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By RT NARA Date -9-10

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HEADQUARTERS 47TH WING
APO 520

E: MEF/RMF/amb

26 September 1944.

SUBJECT: Tactical Analysis for 22 September 1944 (Target- Marshalling Yards in Greece).

TO : Commanding Officer, 98th Bomb Group, APO 520.
Commanding Officer, 376th Bomb Group, APO 520.
Commanding Officer, 449th Bomb Group, APO 520.
Commanding Officer, 450th Bomb Group, APO 520.

1. Bombing Analysis.

a. The 47th Wing attacked the LARISSA, GREECE MARSHALLING YARDS with very satisfactory results.

b. The 98th led the attack and succeeded in scoring excellent results. All units hit the I.P. as briefed, were in trail and squared away for a good run. Although cloud formations in the target area handicapped the lead bombardiers, radar operator HODGES materially aided lead bombardier FINCK in getting set on course. Box leaders, being in trail were then able to pick up target without too much difficulty. The 415th and 343rd squadrons, led by bombardiers FINCK AND BOBBIT respectively, scored superior results on their assigned aiming points. The third box, from the 344th Squadron, experienced a normal run and synchronization was reported to be good; however bombs from the lead ship did not release due to a blown rack fuze, and this box returned their bombs to the base. The 345th Squadron, flying last, were forced to make a P.D.I. run because of auto-pilot malfunction; however bombardier HARBELIS had a good run and scored superior results.

c. The 376th attacked the Marshalling Yards second to score satisfactory results. All units hit the I.P. O.K., were properly spaced, in trail and squared away at target. Although bombardier KASSAB, leading the 514th Squadron was seriously hindered by clouds on the bomb run, he performed an excellent sighting operation and scored SUPERIOR results. Nearly every bomb of this squadron landed in the Marshalling Yards, completely covering their assigned area. The second box, from the 513th squadron, was unable to pick the target up on the first run so the bombardier used good judgement and went around for another run. Making a P.D.I. run the second time because of auto-pilot failure during the first part of the run, bombardier used poor judgement and dropped his bombs, even though he knew they would probably miss the target. Poor pilot- bombardier coordination was partly responsible for this as the bombardier understood that it was necessary to drop the bombs on the second run. The leader of the third box (512th

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Squadron) had the same trouble on the bomb run as the others, that is, continual cloud interference. Although he did pick up aiming point in time for synchronization, bombs fell short. Sight malfunction is believed to be responsible for this error. The 515th Squadron, flying last, took a second run because of cloud interference. Run was too short however, and this coupled with an erratic auto-pilot, and poor bombardier judgement, combined to make the run a complete failure. Bombs missed target completely.

d. The 449th attacked the Marshalling Yards last to score undetermined results. All boxes flew slightly past the I.P. before turning on the target, in order to avoid as much cloud interference as possible. First box, from the 716th Squadron, finished run on P.D.I. after auto-pilot went out on run. Synchronization on target was fair, but clouds precluded the possibility of a bomb plot. The other three squadrons, 717th, 718th and 719th, in that order, had practically identical runs and with the exception of one box which dropped short - they too put their bombs into the target area for undetermined results.

g. Summary: Intervening clouds proved to be a serious handicap to all bombardiers on this mission. The 98th turned in another sparkling performance by surmounting these obstacles and scoring superior results. The 449th also performed an excellent job of bombing under these obstacles; unfortunately however, clouds obscured most of the bomb impacts, so accurate results could not be ascertained. Very poor "bombing sense" exhibited by two boxes of the 376th, and a sight malfunction in another box, seriously affected the bombing accuracy of this group.

GROUP	THIS MISSION	RATING	REPORTS	LAST 5	PRACTICE PREVIOUS TO MISSION.
98th BG.	89.3%	Superior	Excellent	82.8%	Two units.
450th BG.	Did not drop	----	----	68.1	-----
376th BG.	31.4	Satisfactory	Superior	65.6	All units.
449th BG.	N.A.	Excellent	Excellent	53.6	All units.

