucharest like Mihail Sebastian did not deserve to suffer from chronically inaccurate American bombing. The bombing of Bucharest was not as morally repugnant as other instances of area bombing that intentionally targeted civilians, but it still resulted in the avoidable loss of life.

Notes

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[2] Grant T. Harward, *Romania's Holy War: Soldiers, Motivation, and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021), 2.

[3] Richard G. Davis, *Bombing the European Axis Powers: A Historical Digest of the Combined Bomber Offensive 1939-1945* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2006), 245.

[4] Ibid., 119.

[5] Christopher M. Rein, *The North African Air Campaign: U.S. Army Air Forces from El Alamein to Salerno* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2012), 178-82.

[6] Davis, *Bombing the European*, 230-32.

[7] Ibid., 236-38.

[8] Joe L. Norris, *The Combined Bomber Offensive: 1 January to 6 June 1944* (Washington, DC: Army Air Forces Historical Office, 1947), 25, https://www.dafhistory.af.mil/Portals/16/documents/Studies/101-150/AFD-090522-061.pdf.

[9] Davis, *Bombing the European*, 239-42.

[10] Office of the Minister of State in Cairo to Arthur Tedder, December 16, 1943, Mediterranean Allied Air Forces Intelligence Section, "No. 4124, Bucharest," Target Analysis, Reel No. 224, Index BR (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air Force Historical Research Agency), 60.

[11] Kevin A. Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force against the Axis: Combat Missions over Europe during World War II* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2013), 1-5.

[12] Barrett Tillman, *Forgotten Fifteenth: The Daring Airmen Who Crippled Hitler's War Machine* (Washington, DC: Regnery History, 2014), 36.

[13] Ibid., 82.

[14] Leon Wolff, *Low Level Mission: The Story of the Ploesti Raids* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1957), 204-5.

[15] Luke Truxal, "Bombing the Romanian Rail Network," *Air Power History* 65, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 18.

[16] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 83-86.

[17] Operations Department, 449th Bomb Group, "Combat, January to December 1944" (Grottaglie, Italy: 1945), 4, https://449th.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Combat-OneYear.pdf.

[18] Message COSMED 87, Portal to Wilson and Spaatz, 11 April 1944, NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, CCS 373.11 Balkans (2-3-44), Bombing of Axis Satellite Countries, quoted in Davis, *Bombing the European*, 322.

[19] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 86-98.

[20] Ibid., 83.

[21] Headquarters 304th Bomb Wing (HV), "Unit history of the 304th Bombardment Wing (HV), for period 1 April to 30 April 1944," US, 304th Bombardment Wing, 1944-1946, 19, Fold3, https://www.fold3.com/publication/1134/unit-history-us-304th-bombardment-wing-1944-1946.

[22] Tillman, *Forgotten Fifteenth*, 88.

[23] Jay A. Stout, *Fortress Ploesti: The Campaign to Destroy Hitler's Oil Supply* (Havertown: Casemate Publishers, 2003), 103.

[24] Leigh Lott, "461st Bombardment Group Official History," April 1944, ed. Claude W. Hisey (Milwaukee, 1986), 8, https://461st.org/History/461st%20History/461st%20History.html.

[25] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 95-96.

[26] Lott, "461st Bombardment Group," 10.

[27] Headquarters, "304th Bombardment Wing," 41.

[28] XXX, Bombardarea Bucurestilor, p. 1 in "Universul" LXI, no. 97 of 7 April 1944, quoted in Sorin Marin, "The Social Consequences of the 1944 Anglo – American Bombing of Ploiesti: A Grassroots Perspective," MA thesis (Budapest, Hungary: Central European University, 2008), 68-69.

[29] Dan Balteanu, 4 Aprilie 1944, p. 3 in "Universul" LXI, no. 99 of 9 April 1944, quoted in Marin, "The Social Consequences," 69.

[30] Mihail Sebastian, *Journal 1935-1944: The Fascist Years*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 589.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., 591.

[33] Davis, *Bombing the European*, 323.

[34] Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, *456th Bomb Group, 1943-1945*, 1944, 187, Fold3, https://www.fold3.com/publication/1035/unit-history-us-456th-bomb-group-1943-1945.

[35] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 104.

[36] Norris, *Combined Bomber Offensive*, 190.

[37] Mediterranean, "No. 4124, Bucharest," 79-83.

[38] Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, *461st Bombardment Group*, Roll No. B0610 (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air Force Historical Research Agency, 1973), 559.

[39] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 160-67 and 192.

[40] Sebastian, *Journal 1935-1944*, 602.

[41] Zeki Kuneralp, *Sadece Diplomat Anılar-Belgeler*, İstanbul, İsis Ltd, 1999 pp:33-34, quoted in Burak Samih Gulboy and Nevin Yurdsever Ates, "Romania in World War II through the eyes of a young Romanian Turk," *International Journal of Turcologia* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2006): 76-77.

[42] Headquarters Fifteenth, *461st Bombardment Group*, 321.

[43] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 216.

[44] Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, *304th Bombardment Wing*, Roll No. C0110 (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air Force Historical Research Agency, 1972), 2,020.

[45] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 217.

[46] United States Army Air Forces, Evaluation Board, "Army Air Force Evaluation Board Report - Volume VI: Ploesti," Mediterranean Theater of Operations, 1944 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Research Library Digital Library, 2010), 34, https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p4013coll8/id/3327.

[47] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 404.

[48] Truxal, "Bombing the Romanian," 20-21.

[49] "Bombardarea Bucureștilor în '44: mii de morți și sute de clădiri făcute praf" [The bombing of Bucharest in '44: thousands killed and hundreds of buildings destroyed], *Adevărul* (Bucharest), February 22, 2011, https://adevarul.ro/stiri-locale/bucuresti/mari-dezastre-bombardarea-bucurestilor-in-44-mii-1369935.html; and Marin, "The Social Consequences," 64.

[50] United States Army Air Forces, Statistical Control Division, "AAF Bombing Accuracy: Continental – Overseas, N10069," Office of Management Control, 1945 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Research Library Digital Library, 2020), 56 and 66, https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p4013coll8/id/5216/rec/10.

[51] Mahoney, *Fifteenth Air Force*, 86-217.

[52] Stout, *Fortress Ploesti*, 36.

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