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STUDY 9 to II

THE COMMITMENT OF THE LUFTWAFFE AGAINST THE
ALLIES IN THE WEST.

1943 to 1945

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Study 9. to 11

THE COMMITMENT OF THE LUFTWAFFE AGAINST THE ALLIES IN THE
WEST (1943-45)

VOLUME IV (with Appendix Volume IV):

HOPELESS STRUGGLE OF GERMAN SINGLE- AND
TWIN-ENGINE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT STATIONED
IN THE ZONE OF THE INTERIOR AND EMPLOYED
TO WARD OFF THE ALLIED OIL OFFENSIVE
AFTER THE TRANSFER OF THE BULK OF THE
DAY FIGHTER UNITS FROM THE HOME AIR DE-
FENSE TO THE INVASION FRONT AND THE AIR
WAR FOR THE OIL RESOURCES OF THE BALKANS
DURING THE PERIOD FROM D-DAY (6 JUNE 1944)
TO 1 JULY 1944

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and former Commanding General
of the I Fighter Corps.

Augsburg, September 1954

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PREFACE

1. Study 9 to 11 is composed of two volumes with regard to the German Luftwaffe command structure in World War II. The two volumes are as follows:

"The Air War in the West" and

"The Air Defense of the Reich."

2. The procurement and volume of the necessary source material do not permit to write Study 9 to 11 in a historical-chronological manner. The author was forced to research and write about certain periods of time ahead of others because sufficient source material on these periods was available at that time. For that reason the description of the historical events pertaining to the home air defense during the period from 15 September 1943 to D-day (6 June 1944) and the war for Germany's oil resources was prepared first. This work is composed of 4 volumes with four appendix volumes as follows:

Volume I

Air Warfare over the Reich's Territory by Day and
by Night from 15 September 1943 to 31 December 1943

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Volume II

The Struggle for Air Superiority above the Reich's Territory from 1 January to 31 March 1944

Volume III

Air Battles above the Reich's Territory for the Defense of the Vital Resources of the Luftwaffe-- 1 April 1944 to D-day (6 June 1944)

Volume IV

Hopeless Struggle of German Single- and Twin-Engine Fighter Aircraft Stationed in the Zone of the Interior and Employed to Ward Off the Allied Oil Offensive after the Transfer of the Bulk of the Day Fighter Units from the Home Air Defense to the Invasion Front and the Air War for the Oil Resources in the Balkans During the Period from D-Day (6 June 1944) to 1 July 1944.

A critical comparison between the Allied and German historical presentation of the air war events during the above mentioned period will subsequently be given.

3. The following Volume IV of Study 9 to 11 will describe the air war events that occurred in the home air defense exclusively from German knowledge. For the description of the

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air war events in the Balkans, German and American source material was used in order to give maximum coverage to the survey. Insofar as data were available, details concerning the commitment of German antiaircraft artillery and the effect of air bombardments were included in the narrative. As a result, the uniformity of the description is being ^{distorted} ~~disturbed~~. On the other hand, these data serve the purpose of conveying an idea of the direct results obtained in connection with the effectiveness of the German antiaircraft artillery aside from its indirect, repelling effect as well as of the extent of personnel and materiel losses suffered from the effect of bombs.

The sketches belonging to Volume IV are contained in Appendix Volume IV.

4. Source Material for Volume IV.

The most important source for the description of events were the remaining archives of the former military history branch of the Luftwaffe. This material consisted mainly of intelligence information and reports of the Luftwaffe High Command, the Air ^{Fleet Command and} ~~Force Headquarters~~ Reich, and the Corps Headquarters I Fighter Corps. These remaining archives of the former military historical branch of the Luftwaffe can be considered as semi-official sources.

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In addition, the following sources were used to close gaps and substantiate data:

Diary annotations of the former Chief of the Luftwaffe Operations Staff, ^{Generalmajor} ~~Brigadier General~~ Koller, and of the former Nightfighter Radioman Erich Handke;

Postwar reports of the former Chief of Staff of the Air Fleet Command Reich, ^{Generalleutnant} ~~Major General~~ Andreas Nielsen (Ret.) and of the former Commander of the Aircraft ^{Transfer} ~~Ferrying~~ Staff at the I Fighter Corps, Colonel Otto Lachemair (Ret.) and a few individual documents, including situation maps of the Luftwaffe High Command.

For the description of the air war for the oil ^{resources} in the Balkans data from the U.S. study "THE ARMY AIR FORCES IN WORLD WAR II, VOLUME III" and from Copies 8 and 10/1944 of the U.S. magazine "Impact" were used in addition to German source material.

Some additional observations concerning the air raids on Berlin were taken from the private notes of a former civilian ^{official} ~~air~~ defense ~~controller~~.

All sources used, excluding the archives remaining from the former military historical branch of the Luftwaffe are ^{quoted} ~~cited~~ especially in the text of Volume IV.

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critical
 The ~~analytical~~ remarks contained in the surveys and
summary
 in the ~~conclusion~~ of Paragraph 11 of Chapter 1 represent
 the opinion of the author. In writing these parts, an
 evaluation submitted by the former *General* of
 the 3d Fighter Division, *General major* ~~Brig. Gen.~~ Walter Grabmann (Ret.)
 was taken into consideration.

5. General Analysis of Volume IV of Study 9 to 11

The description of the course of the air war in
 Volume IV has been written on the basis of documents of
 the intermediate echelon of the German air operations
 command. No combat reports of flying units have been
 available. Because of the extraordinary conditions pre-
 vailing at the end of the war, it will probably no longer
 be possible to obtain original documents pertaining to
 the course of air combat actions. This is a serious
 deficiency for the historian, all the more so since sub-
 jective reports from memory written by individuals are
 of only limited validity.

The contents of Volume IV of Study 9 to 11, insofar
 as they pertain to the events *in these* ~~of~~ the *air* defense ~~of Reich~~
regions
 territory and the air war for the oil *in* the Balkans, are
 close to the historical facts. On the other hand, there

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will probably be inaccuracies in the description of air operations, particularly those pertaining to details of the operations of the U.S. Air Force in Italy, the British Mosquito night operations, and the German and American losses of ^{aircraft} ~~planes~~ in the air war for the oil ^{resources} of the Balkans.

Minor historical inaccuracies have to be taken into account because of the limited source material available and because of human inadequacies.

Chapter 3 of Volume IV is, with the exception of data taken from the situation map of the Luftwaffe High Command, to be considered a subjective report from experience which does not exclude possible mistakes.

Special emphasis is placed on the fact that the data concerning ^{the} Allied air ^{effort-} ~~warfare~~ ~~commitments~~ represent German knowledge at the time ^{it} ~~they~~ occurred, with the exception of the references to the air war for the ^{resources} the oil in the Balkans.

All figures, not dates, given should be evaluated only with regard to their quantitative significance. The author will express at some other point his opinion on the fundamentally limited significance of figures and on the peculiarities and gaps in the reporting system.

CHAPTER 1

DAYTIME EVENTS IN JUNE 1944

BEGINNING WITH D-DAY.

I. SURVEY

a. American Offensive Action.

Most of the operations of the U.S. Air Force stationed in Britain were directed against France in connection with the Allied invasion. Nevertheless, a number of heavy daytime air attacks were directed against targets in the Reich from British air bases during the first month of the invasion.

Since the beginning of the invasion U.S. air force units in Italy intensified considerably their attacks against targets in the Reich's territory and in the Balkans.

The total impact of the American air offensive against German territory was about half that of the month of May

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despite the air attacks connected with the invasion. The American air force units were able to maintain complete air superiority over Central and Southeastern Europe. In this they succeeded all the better because the majority of the German day fighter units had been transferred from German to French territory. According to German records, the following American air attacks were carried out since D-Day:

From air bases in Great Britain:

- 5 large-scale attacks against targets in northern and central Germany. (The respective records are available.)
- 2 large-scale attacks and one air raid with minor forces against targets in the Reich's territory. (The records concerning these air raids are missing).

From air bases in Italy:

- 4 large-scale attacks against targets in the Munich and Vienna areas.
- 3 large-scale attacks against targets in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria.
- 1 low-level fighter-bomber attack against the oil refineries at Ploesti.*

*Two additional large-scale attacks which had been planned from American air bases in Italy had to be called off because of unfavorable weather conditions.

From air Bases in Soviet Russia:

3 large-scale attacks against targets in Hungary, Romania, and southern Poland.

In June 1944, the U.S. air command concentrated most of its attacks on establishments of the oil industry and extended its offensive action against this type of industry by adding to its target list refineries, storage tanks, the plants producing lubricants. It did not, however, direct its main effort exclusively against industrial targets, but extended its air attacks in June also on other types of targets.

The total number of U.S. bomber aircraft operating against objectives in the Reich's territory and in the Balkans during June 1944 can be arrived at by the following percentages:

- 50 percent against establishments of the oil industry;
- 18 percent against city areas;
- 15 percent against plants of the air armament industry and Luftwaffe installations;
- 10 percent against the transportation system;
- 5 percent against shipbuilding yards and sea ports; and
- 2 percent against various other targets.

This breakdown clearly showed that the U.S. air

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command aimed primarily at decisively weakening the striking power of the Luftwaffe by reducing its gasoline supply and by destroying its industrial plants, especially the plants producing aircraft engines. Beyond this, the Americans probably intended to paralyze the potential of the entire Wehrmacht by bombing the establishments of the oil industry in Germany and in the Balkans. It could not be explained nor understood why U.S. air attacks in June 1944 were directed against other types of targets as well. In the case of the American June attacks against the city areas of Berlin and Munich only the prevailing weather conditions may have been the reasons. It was remarkable that no U.S. air attacks were launched against communications in the West German border area. This is especially so since from air reconnaissance the Americans probably knew that the damages caused to communication centers in that area by May attacks had been repaired. Moreover, the Germans had expected that the Americans would be particularly interested in cutting off the V-1 weapon re-supply.

The repeated American attacks on the petroleum centers of Poelitz, Boehlen, and Magdeburg were proof enough that the U.S. air command was exactly informed by a combination of Allied intelligence and air reconnaissance results on the repair status of these factories.

Yet, it was surprising that the U.S. air forces did not put out of action the few German day fighter units by systematically bombing their air fields in June 1944. ✓

The following details and tactical characteristics of the U.S. air operations were observed in June:

On days of large-scale attacks weather reconnaissance aircraft were used regularly during the early morning hours. Their appearance enabled the Germans to draw conclusions as to the target area the American bombers had selected for that day.

