

patible, with the German fuel having an octane rating of 87 and the RAF fuel a rating of 91, but both were compatible with US 91 octane fuel. We decided that 91 octane would be our fuel of choice and that we would use standard US hydraulic and engine coolant fluids. We checked further with the sergeant who ran the oil tests and learned that both US and German engine oils performed slightly better separately than when mixed. We decided to drain the oil, flush, and service with standard US engine oil.

Maj. Nelson arrived and we brought him up to date. Along with Lt. Cook, we went over the planned route and primary and alternate service points. We decided that 9th Air Force should send a priority message to all units along the route, including Wright Field, informing them of the project, the probable flight dates and services required, and asking that defense units be notified to prevent attack. The message advised that periodic follow-on messages would be dispatched as the project progressed.

After lunch, we met with the fuel shop people and learned that they had not been able to locate, or surface any information that might lead to locating, any JU 88 drop tanks. Maj. Nelson phoned Col. Thompson to see if he had any luck; he hadn't. Apparently they had not been used extensively by the Germans in the Middle East Theater. I remembered that a crashed P-38 we recovered in Palestine had drop tanks on it that didn't look too bad. The fuel people said they had seen some at the salvage yard while looking for JU-88 tanks and that they also saw a lot of other German parts in the yard. We asked them to pick up the P-38 tanks and see if they might be fitted to the JU bomb racks. They returned in about 20 minutes with the tanks. One was completely serviceable and the other appeared to be repairable, but the big surprise was that the diameter was just right and it looked like mounting hardware could be adapted. The fuel and armament shops went to work.

Maj. Nelson drafted the 9th AF wire and phoned it to Col. Thompson, who finalized and dispatched it. Maj. Nelson was pleased with the way things were going and decided to return to Cairo. He asked if we would like to have the Rumanian pilot, Theodore Nikolai come out for a few hours on his next trip. I said we would.

A check late in the afternoon indicated that the P-38 tanks could be mounted and stabilized, but that transferring fuel using the Ju 88 system was in doubt. Lt. Cook had some ideas on using a transfer pump. We decided to leave the JU system intact until the next morning in case Col. Thompson lucked out in locating JU drop tanks. Cook, the fuel shop people, a Consolidated Aircraft, and a General Electric tech rep diagrammed a system to transfer fuel using a B-24 transfer pump. With the range problem moving

toward a solution, I went after our next concern, navigation aids. The radio shop people had been analyzing the JU 88 equipment and concluded that we had good tunable transceivers for communications and a radio compass covering the needed frequencies, but were of the opinion that the automatic homing module was not installed. A separate receiver which also covered radio range frequencies was installed. They could not check the equipment until the aircraft was buttoned up and the batteries reconnected.

Lt. Cook informed me that the main landing gear tires were at about half life and had some minor cuts; he was not sure we could go all the way. The fuels man overheard our discussion and said he had seen some German tires in the salvage yard. Cook asked the tire people to go take a look. They returned in a few minutes with German tires that turned out to be new and the exact size. The next day they pulled the wheels, changed the tires, repacked wheel bearings, and reinstalled the wheels.

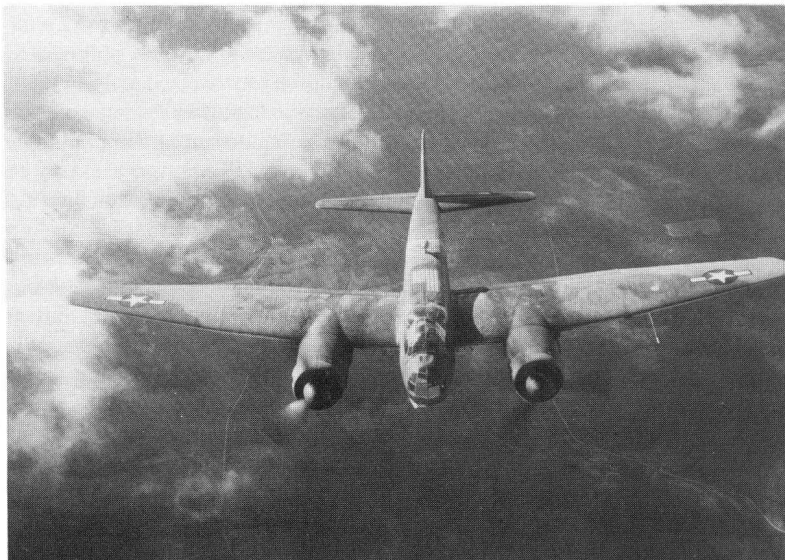
I drove over to operations to check on my flight navigation kit. It was ready with everything I asked for and some additional items they had added. I signed for the kit, thanked the operations personnel, and returned to the hangar. Lt. Cook had the personal equipment shop removing the life raft for a check and they were to make up a list of emergency equipment we should carry. It was well after normal duty time and I suggested we secure for the night or many of the crew would miss dinner.

After dinner I returned to base operations where there were good work tables to plot my course and make up my navigational

log for each flight leg. Each log contained all the data I would need from takeoff to landing. The maps and flight charts all had planned ground tracks plotted, along with true and magnetic headings; distances, check points, and navigational aids marked; and radio facilities with identification codes circled. I quit for the day about 2230 and turned in for the night.

The next morning I checked in at the hangar. Lt. Cook was well into the effort. The right P-38 tank was now mounted and stabilized. Cook and the fuel system crew had diagrammed the drop tank fuel transfer modification and were assembling parts, some of which they would have to fabricate. The paint shop came in with a sketch of the USAAF marking scheme for the JU 88 and a regulation that prescribed painting a gold band around the fuselage aft of the wing on foreign aircraft. They also wanted to add US flags to wings, fuselage, and rudder. We agreed and they went to work..

I called Col. Thompson to see if he had any leads on drop tanks and he reported no luck. I told him we were going to proceed



Notice the ARN-7 loop antenna installed just aft of the US Flag painting. (30-1).