

Do.200 - MADE IN U.S.A.

by

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The First Gruppe of Kampfgeschwader 200 (I/K.G.200) was a secret Luftwaffe unit of the Second World War which undertook the ferrying and parachuting of agents, and a variety of special tasks behind the Allied lines. The aircraft used by I/K.G.200 were a very mixed bag; eight different types of German manufacture are known to have been used at various times. The most interesting type to serve this unit, however, was undoubtedly the Do.200.

These Do.200's are known to have been used for very long range operations; on one occasion to Ireland and on another North Africa. The latter was early in 1944 when a daring and successful mission was carried out establishing landing strips and supply dumps in the desert. A flight was also made over the Middle East area. The Do.200's most common task appears to have been the following and observing of U.S.A. A.F. bomber formations. What did this machine look like? In looks it was identical to a glamour girl known as B One Seven. In fact, Do.200 was simply a cover name for Boeing's B-17 Flying Fortress.

Just how many flyable Fortresses the Luftwaffe possessed is probably not on record. Most if not all were U.S.A.A.F. machines that had landed in German held territory while on operations. Two B-17's missing during 1943 were suspected of this action. As early as the spring of that year a Fort sporting the markings of 306th Bomb Group was seen over enemy territory flying alongside Eighth Air Force formations (always at a safe distance it seems!).

Reports indicate that the Germans usually retained the original U.S. unit markings but displayed no national insignia of any kind. Late in 1944 a B-17 in natural metal finish and painted in 34th Bomb Group colours was used on a number of occasions for formation following. After hostilities had ceased, a B-17F found on a German airfield still carried its U.S. nick-name on the nose - a name given to a missing 390th Bomb Group Fort. This and other information suggests that four different machines were employed at some time or other.

This story is of necessity sparse as little reliable information on the history of these machines is forthcoming. Can any reader add to the story of the Do.200 - made in U.S.A.?

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USAF CENTRAL MUSEUM A/C

Additions to the previous list of aircraft on outdoor display include: North American X-10 GML9307A; Northrop JF-89A-35-NO 49-2438A; Lockheed NF-80C 47-171A (the all magnesium job); Boeing B-50D-100-BO 48-117A; Douglas YC-124A 42-65406A; NAA F-51D-30-NT 44-74936A, F-107A-1-NA 55-5119A, T-6G 50-1279A; Northrop P-61C-1-NO 43-8353A, also XF-85 now outside.

Major Gene Sommerich