The first tactical weather reconnaissance was carried out on 29 June 1944. The reconnaissance aircraft preceded the first bomber units by about 10 minutes flying time.

Targets were marked also by escort aircraft.

Smoke signs were used more extensively, and it was assumed that these served occasionally to reassemble bombers after a long approach flight.

The total strength of escort fighters participating in a large-scale attack amounted to about 1,000 to 1,200 aircraft.

A special concentration of escort fighter protection was effected primarily in front and above the bomber units.

Aluminum foil was dropped by type "lightning" aircraft belonging to units which provided fighter cover.

Low-level strafing attacks by lighter forces were conducted only at rare occasions.

Long-distance fighter operations by Mosquito aircraft were conducted against German coastal areas, mostly during bad weather. The surprising and sudden appearance of the attackers caused the loss of several German aircraft.

American air reconnaissance over the expanded Reich's territory during June 1944 was very active. Its purpose was to determine the effect of the attacks on petroleum production centers, but it was also noticeably directed against the hitherto untouched coal distillation plants and oil refineries in Bohemia and Upper Silesia, as well as the power plants on the Upper Rhine and in Vorarlberg and plants producing ammunition and explosives.

An analysis* of the German aircraft gasoline

*This analysis is based on the June 1944 report by the official responsible for aircraft gasoline supply at the Armed Forces Operations Staff of the Armed Forces High Command, and the diary notes of the former Chief of the Luftwaffe Operations Staff, Generalmajor Koller.

From surveys conducted by the former Military Science Branch of the Luftwaffe which are based on reports by the Air Fleet Command Reich, Operations Branch No. 17800/44 (Intelligence Officer) of 9 July 1944 and Luftwaffe High Command Operations Staff (Ic) No. 3080/44 of 16 July 1944 it becomes apparent, among other things, that the following quantities of engine fuel had been lost until June 1944, as a result of American air attacks.

Footnote continued:

70 percent of the aircraft gasoline production
60 percent of the production of coal distillation and
synthetic engine fuel,
70 percent of the refineries.

These reports on the percentages were not evaluated in this study because it could not be established what the 100 % figures actually represented.

text continued from p. 5:

situation after the effects of the American attacks in June showed the following figures:

German aircraft gasoline production.

in March 1944: 214,000 metric tons (highest production level of the year)
in May 1944: 120,000 metric tons
in June 1944: 74,000 metric tons

According to the foregoing the loss of production as a result of the American air attacks was as follows:

in May 1944 it amounted to 43.9 percent of the March production
in June 1944 it amounted to 38.1 percent of the May production
in June 1944 it amounted to 65.3 percent of the March production

Aircraft-
Aviation gasoline stocks of the Luftwaffe.

on 1 May 1944: 540,000 metric tons

on July 1 1944: 218,400 metric tons, consisting of the following:

June production 74,250 metric tons
 From ~~Armed Forces~~ *Wettermacht*
 High Command reserves: 20,650 metric tons
 From Romanian stock.... 3,500 metric tons
 Luftwaffe stock:..... 120,000 metric tons

Aircraft-
Armed Forces High Command *aircraft-* aviation gasoline reserves.^x

on 1 June 1944: 119,000 metric tons

on 1 July 1944: 98,350 metric tons.

From the stand of the German *aircraft* aviation gasoline supply up to July 1944 one could deduct^e that in October the German Luftwaffe would dispose of only about half of the monthly average of the first six months of 1944, that is about 75,000 metric tons. This amount did not include the probable increase in consumption for the defense against the invasion. The computation was based on the assumption that the German monthly production of *aircraft* aviation gasoline and ~~its~~ *the monthly* consumption would remain the same as in June 1944. The extent of the American air attacks and their effect on the German gasoline production and *aircraft-* aviation gasoline stocks ~~were to~~ *would* *to* have remained

^x The source material does not show clearly whether this was a reference to reserves of *aircraft-* aviation gasoline, or gasoline in general.

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How critical the German gasoline situation had become by June 1944 can be gathered from the following documents:*

"On June 17, 1944 the Commander in Chief of Air Fleet "Reich" issued the following orders:

"Headquarters Air Fleet Reich, Chief of Supply and Administration, Berlin, 17 June 1944."

"The gasoline situation and the present rate of consumption at the fronts necessitate the imposition of immediate measures to save gasoline. Only by making utmost reductions, above all in general air activity, and also in operations will it be possible to overcome the present situation. Unnecessary use of gasoline is equivalent to sabotaging the war effort. I request all generals commanding corps to exercise strict and absolute supervision of all air traffic within their areas of responsibility."

"Travel by air, even flights by top-level personalities, must be restricted to flights that are absolutely essential to the war effort. Even major delays, caused by the use of means of transportation that save gasoline, must be taken into account. Other means of transportation, used in good time, will be substituted for air transportation."

*These documents were quoted in the study "Geopolitics and the Conduct of Air Warfare" (Geopolitik und Luftkriegs-fuehrung) of the former Military History Branch of the Luftwaffe.

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"Gasoline quotas for motor vehicles will be sharply reduced. Motor vehicle gasoline will be used exclusively for carrying out missions essential to the war effort."

On July 8, 1944 Generalmajor (Brig.Gen.) Schmid made the following statement on the subject of the gasoline problem:

"It is of decisive importance to the issue of the war that the flow of gasoline is not interrupted. For this reason the systematic and continuous enemy attacks on the hydrogenation plants constitute at this time the most acute danger."

b. The Commitment of the I Fighter Corps.

The Allied invasion of France led to a fundamental change in the day fighter situation in the air defense of the Reich in June 1944. Realizing the decisive significance of a successful interception of the invasion for the entire issue of the war, the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe ordered the transfer of all single-engine day fighter units from the area of the home air defense to France.

For a survey of the transfer of day fighter units on D-day.

see Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.

After the beginning of the invasion only the following units were available to the home air defense for commitment against U.S. daytime raids:

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Fully combat-effective and mobile flying units:

- 4 single-engine night fighter groups, and
- 3 (later 4) twin-engine fighter groups.

Static flying units capable of limited commitment:

- 2 replacement fighter groups in Silesia,
- 1 replacement fighter group in East Prussia,
- 4 operational squadrons of fighter training schools in Lachen-Speyerdorf, Fuerth/Bayern and Vooslau near Vienna.
- 1 Hungarian fighter group in Hungary,
- 1 test unit equipped with type Me 163 aircraft in Zwischenahn.

The mobile flying units were deployed over a great distance between each other:

- in the area of Greater Berlin
- in the area of Munich-Nuremberg and
- in the area of Vienna

The 2nd and 3rd Fighter Divisions possessed no fighter forces with the exception of two operational squadrons of fighter training schools whose ability to operate was limited and the test unit of Me 163 aircraft which was rarely in operational condition. The territories of the German Bight, North West Germany, West Germany and Holland were thus not covered by day-fighter units.

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The I Fighter Corps Headquarters had to perform the difficult task of conducting the defensive operations over German territory with fighter units which were greatly inferior to those of the enemy and which varied considerably in their combat effectiveness. The following is a detailed presentation of the combat effectiveness of the flying units available to the day-fighter command of the home air defense:

Single-engine night fighter groups: equipped with the types FW 190 and Me 109, about 40 aircraft in a group.

crews: selected, experienced night fighters, rested, experienced in operations in bad weather conditions at night, little training in day fighting, up to now they were only rarely used for the repulsion of U.S. day attacks.

The combat effectiveness of the single-engine night-fighter groups in day operations was greatly doubted by the I Fighter Corps Headquarters before they were actually committed in such operations.

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Twin-engine fighter groups: equipped with the types Me 110
and Me 410, about 40 aircraft per
group.

crews: combat-experienced and rested.
Because of the great superiority
of the U.S. fighters in May 1944,

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twin-engine fighter groups were only rarely used against strong bomber units not protected by fighters. Twin-engine fighter groups could be employed against bomber units which were escorted by fighter aircraft only provided the risk of heavy losses was accepted or fighter cover was made available for such groups.

Replacement fighter units: Of these, only squadron leaders and advanced or recuperated crews could be employed locally. Combat efficiency: negligible.

Operational squadrons of the fighter schools: they consisted of a few flying instructors of the respective fighter schools. Combat efficiency: negligible.

Hungarian fighter group: this unit could only be locally committed over Hungarian territory, and its capability of operational employment was limited.

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The total strength of the day-fighter units in the home air defense at the beginning of the Allied invasion in the West amounted to about the following figures*:

160 single-engine night fighters in operational condition

100 single-engine night fighter reserve crews at the night fighter training school in Altenburg,

120 twin-engine fighter aircraft in operational condition.

Since the fighter units had to be dispersed over a wide area, a successful conduct of defensive day-

*according to the author's memory.

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time operations with the various types of weak defense forces against an enemy generally ten times superior in strength appeared impossible to the I Fighter Corps Headquarters. For that reason the latter tried again, at the beginning of June, through the Air Fleet Command Reich to get the permission of the Luftwaffe High Command (OKL) to concentrate all day-fighter units within a closely limited area of the Reich. By such measure, the basis for the defensive action of all day-fighter units concentrated in the air was to be created.

The Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe, however, insisted on his idea of providing fighter protection at the specific objects, that is he thought it necessary, for reasons of economy and interior politics, to station small units (fighter groups) near the objects to be protected such as Berlin, Stettin, Munich, and Vienna. In view of the transfer of day-fighter units from the home air defense to the theater of war in which the invasion took place and of the critical situation of German petroleum production, he demanded the ruthless daily commitment of all available day-fighter, single-engine night fighter and twin-engine fighter aircraft from the home air defense to prevent further destructions in the oil industry.

The I Fighter Corps Headquarters was, therefore, forced to start the defensive action with day fighter units which

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were based in three different concentration areas and much inferior to those of the enemy.

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By concentrating all forces on the long approach flights from Bavaria and Austria to the Berlin and Central German area and vice versa, the corps attempted to bring its entire defensive power to bear upon the enemy. The course of the operations in June showed that these tactics were only seldom successful. The principal reasons for this failure were the following:

Great variability of weather conditions in the Reich's territory, limited endurance of fighter aircraft and lacking experience of the single-engine fighter pilots in conducting day operations,

difficulties in coordinating the command methods in the areas of the 1st and 8th Fighter Divisions, caused by the Y-command method employed by the 1st Fighter Division and the Egon-command method employed by the 8th Fighter Division.