2. Navigation Analysis.

a. No wing rendezvous was scheduled. Each group was assigned a time and altitude to be over their own fields in such a manner that a ten minute interval would exist over the target. To eliminate any possible congestion in group rendezvous and departure, the groups were arranged to lead in order of their location from East to West. (the route being in an Easterly direction) The 98th made good its rendezvous time but found it necessary to attain an altitude of 15,500 feet to clear the unsettled weather consisting of towering cumulus clouds. The 376th, next to depart, experienced the same rendezvous trouble, but were able to form at 15,000 feet and depart at the briefed time of 0954. Likewise the 450th and 449th found it necessary to raise the briefed altitude to 14,500 and 15,000 feet respectively to clear the local weather. Both of these groups departed their respective fields at the briefed

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times.

b. The route out was followed very closely by all groups. No key-point time was stated in the order as this was an individual group mission. Following are the times and altitudes at VUNOJ, the keypoint:

- (1) 98th - at 1011 at 16,000 feet.
- (2) 376th - at 1020 at 19,000 feet.
- (3) 450th - at 1024 at 16,500 feet.
- (4) 449th - at 1052 at 18,800 feet.

This point was cloud obscured. In fact throughout the entire mission very little pilotage navigation was possible due to an undercast.

c. All groups either hit the I.P. or swung wide around it to come in on the briefed axis of 201° . Target times were 1100, 1110, 1120, 1130 respectively. Actual axes and times were:

- (1) 98th - 201° at 1058.
- (2) 376th - 208° at 1109-1129.
- (3) 450th - 201° at 1121-1129.
- (4) 449th - 201° - 219° at 1144-1147.

The 98th experienced no difficulty on the bomb run and consequently the results were excellent. The 376th were troubled by clouds and smoke, thereby causing one section to make a 360 and bomb at the late date of 1129. The 450th found the target obscured so were forced to return the bombs to base. Some confusion was apparent in the target area as a few of the boxes rallied left. This was due to collision course and the flak was heavier to the right. The lead boxes of the 449th over ran the I.P. to the left by 3 miles and crossed the target on a heading of 215° . This was caused by navigator - pilot error; that split second coordination on the initial point.

d. The route back was followed with slight variances due to the existing weather. The 98th found it necessary to turn due South and let down over the Adriatic. This Group broke out at 3,500 feet in the vicinity of FANOS ISLAND, about 20 miles south of the briefed route. The 376th made three 360's in an effort to allow the group to close up. After letting down through the undercast another 360 was made to reform the group again and proceed direct to base. The lead box of the 450th rallied as briefed and returned on the briefed route, the other three boxes that rallied left returned to base along the route out. The 449th also returned essentially as briefed. One dog leg was inserted to miss flak at the reported coordinates 3956N - 2036 E.

e. No escort was scheduled.

f. The lead navigators, Captain NYSTRON, Lt. CROWSTON, Lt. SUEY

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and Captain HOWARD are to be commended for their excellent work on this mission.

g. The navigation on this mission is considered excellent.

h. Individual Group ratings:

- (1) 98th - Navigation superior, logs superior.
- (2) 376th - Navigation excellent, logs very satisfactory.
- (3) 450th - Navigation excellent, logs superior.
- (4) 449th - Navigation excellent, logs superior.

i. Communications commentary:

- (1) 98th - Reported all frequencies satisfactory.
- (2) 376th - Reported unsatisfactory on the inter-group frequency, air to ground frequency command, and interphone, all not functioning properly.
- (3) 450th - Reported intergroup unsatisfactory, all other were satisfactory.
- (4) 449th - Reported all frequencies worked satisfactorily.

3. PFF Analysis.

a. Pathfinder stood down on this mission.

By command of Brigadier General RUSH:

Robert H. Warren
ROBERT H. WARREN,
Lt. Col., Air Corps,
A-3.

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