



Responsibility for maintenance of the JU 88 is transferred to C/C Swiheart at Wright Field.(38-1)

with ease and was more responsive. The bird was quite spry now, and we began to respect it as a damn good airplane. We made the flight in three hours and 35 minutes, but when we called the tower for a clearance to land, we could not establish contact. I lowered the gear, circled the field, and got a green light from the tower, came around for landing, but on final with flaps down, I was waved off with a red light. I came around again on final and got another wave-off. Lt. Cook switched frequencies on our command radio and I finally got the tower on an auxiliary frequency and requested clearance to land. The tower advised that base operations did not want to clear us, as part of the runway was closed for repair. I told the tower that the notam advised of the closure, but listed 4000 feet available for use, and I saw other planes landing. I told them I could not divert to any other field since there were none within several hundred miles. The tower said to stand by. In a couple of minutes, the tower advised that the operations officer considered the JU 88 to be too hot to land there, but that we could land at our own discretion. I acknowledged and turned on final approach. I landed short and took the first turnoff. I closed our flight plan and checked notams and weather for the flight to Georgetown, British Guiana (now Guyana). Natal had advised us to try to get past the mouth of the Amazon River before noon as clouds normally built up in the area most every afternoon. Except for scattered clouds building at the Amazon, the predicted weather was good. I had planned to get a quick turn around at Belem, but Cook came in and told me that he still had not been able to get a fuel truck to finish the servicing. I called transient maintenance asking for expedited service. They said they would call for 91 octane fuel again. We waited a while longer and I was about to call the base commander when the truck arrived. I filed the clearance, picked up some sandwiches and beverage, and went to the aircraft. I talked to some of the people watching until Cook advised he was set to go. We had now lost over two hours. I expedited taxi and takeoff, took up a heading of 330° and climbed to 10,500 ft. About 15 minutes later we were starting to clip the top of clouds, so I climbed to 12,500.

Shortly after resetting power for cruise, the right engine quit. A scan of the instruments showed low fuel pressure on the right engine and the left engine was lower than normal and fluctuating. I snapped on the fuel booster pumps and the right engine restarted. Both fuel pressures stabilized in the normal range. We had to dodge clouds and were about to go to 14,500 when I spotted a slot in the clouds. As we passed the mouth of the Amazon, the heights decreased and thinned out. I did not want to go to 14,500 or stay at 12,500 as we did not have oxygen masks, although we did have some oxygen which we could draw from the hose. We had not set up the oxygen system before we left Deversoir as our support stations would not have proper service fittings. We planned to fly be-

low oxygen requiring altitudes. After 30 minutes, we were able to drop down to 10,500 ft for the rest of the 910 mile flight.

We spent the night at Georgetown. The next day we took off and flew 1,025 miles to a U.S. base, Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, and then on to West Palm Beach, Florida, another 1025 mile leg. These two legs were uneventful except for a tropical storm we had to circumnavigate and some very rough air, which the JU 88 rode through very well.

As we approached Florida, I contacted Miami radio our position and the time we would enter the defense zone. We were given instructions to enter and fly up the coast to West Palm Beach Airport. When we had landed and parked, we were met by military police and asked to remain at the aircraft. Customs, immigration, and agriculture inspectors arrived, questioned us, and inspected the aircraft and our baggage. The inspections did not last long but there sure were a lot of inspectors that looked the JU 88 over.

When we were cleared, the base commander welcomed us. Shortly thereafter, the defense staff people arrived and queried us about the airplane and its performance. They also advised us that their defense forces had been notified of our flight and expected arrival, but not aircraft spotter organizations. Three units had spotted us and correctly identified the JU. Two units reported also that it had U.S. markings. Most of the spotters were "ladies doing their bit for the defense of the country " (actually in those days, they were fondly referred to as "the little old ladies"). The defense staff was damn proud of their performance that day.

There was quite a crowd at the airplane. I had to send word into base operations to close the flight plan. As things quieted down, we were able to start servicing and went to base ops to check conditions for our flight to Wright Field. The weather was a mess, with severe weather warnings all over the southeastern US. The weatherman predicted improving weather for the next day, so we secured the aircraft and spent the night at Palm Beach.

The next morning, 14 October, I checked weather again. The foul weather still covered much of the area and was particularly bad on our planned route, so we delayed again. By 1000, Dayton was clearing, as were Indiana, Western Tennessee, and Mississippi. The weather was good enough to file under instrument flight rules (IFR) to Memphis, then up into Indiana and back into Ohio from the West. I told Lt. Cook to get the JU ready while I worked up a new flight log and filed. When I called the tower for clearance, I had to double check, not having used IFR procedures for many months. After takeoff, we skirted most of the weather and completed the final leg late that afternoon. We landed at Wright Field, taxied up to base operations, shut down, and secured the aircraft as a crowd began to gather.

Colonel Hayward soon arrived and I was preparing to turn the aircraft over to him per my flight orders, when Col. Signa Gilkey, Deputy Chief of the Flight Test Engineering Division, arrived to take charge of the JU 88. I backed away and let the two colonels resolve the matter. In the end, we turned the aircraft over to Col. Hayward and he in turn turned it over to Col. Gilkey, whose organization maintained, flew, and tested it in the months ahead. We unpacked our gear and signed in with the Material Command personnel office.

The next day, we were told to check in with the Flight Test Engineering Division as we were now being carried in TDY status with the Material Command, assigned for duty with that division. We did and were immediately escorted to Col. Gilkey's office, where we had a pleasant session going over the JU 88 and the