In June 1944, the German single- and twin-engine fighter units fought a determined, though totally uneconomical defensive battle over the Reich's territory and constantly lost striking power owing to their heavy losses. As a result of their great numerical inferiority they were in no way capable of preventing the U.S. day attacks. The priority given to the invasion front permitted the allocation of only a limited amount of matériel and a small number of replacements to the home air defense. The overall defensive situation, insofar as the flying units of the home air defense were concerned, had become critical by the end of the month.

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Despite all these factors the struggle of the day fighter units in the home air defense reached a certain climax in June, insofar as the relatively weak units were still successful in

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causing losses to the American attacking units with their tremendous fighter cover.

Insofar as aircraft downed by fighters over the Reich's territory were concerned, the U.S. losses had, despite German transfers of forces to France and despite the necessity of employing single-engine night fighter aircraft in daytime, dropped from 1.9 percent in May 1944 to 1.5 percent in June 1944. On the other hand, the German losses had risen to 13.7 percent.

The main burden of the battle was borne by the former single-engine night fighters. It became evident that the quality of the night fighter crews was, on the average, higher than that of the day-fighter wings which had been sent to the invasion area. The flight personnel of the single-engine night-fighter force consisted mainly of former flying instructors of long standing and of volunteers from all branches of the air arm who originally had been willing to serve in the fierce night operations against British bombers. They possessed a great ability in flying, especially in the field of bad-weather and blind flying. Although they were inexperienced in day air combat, offensive operations conducted in a closed formation, or in the day-fighter control methods, they fought successfully and persistently as single fighters. It was especially noticeable that the single-

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engine night fighter pilots still had confidence in the technical performance of the fighter types Me 109 and FW 190 and, therefore, did not, consider

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themselves on principle inferior to the U.S. fighters. Attacks against the American four-engine units were no fundamental problem for them. These facts deserved special attention. The loss of air superiority over the Reich's territory seemed to be due primarily to the German numerical inferiority as well as to the much-reduced quality of the fighter crews and the resulting high losses of personnel and matériel.*

Even the single-engine night fighters, those fearless air-acrobats, became the victims of U.S. numerical air superiority. Nevertheless they survived a great number of parachute jumps after which they re-entered combat with new aircraft without delay. Slowly but surely the single-engine night fighter groups decreased to small elements, mainly as a result of losses due to injuries, until at the end of the month there were only few who could conduct the defense operations in pairs. Altogether, the use of single-engine night fighters was a reckless exploitation of the most valuable fighter personnel of the Luftwaffe, the majority of whom would have been qualified for service as experienced non-commissioned officers in day fighter wings. Such employment was also prevented by the mentality of the General of the Fighter Forces, who regarded

*The detailed analysis of the air activities over the Reich's territory with reference to the technical, numerical

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*(Continued)

and training facts and possibilities will be dealt with in another part of this study. It seems advisable, however, when considering single-engine night fighters in daytime-operations, to point out the principal importance of numerical differences and the quality of the crews in the air war. This seems all the more important, since the belated appearance of the jet-propelled aircraft Me 262 on the European sky was not the only reason for the breakdown of the German air power position in the year of 1944.

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repeatedly asked that twin-engine fighters be no longer employed since the former could neither provide the required protection nor succeed in simultaneously shooting down U.S. fighters and bombers.

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reserves which had not come from the fighter training schools as unsuitable for employment in the home air defense even as late as in the summer of 1944.

The employment of twin-engine fighter aircraft in June 1944 was, in view of the unlimited U.S. air superiority over the Reich's territory and the great numerical superiority of the U.S. fighter forces, the mere repetition of the hopeless attempt to achieve defensive successes with highly qualified twin-engine fighter crews in technically inferior aircraft. This was true even in view of the tactical cooperation of German single-engine night fighter and twin-engine fighter aircraft. Since the altogether inferior German fighter forces could no longer succeed in gaining air-superiority, limited in space and time, there was no more opportunity for the twin-engine fighter units to attack strong bomber units unprotected by fighters. On the contrary, the twin-engine fighter aircraft were easily shot down by the U.S. fighters during the air combat which developed. Twin-engine fighter units, employing the tactics of the so-called defensive circle, sometimes succeeded in waiting for the return of the attacking U.S. fighters to escape certain destruction. They also managed to escape flying at low altitudes. Commanders of fighter groups whose mission it was to provide protection for the twin-engine fighter forces

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The commitment of twin-engine fighter forces in June 1944 resulted in serious losses of twin-engine fighter crews and in extremely heavy losses of matériel caused by killings and hits. This was practically the collapse of the twin-engine fighter commitment in the home air defense. The Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe only was not yet convinced of the senselessness of the commitment of twin-engine fighter aircraft in the home air defense.

In June 1944, the replacement fighter groups which were in operational condition to a limited extent only, the operational squadrons of the fighter training schools, the experimental unit of Me 163 aircraft and the Hungarian fighter group were engaged in home air defense action only on a limited scope.

Regarding the home air defense operations against considerably superior enemy forces during the month of June the following was to be particularly noted:

The clever and prudent way in which air units in the sector of the 8th Fighter Division were commanded and taken care of by their commander, Colonel Handrick;

the loyal commitment of the 76th Twin-Engine Fighter Wing, commanded by Lt.Col. Kowalewski;

the great successes of the 3rd Single-Engine Night Fighter Group/3rd Fighter Wing in the sector of the 1st Fighter Division;

the heroic commitment of the 1st Single-Engine Night Fighter Group/302nd Fighter Wing in the sector of the 8th Fighter Division.

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The following evaluation of the situation in the home air defense is contained in a document* of the Air Fleet Command Reich of June 1944 as follows:

Air Fleet Command Reich, Operations Staff.

As a result of the invasion the main effort of the fighter commitment was to a considerable extent shifted to the area of the Third Air Fleet.

The relief of the Reich's territory from enemy air attack which had been expected as a result of the invasion, had realized only to a very small extent. On the contrary, the enemy directed the main effort of his offensive action systematically against those war production plants most important at the time, against the fighter aircraft production and, above all, against the oil supply. A further effective support on all defense fronts, especially in the West, can be insured only if by an undisturbed production of aircraft and the necessary gasoline an acceptable balance of power in the air can be maintained.

It is therefore of decisive importance for the outcome of the war that primarily the gasoline supply does not suffer any further interruption. The systematic and continued

*This document was quoted in the study: "Geopolitics and Air Warfare" of the former Military Science Branch of the Luftwaffe.

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attacks against the oil production constitute at present the most acute danger.

In proportion to their numerical strength, their aircraft equipment, and to the degree to which they were in operational condition, the units of the home air defense (4 twin-engine fighter groups, 2 single-engine escort fighter groups) fought heroically and successfully in the air operations against the air attacks in the Reich's territory (hydrogenation plants) which were conducted after the invasion.

"They could not, however, prevent the attacks on the hydrogenation plants. The extent to which the twin-engine fighter groups, however, rapidly decreased in the course of these attacks. The success of these groups was small compared to their losses, because they were invariably engaged in air combat with superior enemy fighter forces, since enemy bomber units no longer operated against the Reich's territory without strong fighter cover."

The critical situation in the home air defense in respect to the defensive day-fighter operations in June 1944 was reflected in the controversies described in the following passage:

The Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht and the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe did not acknowledge the great in-

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feriority and the impotence of the day-fighter units in the face of the heavy blows struck by the U.S. air forces. Because of the rather tense atmosphere in the Fuehrer headquarters and in the headquarters of the Luftwaffe which had been created by the rather unfavorable development of the situation at the invasion front, both commanders were inclined to ascribe the failure of the home air defense operations to the incompetence of the command staff and the cowardice of the flying units. The Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps repeatedly rejected the latter reproach, both in personal and telephone discussions with the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe. The success of such discussions, however, never lasted long. On the other hand, the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe refused to take the responsibility of evaluating the air situation in respect to intruding enemy aircraft and of committing the day-fighter units personally. The reproach of cowardice raised against the fighter units spun wide circles. The reproach raised against the day-fighter units of the home air defense was even echoed from the eastern front. Generalfeldmarschall Ritter von Greim expressed his depreciation of the cowardice of the fighters to the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps. In personal conversation with the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps the Reich's Minister for Public Information and Propaganda, Dr. Goebbels,

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the Reich's Minister for Armament and Ammunition, as well
as the Commander in Chief of the Navy,

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Grossadmiral Doenitz, made intensive enquiries about the defense situation of the home air defense. The Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps made it unequivocally clear to the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe and to all other authorities concerned, that the recovery of the air supremacy over the Reich's territory and the prevention of the American daytime attacks were doubtless a question of the relative strengths of the opponent forces and not the result of lacking devotion to combat duty or courage on the part of the flying units.

While the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe demanded by daily urging the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps persistently and impatiently, the continued commitment of all day-fighter units in the home air defense regardless of unit strengths, losses, or the general condition of the crews, the commanders of the fighter divisions and wings pointed out repeatedly to the commanding general that combat efficiency of the crews had been minimized by excessive strain and that the fighting methods were uneconomical. The crews who had been gravely tested, both physically and mentally, remained silent. They had not been demoralized.

A thorough evaluation of the air situation in the Reich's territory took place during the last days of the month of June at the I Fighter Corps Headquarters in Treuenbrietzen in the presence of the Chief of Staff

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of the Air Fleet Command Reich, Generalmajor Nielsen. As a result of this evaluation Generalmajor Nielsen suggested the following measures for the continuation of the defensive action in the home air defense:

"Temporary discontinuation of the defensive operations of the day-fighter units in the home air defense. Rehabilitation of the fighter units, primarily by replacing personnel and matériel losses.

Re-equipment of the twin-engine fighter units with single-engine fighter aircraft.

Restoration of the full combat efficiency of the fighter units by short-term combat training in wing formation at high altitudes.

Concentration of all fighter units of the home air defense in a close limited area of the Reich."

It was general Nielsen's intention to gain a locally limited air supremacy by committing all fighter units rested and fully combat-efficient at the same time in the same area and in favorable weather conditions. By these tactics air supremacy was to be regained, a defensive success was to be achieved and unbearable losses were to be inflicted on the enemy at one stroke.

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In order to carry out Nielsen's suggestions it was important that the top-level Luftwaffe command would show patience during the time of rehabilitation and re-equipment of the day-fighter units, and the home air defense missions would be left entirely to the antiaircraft artillery. Since, for the last three months, the day-fighter units had been unable to prevent any American day attack against targets in the Reich's territory anyhow, such a period of rehabilitation offering the prospect for a decisive subsequent defensive success seemed to be justified. After all, it was General Nielsen's primary objective by this method to turn the German defensive action into an economically sound process, which meant to discontinue the reckless exploitation of the fighter potential which had existed so far. The Chief of Staff of the Air Fleet Command Reich suggested that the process of rehabilitation should be repeated in case the planned commitment of fighters on a large scale should have resulted in heavy losses of friendly forces.

Generalmajor Nielsen's proposal appeared as an urgent necessity in the precarious situation which had developed owing to the German inferiority in the air as a result of the operations to repulse the invasion and the failure to provide the jet fighters. This suggestion met with unqualified approval by the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps immediately brought it before the Commander in Chief of the Air Fleet Reich.

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Generalleutnant (ret.) Andreas Nielsen, former Chief of Staff of the Air Fleet Command Reich, made the following statement on 31 July 1954:

"The suggestion concerned was discussed by me with the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps in the form described, after I had reported on it to the Commander in Chief of the Air Fleet Reich at the end of June. We fully agreed that defensive operations as hitherto conducted would lead to a complete attrition of the small forces available and would mean no more than pinpricks to the enemy. The units were tired out, the daily losses were heavy, the replacements were moderate and inadequately trained owing to fuel shortage. Effective defensive successes could no longer be expected under these circumstances. This was especially so since the forces engaged in the home air defense had been weakened decisively by the transfers of elements to the invasion front. We both agreed that successes could only be obtained if all forces could be committed against the enemy in a concentrated effort. In order to achieve such concentration it would have been necessary to withdraw temporarily all forces from operational commitment to rehabilitate the units and to improve their fighting power as well as to raise their training standards."

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"The Commander in Chief of Air Fleet Reich approved the suggestion made by both his chief of staff and the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps. He also instructed me to get in touch with the General of the Fighter Forces in order to consider with him the possibilities for rehabilitating the units. I also was to obtain his support in submitting a corresponding request to the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe."

"The General of the Fighter Forces, Generalmajor Galland, did not question the effectiveness of the measures suggested, but voiced certain misgivings regarding the withdrawal of the units from operational commitment. Above all, he did not believe that he could obtain Goering's consent to such a withdrawal, because the latter was under constant attack by Hitler and the National Socialist Party leaders. They blamed him for the unsuccessful air defense operations. If the fighter defense operations would be completely stopped for a limited period of time the attacks on Goering would assume intolerable proportions which the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe would not--in Galland's opinion--willingly take into account to insure an effective success."

"Nevertheless, the Air Fleet Command Reich decided to submit a corresponding request to the Operations

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Staff of the Luftwaffe High Command in order to bring about a decision by Goering. The request was submitted in writing and, insofar as it concerned the withdrawal of units from operational commitment, was disapproved by long-distance telephone communication."

After the suggestion for a more effective defensive action against American daytime air raids had been disapproved, there was no prospect for a basic improvement in the air defense situation in the Reich during July 1944. It was not until the autumn of 1944, when--after the loss of France to the Allies--the U.S. bomber fleets concentrated their attacks exclusively on German territory, that the General of the Fighter Forces reconsidered the suggestions of the Chief of Staff of the Air Fleet Command Reich on the rehabilitation method for the fighter forces.

c.) Successes and Losses in June 1944

The average total strength of the day fighters in operational condition in the sector of the I Fighter Corps amounted, in June 1944, to:

100 single-engine and

60 twin-engine fighter aircraft.

The total number of day fighter aircraft committed in the sector of the I Fighter Corps in June 1944 amounted to:

1310 aircraft

The total losses of aircraft in the sector of the I Fighter Corps in June 1944 amounted to:

179 aircraft, which is 13,7 % of the total effort

The losses of the enemy over the Reich's territory in the sector of the I Fighter Corps in June 1944 amounted to:

179 aircraft not including those brought down by antiaircraft artillery.

This figure represents 1,5 % of the estimated total effort against the Reich's territory which amounted to 11 900 American aircraft in June 1944 including the effort from the American air base in Italy.

In addition, the incomplete data contained in the documents of the former Military Science Branch of the Luftwaffe include the following figure for the American losses of aircraft over the Reich's ~~territory~~ territory due to antiaircraft ~~guns~~ artillery in June 1944:

83 aircraft definitely shot down by antiaircraft artillery.

Consequently, the total American losses over the Reich's territory ~~in June 1944~~ in June 1944 amounted to:

Losses due to fighter aircraft : 179 aircraft, which is 1,5 %

Losses due to antiaircraft artillery: 83 aircraft, which is 0,7 % *

Total losses: 262 aircraft, which is 2,2 %

Note: * Incomplete data.

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2.) American Attack on Munich ^{on 6 or 9} June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 229!)

Enemy Effort:

15 wings consisting of about 500 Fortress and Liberator aircraft of the American 5th, 47th, 49th, 55th, and 304th Brigades from the air base in Italy raided Munich. Strong fighter forces escorted the bomber aircraft up to the area of Munich.

Time of Attack: From 10:09 to 10:35 hours.

Results of the Attack in Munich: Medium damage to buildings.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps:

The following aircraft were employed: 38 single-engine and 43 twin-engi-

ne fighter aircraft of the 8th Fighter Division. Units of other fighter divisions could not be employed owing to bad weather conditions.

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery:

The following amount of ammunition was fired: A total of 12 262 rounds

was fired by 82 heavy batteries of the Antiaircraft Artillery Groups Munich, Regensburg, Innsbruck, Salzburg, Berchtesgaden, and Bruck on the Mur.

Enemy Losses: 7 aircraft definitely shot down,

5 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition,

3 aircraft were definitely shot down by antiaircraft
artillery.

Total losses:

10 aircraft definitely shot down,

5 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces:

2 aircraft destroyed,

5 aircraft damaged.

Losses of personnel: 1 ~~killed~~ wounded.

Weather Conditions: In the area of Munich 10/10 clouds.

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3.) American Attack on Munich and Oberpfaffenhofen on 13 June 1944

(See sketch: Home air defense, supplement
2301)

Enemy Effort:

The second air attack conducted from the air base in Italy in June 1944 was directed against Munich again. The attack was carried out by 600 to 700 Fortress and Liberator aircraft which flew in 4 waves. A secondary raid was directed against the aircraft assembly plant at Oberpfaffenhofen.

Time of Attack: 10:17 to 1038 hours.

Results of the Attack: Medium damage was inflicted upon industrial establishments and on the transportation system in Munich.

16 grounded aircraft were destroyed at Oberpfaffenhofen.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps:

The following aircraft were employed: 113 single-engine and twin-engine

fighter aircraft of the 1st, 7th, and 8th

Fighter Divisions. 98 aircraft engaged in combat

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery:

82 heavy batteries of which 50 were stationed in the area of Munich fired 24 874 rounds.

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Enemy Losses: 9 aircraft definitely shot down,

4 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition, the following aircraft were shot down by

antiaircraft artillery:

8 aircraft definitely shot down,

3 aircraft probably shot down.

Total losses:

17 aircraft definitely shot down,

7 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces:

9 aircraft destroyed,

7 aircraft damaged.

Losses of personnel: 14 killed,

8 wounded,

1 missing.

Weather Conditions: Several thin layers of clouds in the target area.

Special Information: During the American air attack on 13 June 1944,

parchment foils each with 4 to 5 attached aluminium strips 2 mm wide were dropped from the bomber aircraft to jam the German radar equipment.

4.) American Attacks on Oil Refineries, Industrial Installations,
and the Transportation System in the Area of Vienna on 16 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 2311)

Enemy Effort:

Oil refineries, installations of the industry as well as of the transportation system were the targets of 350 to 400 Fortress and Liberator aircraft intruding from the American air base in Italy. Strong fighter forces escorted the bomber aircraft into the target area.

Time of Attack: 10:30 to 11:12 hours.

Results of the Attack: Medium damage in the oil refineries.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps:

The following aircraft were employed: 166 single-engine and twin-engine

fighter aircraft of the 7th and 8th Fighter Divisions, of the Fighter Commander Silesia and of the Hungarian Fighter Group. 108 aircraft engaged in combat.

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery

The following amount of ammunition was fired: 20 065 rounds by 48 heavy

batteries in the area of Vienna and 705 rounds

by 30 heavy guns in the area of Hungary.

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Enemy Losses: 19 aircraft definitely shot down,

8 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition,

7 aircraft were definitely shot down by antiaircraft
artillery.

Total losses:

26 aircraft definitely shot down,

8 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces:

20 aircraft destroyed,

2 aircraft missing.

Losses of personnel: 11 killed;

7 wounded, and

3 missing.

Weather Conditions: 1/10 to 3/10 clouds in the area of Vienna.

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5.) American Attacks on Targets in the Areas of Hamburg, Bremen, andHannover on 18 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 2321)

Enemy Effort

A force of about 1 000 Fortress and Liberator bomber aircraft intruding from the air base in Great Britain and escorted by strong fighter forces into the target areas bombed objectives in the areas of Hamburg, Bremen, and Hannover.

The Principal Targets were: Hamburg, city and port areas.

Time of attack: 09:10 to 11:30 hours.

Bombing altitudes: 6 000 to 8 000 meters.

Bremen, city area.

Time of attack: 09:05 to 09:15 hours.

Bombing altitudes: 6 000 to 8 000 meters.

Hannover - Misburg

Time of attack: 09:20 to 09:36 hours.

Bombing altitudes: Around 6 500 meters.

Secondary Targets were: Wesermuende, city and port areas,Brunsbuettel, floodgate installations,Nordenham, the "Weserflug" aircraft plants,Schwesing, airfield near Husum.

The bombloads were dropped

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on the principal targets by 7 bomber units with visual observation
of the ground and
by 16 bomber units without visual observation
of the ground and
on the secondary targets by 3 bomber units with and by 10 bomber
units without visual observation of
the ground.

Results of the Attacks: Considerable damage, especially in Hamburg.
Large conflagrations in the petroleum harbor
of Hamburg. Heavy losses of men.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps: Bad weather conditions permitted
the employment of the units of the 1st Fighter Division only.

Total Effort: 95 single-engine and twin-engine fighter aircraft which
did not achieve contact with enemy forces.

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery:

The following amount of ammunition was fired: A total of 24,000 rounds
was fired by 94 heavy batteries of the 3rd Antiaircraft Artillery Division and the 8th Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade.

Enemy Losses: No aircraft was shot down by fighters. 11 aircraft were
definitely shot down by antiaircraft artillery.

Losses of Friendly Forces: None

Weather Conditions: 9/10 to 10/10 clouds, lower ceiling at 2,000 meters

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6.) American Attacks on Oil Factories in the Areas of Hamburg, Brunsbuettel, Stettin, Hannover, and Magdeburg on 20 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 233!)

Enemy Effort

A bomber force of approximately 1 300 aircraft directed its attacks against oil factories in North and Central Germany. The approaching aircraft flew by way of the North and Baltic Seas. Strong fighter forces penetrated into the target areas to cover the offensive operations. In the Hamburg area alone 500 American fighter aircraft were spotted.

The following were the objectives of the attack:

Hamburg and Brunsbuettel, mineral oil refineries.

Time of attack: 09:10 to 09:58 hours.
Poelitz near Stettin, hydrogenation plant.

Time of attack: 09:48 to 10:11 hours.

The attack was carried out in three waves.

Hannover - Misburg

Time of attack: 09:06 to 09:14 hours.

Fallersleben

Time of attack: 09:07 to 09:11 hours.

Magdeburg - Rotensee, hydrogenation plant.

The attack was carried out in ~~three~~ eight waves.

Time of attack: 09:09 to 09:16 hours.

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Results of the attacks: Considerable damage was caused to all the

factories of the oil industry which were hit by the bombing. This applies particularly to the hydrogenation plant at Poelitz, the "Erabag" factories at Lagdeburg, and to the "Rhenania-Ossag" factories at Hamburg.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

167 single-engine and twin-engine fighter aircraft of the 1st, 7th, and 8th Fighter Divisions were employed, sometimes in a second mission.

115 of these aircraft engaged in combat.

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery

The following amount of ammunition was fired:

A total of 49 761 rounds was fired by 195 heavy batteries of the 1st, 2nd, and 8th Antiaircraft Artillery Divisions, of the 2nd and the 8th Antiaircraft Artillery Brigades as well as of the Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade Greater Berlin and Mecklenburg.

Enemy Losses: 30 aircraft definitely and 3 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition, 18 aircraft were definitely and 4 aircraft were probably shot down by antiaircraft artillery.

Total losses:

48 aircraft definitely shot down,

7 aircraft probably shot down.

Moreover, 21 American aircraft made an emergency landing
in Sweden.

Losses of Friendly Forces: 25 aircraft destroyed,

3 aircraft missing,

8 aircraft damaged.

Losses of personnel: 20 killed,

13 wounded,

6 missing.

Weather Conditions: Traces of cumulus clouds at altitudes from 1 000 to

1 500 meters in the target area.

High-altitude visibility: From 20 to 50 kilometers.

7.) American Attack on Berlin on 21 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 234!)

Enemy Effort

The following objectives were attacked in operations conducted ~~xxxx~~ by forces from the American air base in Great Britain:

Berlin, city area was raided by about 700 bomber aircraft during the period from 10:03 to 10:38 hours. The bomber units approached by way of Holstein, Schwerin, Lueritz, and via Wesermuende, Stendal, and Jueterbog.

h
Schwarzheide near Ruhland, hydrogenation plant and

Basdorf, motor factory were raided by forces of the 1st Bomber Division

and by elements of the 3rd Bomber Division

Numerous fighter units penetrated into the target areas to provide cover for the bomber aircraft.

The attack on the hydrogenation plant at Schwarzheide was carried out during the period from 10:30 to 10:42 hours. ~~The attack was carried out during~~

~~and~~ During this attack the bombers flew in 7 waves of 20 bombers each with time intervals of two minutes and at an altitude of 5 600 meters.

After this attack 114 B17 bombers and 70 P51 fighters proceeded in eastern direction to Soviet Russia and landed at Poltava.

Results of the Attack in BerlinThe main effort of the attack was directed against: The central sector

of the city, moreover against the districts of Kreuzberg, Horst Wessel and Prenzlauer Berg, the power plant of Klingenberg, the motor plants at Genshagen and the "Heinkel" aircraft factories at Oranienburg.

The following amount of explosives was dropped:

9 000 demolition bombs,
10 000 liquid incendiary bombs,
250 000 stick-type incendiary bombs.

Damages: 988 houses destroyed,
3 039 houses damaged,
474 killed, 756 wounded, 28 000 homeless.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps:The following aircraft were employed, sometimes in a second mission:

134 single-engine and twin-engine fighter aircraft of the 1st, 7th, 8th Fighter Divisions and of the Fighter Commander Silesia. 121 of these aircraft achieved contact with the enemy.

Activities of the Antiaircraft ArtilleryThe following amount of ammunition was fired:

70 534 rounds by 411 heavy batteries and
4 200 rounds by 8 light batteries.

Enemy Losses: 25 aircraft definitely shot down,

6 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition,

20 aircraft were definitely shot down by antiaircraft

Artillery.

Total losses:

45 aircraft definitely shot down,

6 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces: 10 aircraft destroyed,

4 aircraft missing,

19 aircraft damaged.

Losses of personnel:

19 killed, 14 wounded, 4 missing.

Weather Conditions: 7/10 to 9/10 clouds at altitudes from 2 500 to 2 700

them
meters. Under ~~such~~, visibility of 8 to 10 kilometers.

Special Information: On 21 June 1944, brown wrapping paper foils 200 by

200 mm in size with attached tinfoil strips were dropped from the bomber
aircraft to jam the German radar equipment.

Effects of the Transfer of American Bomber Aircraft to Soviet Russia on

the Disposition of the Antiaircraft Artillery Forces in the Reich's Terri-

tory *:

After the transfer of American units to the East

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Note: * Source: Notes in the diary of the former Chief of the Luftwaffe
Operations Staff, Generalmajor Koller.

on 21 June 1944 during which leaflets were dropped announcing air raids on the Reich's territory to be conducted from the East, the Air Fleet Command Reich feared that the industrial area of Upper Silesia, in particular the hydrogenation plants of Blechhammer and Heydebreck would be subjected to air attack. For this reason, the Air Fleet Command Reich immediately ordered the reinforcement of the antiaircraft defenses at ^{both} ~~the~~ hydrogenation plants by 13 batteries of which 7 were equipped with 105 mm guns. These batteries were parts of the home air defense force.

On 22 June 1944, the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe issued an order to the effect that the antiaircraft artillery defenses at the hydrogenation plants of Blechhammer and Heydebreck were to contain 104 heavy guns and that, in addition, ^{the employment of} smoke units was to be planned at these two objects.

In compliance with the order of the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe the Luftwaffe High Command directed, on 22 June 1944, the additional reinforcement of the antiaircraft artillery defenses at the hydrogenation plants in Upper Silesia by the moving in of the following forces:

- 4 heavy batteries from the area of Kassel,
- 5 heavy batteries from the area of Strassburg,
- 4 heavy batteries from the area of Soest, and
- 4 heavy batteries from the area of Prag.

Total : 17 heavy batteries .

8.) American Attack on Bremen on 24 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 235!)

Enemy Effort

The following objectives were attacked by approximately 500 bomber aircraft from the American air base in Great Britain:

Bremen, fuel dumps and shipbuilding yards by 10 units flying in three waves and

Wesermuende.

Time of Attack: From 12:53 to 13:28 hours.

According to German reports 120 to 150 Lightning, Mustang, and Thunderbolt fighter aircraft operated over the target area.

Results of the Attacks: Medium damage in the port district of Bremen.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps:

91 aircraft were readied for employment but could not take off owing to bad weather conditions.

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery

The following amount of ammunition was fired:

11 631 rounds by 70 heavy batteries of the 8th Antiaircraft Artillery Division.

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Enemy Losses: No enemy aircraft were shot down by fighters.

1 enemy aircraft was shot down by antiaircraft artillery

Losses of Friendly Forces: None

Weather Conditions: 9/10 to 10/10 clouds between 600 and 2 500 meters.

Only a slight possibility of any visual observation of the ground.

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9.) American Attack on Objectives in the Area of Vienna on 26 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 236!)

Enemy Effort

600 bomber aircraft from the American air base in Italy operated against objectives in the area of Vienna.

The following targets were attacked:

Moosbierbaum, hydrogenation plant, attacked during the period from

09:37 to 09:57 hours and

in the areas of Vienna and Bratislava mineral oil refineries, fuel

dumps as well as targets of the industry and the transportation

system were attacked during the period from 09:45 to 10:30 hours.

Strong fighter forces penetrated into the target areas to provide cover for the American attacking units.

Results of the Attacks: Considerable damage was caused to the objectives attacked.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

The following aircraft were employed: 303 single-engine and twin-en-

gine fighter aircraft ~~xxx~~ of the 1st, 7th, and 8th

Fighter Divisions as well as of a Slovak unit.

186 of these aircraft engaged in combat.

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery

The following amount of ammunition was fired: A total of 19 705 rounds

was fired by 57 heavy batteries in the area of Vienna and by 9 heavy batteries in the area of Bruck on the Mur.

Enemy Losses: 37 aircraft definitely shot down,

7 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition, by antiaircraft artillery:

15 aircraft definitely shot down.

Total losses:

52 aircraft definitely shot down,

7 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces: 32 aircraft destroyed,

8 aircraft missing,

12 aircraft damaged.

Losses of personnel: 28 killed, 13 wounded,

13 missing.

Weather Conditions: Cloudless, considerably hazy.

Special Information:

Aluminum wool and foils dropped from bomber aircraft

achieved, on 26 June 1944, the most effective Duespelt*-jamming of German radar equipment ever produced.

.....
Note: * Duespelt: (window?)

10.) American Attack on Armament Objectives and Airfields in the Area
of North and Central Germany on 29 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 237!)

Enemy Effort

The air raids conducted by a total strength of approximately 1 100 American bomber aircraft from the air base in Great Britain were directed against armament objectives and airfields in the area of North and Central Germany. A strong fighter force escorted the ~~bomber~~ attacking units into the target areas. A fighter cover consisting of about 50 aircraft flew ahead of the bombers. The escort fighters conducted 5 low-level strafing attacks against air bases and targets of the transportation system in North Germany.

The following objectives were attacked by the bombers:

Boehlen, hydrogenation plant, time of attack: from 08:59 to 09:35 hours,
bombing altitudes: 7 000 to 7 500 meters.

Quakenbrueck, airfield, time of attack: 08:55 hours,
bombing altitude: 4 000 meters.

Fallersleben, time of attack: ^{from} 09:04 to 09:16 hours,
bombing altitudes: 5 000 to 6 000 meters.

Leipzig, "Erla" factories and

"Mitteldeutsche Motorenwerke", time of attack: from 09:04 to 09:16 hours,
bombing altitudes: 5 000 to 6 000 meters.

Wittenberg, "Arado" factories, time of attack: from 09:30 to 09:38 hours,
bombing altitudes: 6 000 to 8 000 meters.

Bernburg, air base and "Junkers"

factories, time of attack: 09:22 hours,
bombing altitudes: 6 000 to 8 000 meters

Magdeburg, time of attack: ~~from~~ 09:23 to 09:29 hours,
bombing altitudes: 5 000 to 6 000 meters.

Oschersleben, airfield and

"Junkers" factories, time of attack: from 09:20 to 09:29 hours,
bombing altitudes: 5 000 to 6 000 meters.

Burg, air base,

time of attack: 10:15 hours,
bombing altitudes: 4 000 to 5 000 meters.

Stendal, air base,

time of attack: 09:55 hours,
bombing altitudes: 5 000 to 6 000 meters.

Zerbst, air base,

time of attack: 09:25 hours,
bombing altitudes: 5 000 to 6 000 meters.

Results of the Attacks: Moderate effects only were produced by bombing
raids against a variety of targets.

10 aircraft were destroyed and

3 aircraft were damaged

by strafing attacks against airfields.

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9 locomotives were heavily damaged
by strafing attacks against trains.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

The following aircraft were employed: By the 1st, 7th, and 8th Fighter

Divisions 109 single-engine and twin-engine fighter aircraft.

75 of these aircraft engaged in combat. The offensive action of this division failed because the commander ~~and his deputy~~ and his deputy of the combat unit of the 1st Fighter Division had been put out of action.

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery

The following amount of ammunition was fired:

14,413 rounds by 76 heavy batteries of the 14th Antiaircraft Artillery Division and

1,116 rounds by 12 heavy batteries of the 2nd Antiaircraft Artillery Division.

Enemy Losses: 6 aircraft definitely shot down,

2 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition, by antiaircraft artillery:

10 aircraft definitely shot down.

Total losses:

16 aircraft definitely shot down,

2 aircraft probably shot down.

- 53 -

Losses of Friendly Forces: 18 aircraft destroyed,

1 aircraft missing,

7 aircraft damaged.

Losses of personnel: 10 killed,

6 wounded,

1 missing.

Weather Conditions: 4/10 to 8/10 formation of thin cloud banks between

1 500 and 3 000 meters over the target area.

Visual observation of the ground sometimes impaired.

Special Information:

During an attack of a German twin-engine fighter unit on a Fortress unit rocket-type missiles were fired from the rear upper turrets of the bomber aircraft. The trajectories of these missiles were marked by ~~red~~ red smoke trails which disintegrated after approximately 1 000 to 1 500 meters.

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11.) American Attacks on Installations of the Oil Industry in the

Balkans in June 1944 *

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 238!)

Enemy Effort

On 2 June :

American bomber units under fighter escort, with a total strength of 130 B 17 and 70 P 51 aircraft coming from the air base of Foggia in Italy attacked the railroad center of Debrecen in East Hungary and subsequently landed at three air fields in the area of Poltava (Poltava, Mirgorod, and Piryatin) in Soviet Russia. This was the first of the so-called "shuttle bombing" raids of the American air forces**.

On ⁶ June:

The American bomber unit consisting of 104 B 17 and 42 P 51 aircraft which had landed in Soviet Russia on 2 June attacked the airfield of Galatz in Rumania from the air base in Soviet Russia. After the attack the aircraft returned to the airbase in Soviet Russia ***.

Notes: * In view of the basic and decisive importance of the American action against the oil industry in the Balkans for the overall war effort and to ~~give~~ provide a survey as complete as possible of the overall air operations in this theater of war, the presentation of the events in June was based, as an exception, on German and American sources.

** Sources: The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III and the American journal "Impact", Volume 8/1944.

*** Source: The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III.

In addition, 310 bomber aircraft from the Italian air base conducted a large-scale attack on the oil refineries at Ploesti on 6 June *.

On 10 June: 36 P38 fighter bombers escorted by 39 P38 fighter aircraft carried out a low-level attack on the oil refineries at Floest in Rumania.

The attacking force sustained heavy losses. Parts of three refineries were damaged.**

On 11 June: The oil depots of Giurgiu and Constanza in Rumania were attacked by

300 American bomber aircraft from the air base in Italy and suffered several bomb hits. Since the bombing attack had been expected, major effects by the bombing could be prevented by preparatory measures.***

The bomber units of the Fifteenth USAAF which were landed in Russia on 2 June returned to their base in Italy and, on their return flight attacked the airfield of Focani in Rumania. This attack caused heavy damage to buildings.****

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Notes: * Source: American periodical "Impact", Volume 10/1944 and The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III.

** Source: The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III.

*** Source: Report of the competent officer for fuel supply in the Wehrmacht High Command/Wehrmacht Operations Staff of June 1944.

**** Source: US-periodical "Impact", Volume 8/1944.

On 12 June: The hydrogenation plants at Komorn in Hungary were attacked

by American bomber aircraft from the air base in Italy**.

On 14 June: American offense forces attacked the hydrogenation plants near

Budapest *.

The attack of 85 bomber aircraft of the Fifteenth USAAF inflicted heavy damages on the oil refinery of Szony near Budapest **.

On 21 June: After a large-scale attack of the American air force based in

Great Britain on the city area of Berlin, the motor factory of Basdorf, and the hydrogenation plant of Schwarzhilde (Ruhland)

114 B 17 bomber and 70 P 51 fighter aircraft proceeded in eastern direction via Poland and landed at the Soviet air base in the area of Poltava ***.

American bomber units from the air base in Italy raided the airfield of Carlowo in Bulgaria.

Results of the attacks: 30 Me 109 aircraft of the Bulgarian Air Force destroyed,

airfield repair and maintenance shop of Carlowo destroyed,

500 cubic meters of fuel destroyed.

.....

Notes: * Source: Report of the competent officer for fuel supply in the Wehrmacht High Command/Wehrm.Op.St. of June 1944.

** Source: American periodical "Impact", Volume 8/1944.

*** See Chapter I, Par. 7. Source: The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III.

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The reason for the destruction of such a great number of aircraft was the inadequate dispersion of forces effected by the Bulgarian Air Force. The Bulgarian fighter forces based at Carlowo were not employed for the repulsion of the American air raid. The reasons for this failure remained unknown*.

On 23 June: 139 American bomber aircraft attacked the oil refineries of Ploesti

**.

On 24 June: The attack conducted by 135 American bomber aircraft was directed

against the oil refineries of Ploesti again**.

which had

On 26 June: The bomber forces landed in Soviet Russia on 21 June attacked the

oil refineries of Drohobycz ~~with~~ in Galicia with 71 B-17 bomber and 55 P-51 fighter aircraft and proceeded to the American air base in Italy***.

At 15:00 hours, 2 American bomber units with a total strength of 48 Liberator and 38 Fortress bomber aircraft flew at an altitude of 5 000 meters from the East across the area south of Lwow in southern direction and raided the oil production establishments of Drohobysc. The aircraft proceeded by way of Croatia in direction of South Italy

Notes: * Source: Notes in the diary of the former Chief of the Luftwaffe Operations Staff, Generalmajor Koller.

** Source: American periodical "Impact", Volume 10/1944.

*** Source: The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III and the American periodical "Impact", Volume 8/1944.

At the same time, 20 Lightning fighter aircraft intruded via Croatia in northern direction to meet the returning bombers.*

On 5 July: The American bomber forces of the Eighth USAAF which had arrived at Foggia on 26 June coming from Poltava returned from Italy by way of France to Great Britain after having participated in attacks on Bukarest and Belgrad on 3 July. On their return flight they raided the railroad station of Beziers in France **.

.....
Notes: * Source: Notes in the diary of the former Chief of the Luftwaffen Operations Staff, Generalmajor Koller.

** Source: American periodical "Impact", Volume 8/1944.

and
Commitment of the German^VAllied Fighter Forces *.

The following aircraft were available:

(Average number of aircraft in operational condition)

In the Area of Vienna: 30 single-engine night fighter aircraft and

40 twin-engine fighter aircraft of the 8th Figh

ter Division for the repulsion of the bombing x

raids on Budapest and Komorn.

In Hungary:

20 Hungarian fighter aircraft (Me 109) of the

Sector Commander Hungary at the airfield of

Veseprem for the repulsion of the bombing raids

on Budapest and Debrecen and for operations

American
against ~~many~~ aircraft flying to Russia.

In Bulgaria:

12 German fighter aircraft,

25 Bulgarian fighter aircraft,

37 fighter aircraft of the Sector Commander Bul

garia at the airfields Buseriste and Carlowo

for the repulsion of the bombing raid on Carlowo

and for operations against American aircraft

flying to ~~Rumania~~ Rumania.

.....
Note: * Source: Situation map of the Luftwaffe High Command of 1 July

1944.

In Rumania: 50 German fighter aircraft in the area of Floesti and Tocsani,

80 Rumanian fighter aircraft (Me 109 and Jar 80) in the areas
of Bukarest, Galatz, and Constanta.

130 fighter aircraft of the Fighter Commander Rumania for the

repulsion of the bombing raids on Floesti, Galatz, and Constanta

The Total Average Strength of Day Fighter Units in Operational Condition

in the Balkans Including the Area of Vienna in June 1944:

217 single-engine and 40 twin-engine fighter aircraft of

which 92 single-engine and 40 twin-engine fighter aircraft

were German.

The Commitment of German and Allied Antiaircraft Artillery Including Smoke-

Generator Units *:

In Hungary: In the Sector of the Commanding General of the German Luft-

waffe in Hungary:

German forces: 21 heavy batteries,

6 light batteries,

0 searchlight batteries.

Hungarian forces: 42 heavy batteries,

21 heavy light batteries,)	75 % of
3 heavy searchlight batteries.))	full
		strength

.....
Note: * Source: Situation map of the Luftwaffe High Command of 24 May 1944

In Bulgaria: In the Sector of the German Luftwaffe Mission in Bulgaria:

No German antiaircraft artillery forces.

In Rumania: In the Sector of the Commanding General of the German

Luftwaffe in Rumania:

German units:

Total: 34 heavy batteries,

16 and one fifth light batteries,

7 searchlight batteries,

4 smoke-generator batteries, of which the following

were employed in the oil area of Floesti:

5th Antiaircraft Artillery Division:

30 heavy batteries,

10 and four fifth light batteries,

7 searchlight batteries,

4 smoke-generator batteries.

Rumanian and Bulgarian units:

In the oil area of Floesti:

26 heavy batteries,

13 and one fifth light batteries,

4 searchlight batteries,

2 and one half antbaircraft barrage batteries

(balloons).

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Commitment of German Bomber Forces on 22/23 June 1944 *

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 2381)

The operations were conducted as follows:IV Air Corps with 4th Bomber Wing (pathfinder) from airfield Bialystok,

53rd Bomber Wing from airfield Minsk,

55th Bomber Wing from airfield Minsk.

Total force: 200 bomber aircraft.Take-off: 22 June 1944, 21:00 hours.Approach route: Kalinkowichi - Poltava.Time of attack: Poltava on 23 June, from 00:00 to 00:15 hours.American losses:

47 aircraft destroyed on the ground,
 (According to German aerial photographic reconnaissance) 26 aircraft damaged on the ground.

German losses: None

.....
 Note: * Europaeische Sicherheit (European Security), review of military science, 1951, number 1. Author: Herhudt von Rhoden, former Chief of the Military Science Branch of the Luftwaffe.

According to the American book: "The Army Air Forces in World War II",
 took place
 Volume III, the German bombing attack on Poltava on 21/22 June 1944.

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American Losses in the Oil War in the Balkans in June 1944:

German reports:		American reports:*
2 June	-	1 bomber aircraft
6 June	-	14 bomber 2 fighter aircraft
10 June	-	23 fighter aircraft (P38)
11 June	-	1 bomber aircraft
22/23 June	47 aircraft destroyed on the ground, 26 aircraft damaged **	43 bomber aircraft destroyed on the ground, 26 bomber aircraft damaged on the ground, 15 fighter aircraft destroyed on the ground.
23 June	-	6 bomber aircraft
24 June	-	14 bomber aircraft.

Notes: * Sources: The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III and the American periodical "Impact".

** See footnote on page 62.

German Losses in the Oil War in the Balkans in June 1944:

	<u>German reports:</u>	<u>American reports:*</u>
6 June	-	8 plus 22 : 30 aircraft
21 June	30 fighter aircraft destroyed on the ground ** (airfield of Carlowo in Bulgaria)	
22/23 June	no losses	no losses
23 June	-	10 aircraft
24 June	-	11 aircraft

Notes: * Sources: The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume III¹ and the American periodical "Impact".

** Sources: Diary of the former Chief of the Luftwaffe Operations Staff, Generalmajor Koller.

Summary

The American air war in the Balkans was a part of the most interesting and most impressive Allied air operations during 1944. It manifested the daring spirit of the American air command and the striking power of the American air forces. The truth of these statements is hardly diminished by the fact that the American air forces sustained heavy losses during their operations against the German oil base in the Balkans in the month of June. The weak German and allied fighter forces in Austria, Hungary, in the Balkans, and and at the German eastern front offered the least contribution to ^{the} ^{of} ~~inflicting~~ these losses on the American air forces. The American losses were in the first place due to the attempts ^{of the bombers} ~~to~~ make intermediate landings on Soviet territory in order to operate from this area and to the attempt ~~in~~ of fighter-bombers to conduct ^{low-level} ~~striking~~ attacks against the oil center of Floesti from the air base in Italy. In the first case, the American air command oversaw the danger of ^{operations} ~~annihilation~~ ~~of~~ the German bomber forces stationed at the eastern front ~~which~~ against the grounded American air forces. In the latter case, the American command did not take into consideration the flawless functioning of the German aircraft warning and reporting system and the great defensive power developed by the light antiaircraft artillery stationed in Rumania. The strength of the antbaircraft artillery defenses in the oil area of Floesti, including the effective concealment and smoke screening, considerably impaired the American offensive action in any case.

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In spite of all difficulties and reverses the American air operations in the area of East and South-East Europe during June 1944 produced a variety of effects decisive for the overall war effort. The numerous air bombardments of the oil production establishments in the Balkans conducted in connection with the heavy bombing raids on the fuel production in the Reich's territory brought about a bottleneck in the fuel situation which was of great consequence for the entire German Wehrmacht. During the phase of the Allied invasion in France which was extremely impressive to the public opinion of the whole world the American air forces had, in addition, ~~succeeded~~ succeeded in gaining the unrestricted air supremacy in South Europe. American air power now affected the entire European territory under German occupation. There remained no corner of this area not threatened by air attack. The American demonstrations of air power in the form of "shuttle-bombing" and of the inter-European triangle-bombing-operation conducted from Great Britain by way of Soviet Russia to South Italy and from there via France to the Island of Britain did not fail to show propagandistic effects. ~~affairably~~ ^{affected} These demonstrations ~~were~~ affected the attitudes of the countries allied with Germany, the strengthening of the guerilla movements in Poland, Russia, and in the Balkans, the American support provided to Russia, the growing recognition of the hopeless situation in the sectors of the German armies fighting in the East and in the South-East, and the evaluation of the war situation by the neutral powers.

CHAPTER XI

Nighttime Events in June 1944Beginning on D - Day1.) Surveya.) British Offensive Action

The main effort of the British air operations during June 1944 was connected with the Allied invasion in France. The Bomber Command operated against the Reich's territory with a comparatively small total force and restricted its operations to targets in North Germany, probably on account of the short summer nights. The offensive action of Mosquito bombers against targets in the entire Reich's territory not including targets in East Germany, however, continued with undiminished intensity. No increase of the British night effort from the air base in Italy was observed.

Regarding the selection of targets, a close coordination of the Allied

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~~air commands~~ was evident. Like the American day attacks the British

night operations in June ¹⁹⁴⁴ were in the first place directed against

~~establishments of the German fuel industry.~~ ^{production & processing facilities} These establishments

were also the principal targets of the Mosquito bombers.

According to German reports, the British night ^{effort} ~~operations~~ against

the Reich's territory consisted of the following operations:

From the air base in Great Britain:

3 large-scale attacks against factories of the fuel industry in

North-West Germany.

1 large-scale attack against the Ruhr Area*.

1 large-scale attack against installations of the transportation system in the border zone of West Germany*.

No documentary data are available regarding this attack.

9 Mosquito attacks against fuel factories*.

No documentary data are available regarding these attacks.

A number of Mosquito attacks (2 to 3?) against industrial installations and the transportation system in the areas of Koeln, Muenchen-Gladbach, Osnabrueck, Goettingen, and Saarbruecken*.

No documentary data on the individual operations are available.

.....
For a
Note: *Survey of British attacks without documentary data on the in-

dividual operations see sketch: home air defense, supplement

2431

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8 air raids conducted by about 345 Mosquito bombers against the city areas of Berlin, Hamburg, and Bremen *.

Detailed documentary data are available only in respect to the attacks on Berlin.

From the air base in Italy:

4 air attacks conducted by small units, each consisting of 50 to 70 aircraft, against Munich, Budapest, Komorn, and the air base Fels on the Wagram *.

It ^{was} ~~is~~ possible that these air raids were carried out by heavy as well as by Mosquito bombers. Moreover, it seemed probable that the night attacks ~~missions~~ conducted against Komorn and Budapest were mine-laying operations during which the major part of the mines hit upon land.

The attack against the airfield Fels on the Wagram was ~~presumably~~ aimed at hitting the day fighter aircraft of the 8th Air Division based there. The enemy aircraft conducted the attack gliding at medium and low altitudes. No documentary data are available ~~regarding~~ ^{on} the individual night attacks conducted from the air base in Italy.

From both air bases:

Intensive British nuisance and long-distance night fighter operations ranging deep into the Reich's territory.

.....

Note: * For a survey of British attacks without ~~without~~ documentary data on the individual operations see sketch: home air defense, supplement 243!

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No German data are available on British mine-laying operations in June 1944.

The British large-scale attacks on targets in the Reich's territory during June 1944 were of importance only in connection with the fateful American air offensive against the fuel industry. They caused, broadly speaking, only the loss of the hydrogenation plant of Gelsenberg which additionally increased the German fuel crisis.

The effects of the British Mosquito attacks had increased since the British had succeeded in employing the "Boomerang" tactics ~~in the~~ night ~~in their~~ in their operations against point targets in the area of North-West Germany. In addition, by increasing the bomb loads of the Mosquito bombers the destructive effects on the city areas ~~outside~~ outside the range of the "Boomerang" tactics were improved. The intensified employment of illuminating equipment during Mosquito bomber attacks brought about a concentration of the bomb releases in respect to space and time ~~and thus an~~ improved ~~effect~~ effect of the attacks only in exceptional cases.

The British night bomber operations against the Reich's territory in June 1944 had no consequences of decisive importance for the overall warfare .

b.) British Offensive Tactics and Radio Interference

The Bomber Command took the following measures to disturb the German evaluation of the air situation, to conceal the principal targets for the attacks, to disperse the German night fighter defenses, and to reduce British losses :

Simultaneous attack of two bomber streams on two objectives, the target marking by pathfinder forces guided by "Boomerang" method and concealment of the flight course of the bomber streams by having a number of small units fly beside or ahead of the bomber streams constantly emitting ~~and emit~~ radar beams and applying the Dueppel *-radar jamming method to a considerable extent.

Contrary to statements of the post-war literature the German SN 2 aircraft search apparatus was not effectively jammed by the British in June 1944.

The Mosquito raids, too, were for the first time consistently directed industrial point targets. During these attacks which were conducted by units of up to 60 aircraft the target markers were dropped by the "Boomerang"-method. In these cases the attacks were concentrated in respect to time.

In Mosquito attacks conducted by units of up to 12 aircraft each aircraft

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was guided by the "Boomerang" - method so that these attack extended over long period of time.

By flying their attacks at higher altitudes ^{ranging} ~~which ranged~~ from 9 000 to 10 200 meters, which was made possible by the employment of new improved Mosquito models, ~~the~~ fast bomber aircraft tried to evade the concentrated antiaircraft artillery defenses.

In applying the "Boomerang"-method the RAF used new radio frequencies to ward off German radio interference. An extension of the employment of the "Boomerang"-method beyond the Ruhr Area was not observed.

c.) Commitment of the German Night Fighter Forces

At the beginning of the Allied invasion in France the organizational structure of the German night fighter force in the home air defense was changed.

The major part of the single-engine night fighter units was withdrawn from the employment in night operations and was committed in daytime. Elements of the single-engine night fighter force was employed for the protection of the V - 1 bases in France. A small number of single-engine night fighter aircraft only remained in the home air defense to repulse Mosquito attacks on Berlin.

4 twin-engine night fighter groups were transferred into the sector of the Third Air Fleet Command in France during June.

The following night fighter forces were available in the home air defense in June 1944:

For the repulsion of the large-scale attacks conducted by four-engine
bomber aircraft:

The major part of the twin-engine fighter aircraft of the Luftwaffe

For the repulsion of the Mosquito attacks:

1 reinforced single-engine night fighter squadron at the airfield of Jueterbog near Berlin.

1 testing unit of twin-engine fighter aircraft, equipped with Type-Me 410 aircraft (from 5 to 10 aircraft on the average in operational condition).

The following was the main concentration area of the twin-engine night fighter forces:

The coastal area of the German Bight, North-West Germany, Holland, and Belgium.

Small forces were based in South Germany and in the area of Vienna.

Although the operations of the British bomber divisions were, in June, conducted only on short approach routes and covered by ample concealment and radio jamming measures and were restricted to dark nights, the defensive action of the German night fighters scored considerable success. Not including the losses due to antiaircraft artillery, the British lost 15 % of the total strength of four-engine bomber aircraft

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committed against the Reich's territory in June 1944. These losses were caused by the German night fighter defenses. The effectiveness of the night fighter defenses in the home air defense had thus reached its last peak in World War II.

The following were the principal reasons for these night fighter successes:

British failure to fly in wide circles around the defenses because of the short summer nights,

concentration of the major part of the German night fighter forces in the western outpost area, which provided the possibility of taking off for pursuit operations with at least two night fighter wings as soon as the British bombers crossed the coast,

high training standards of the night fighter crews and ground control personnel in the sector of the 3rd Fighter Division,

adequate German radio intercept and radar system in the coastal areas of France, Belgium, and Holland,

right interpretation of the air situation by the 3rd Outpost-Area

Fighter Division. This interpretation was always kept up-to-date and

was based on the excellent reports of the German radio intercept

service and of the radar stations which operated successfully again

with now "Dueppel"-proof equipment and with experienced radar persons-

nel in the area of Holland, Belgium, and North-West Germany,

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PHOTO OF

Generalmajor Walter Grabmann, Commanding

General of the 3rd Outpost-Area Fighter

Division.

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flexible ground control by the night fighter forces operating in the air by the 3rd Fighter Division which showed a great readiness to shoulder responsibility,

almost complete equipment of all twin-engine night fighter aircraft with the SN 2 aircraft search apparatus,

undisturbed functioning of the SN 2 aircraft search apparatus,

a night fighter base almost not affected by enemy action as prerequisite for a maximum readiness for action in respect to personnel and matériel.

The successful functioning of the German night fighter forces and night fighter command is emphasized here for historical reasons. This emphasis is to serve the right understanding of the gradual collapse of the German night fighter defenses in the fall and winter of 1944 as a result of the successful Allied invasion, of the American day bomber offensive with its devastating effects, and of the overall war situation.

In contrast to the air situation regarding the defensive operations against the heavy night bomber aircraft which offered justified prospects for a further development of the events in favor of Germany, the British Mosquito bombers had the almost unrestricted air supremacy over the Reich's territory at night.

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While the effectiveness of the Mosquito bombardments had increased, Germany ~~did~~, in spite of a large variety of attempts and efforts, not succeeded ~~in improving this~~, ^{with} ~~by~~ all means available, the prospects for a successful repulsion of the Mosquito night attacks. By improvisation the altitude and speed performances of the aircraft models Me 109 and Me 410 could, admittedly, be improved to an extent offering the theoretical possibility of successful anti-Mosquito operations. However, the slight technical superiority in short-distance pursuit operations actually was not sufficient to catch up with and shoot down the fast bomber. In addition, the German single-engine fighter aircraft were not equipped with the aircraft search apparatus and the twin-engine fighter aircraft encountered difficulties in spotting the airborne target. Owing to the high flying speed of the Mosquito aircraft and ^{to} difficult target location the German radar station succeeded only seldom in applying the "Himmelbett" night fighter method*. with good success. Difficulties were also encountered in the handing over of an intercepted Mosquito target to another radar station. Finally, the only possibility left was to direct the anti-Mosquito fighters extremely early, i.e. at the first indication of an impending Mosquito attack, to "waiting areas" near the presumable target area where they were to expect the enemy at maximum flight altitud-
 es.

Note: * Older type of night fighting in which each German aircraft was assigned to a particular "box" outside of which it was not authorized to operate.

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The successful employment of this method was dependent on the following prerequisites:

The right recognition of the presumable target of the attack. (This prerequisite existed almost ever in respect to targets in the Ruhr Area and in Berlin).

The Beginning of the ^{approach flight} ~~penetration~~ of the Mosquito aircraft over the Island of Britain had to be recognized ~~in time~~ early enough. (This requirement was met only seldom. Whenever the intruding Mosquito aircraft were ^{for the first time} located as late as when they were crossing the Channel or ^{later} even when they were crossing the coast, it was no longer possible for anti-Mosquito fighter aircraft to reach combat altitude ^{early enough} for the repulsion of attacks on objectives in West Germany).

Good ^{high-altitude visibility at} ~~night conditions~~ night or the possibility of spotting the enemy aircraft with search-lights. (Such weather conditions existed rarely).

Broadly speaking, the method of the illuminated night fighter operation did not insure the successful repulsion of the Mosquito attacks against targets in the Reich's territory. In addition, this method required a comparatively great number of night fighter aircraft suitable for anti-Mosquito operations. This number of night fighter aircraft, however, was not available to Germany.

d.) The Supremacy of Mosquito Aircraft over the Reich's Territory

at Night

The German weakness in the face of the British Mosquito night air war

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which reached ~~its~~^a climax in June 1944 invites a consideration of the air war situation in 1943/44 in respect to the general importance of the aircraft types De Havilland, ~~and~~ Mosquito and ~~their~~^{its} underestimation by the German air command. The latter did not think it possible in 1943 that an aircraft of the size and constructional type of the Mosquito would ~~play an eminent~~^{play an eminent} rôle in the Allied air war against Germany, though the data of the performance of this aircraft were known to the German air command. This explains why Germany did not draw her conclusions in the field of armament early enough to provide for the home air defense an aircraft suitable for operating successfully against the Mosquito aircraft.

As early as in 1943, the multi-purpose aircraft Type Mosquito demonstrated clearly its technical superiority over the German types of fighter aircraft.

Employed as reconnaissance aircraft, the Mosquito provided the necessary information of the targets in Germany thus creating the most ~~xxxx~~ important prerequisite for the Allied bombing operations against objectives in the Reich's territory.

Employed as long-range night fighter aircraft, this aircraft disturbed, to an increasing extent, the German night fighter operations.

Employed as bomber, it produced, at first, nuisance effects on large areas in the Reich's territory, especially on the armament industry.

Finally, the importance of this aircraft increased since it^{was} developed to an additional British arm for night combat which was able to operate from high altitudes effectively against point targets independently of weather conditions, visibility, radar action, and German defenses.

Like the antiaircraft artillery, the day and night fighter forces of the home air defense fought, employing a great number of personnel, materiel, and consuming a great amount of fuel, an uneconomical ~~war~~ and almost unsuccessful war against the Mosquito throughout a whole year. The Mosquito aircraft struck the first daytime blow with lasting effect to ~~the~~ German air fortress. This fact should have been considered as ~~an~~ ^{an} alarm signal by the German air command which should have prompted the latter to accelerate the serial production of the superior Type Me 262 jet aircraft. This should have been done at a time when the day fighter forces in the home air defense won a victory over the American bomber force and when the American fighter force was not yet ready to fight for the daytime air supremacy over the Reich's territory.

In addition, the air supremacy won by the Mosquito aircraft over the Reich's territory should have induced a modernization of the German fighter control methods, ~~the~~ aircraft warning system, and of the fighter control radio equipment.

The German day and night fighters recognized their weakness in the face of the Mosquito aircraft early enough. The XII Air Corps Headquarters,

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later I Fighter Corps, repeatedly drew the attention of the responsible German armament authorities to the urgent necessity of a German fighter aircraft superior to the Mosquito aircraft.

The ~~xxxxxx~~ conclusion ~~is~~ can be ~~xxxx~~ drawn that the appearance of the Mosquito aircraft in the air operations over Europe in 1943 could have initiated a modern fighter armament program. Such fighter armament program of which the main emphasis should have been determined according to the American air armament would have jeopardized the unlimited American air supremacy over the Reich's territory in the year of 1944.

In view of the overall war situation there was, ~~from~~ the end of June 1944 on, no more hope for the night fighter forces in the home air defense to contest the air supremacy of the Mosquito aircraft over the Reich's territory.

e.) Successes and Losses in June 1944

The average total strength of night fighter aircraft in operational condition in the sector of the I Fighter Corps in June 1944 amounted

to: 250 twin-engine fighter aircraft and
20 single-engine fighter aircraft.

The total number of night fighter aircraft employed in the sector
of the I Fighter Corps in June 1944 amounted to:

1 159 single-engine and twin-engine fighter aircraft of
which 134 aircraft were employed in anti-Mosquito opera-
tions.

Total losses of night fighter aircraft in the sector of the I Figh-

ter Corps in June 1944: 36 aircraft, which is 3 % of the total
effort. 14 of them were lost in anti-
Mosquito operations.

Losses of the RAF over the Reich's territory in the sector of the

I Fighter Corps in June 1944:

Losses caused by fighter aircraft: 175 aircraft, which is 8,1 % of
the British total effort. 4 of
them were Mosquito aircraft, which
is 0,39 % of the total Mosquito ef-
fort amounting to 1015 aircraft.

Losses caused by antiaircraft artillery: 14 aircraft

(incomplete information!)

Total losses: 189 aircraft, which is 8,7 % of the estimated

total RAF effort against the Reich's territory
which amounted to 2 145 aircraft in June 1944.

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2.) British Nuisance Raids on Berlin during the Period from 9/10 to

24/25 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 239!)

Enemy Effort

Berlin was attacked at the following dates:

On 9/10 June by about 20 Mosquito bombers during the period from 01:30
to 01:35 hours.

On 10/11 June by a number of Mosquito bombers.

On 11/12 June by about 50 Mosquito bombers during the period from 01:06
to 01:49 hours.

On 16/17 June by about 20 Mosquito bombers during the period from 01:26
to 01:56 hours.

On 24/25 June by about 30 Mosquito bombers during the period from 01:21
to 01:56 hours.

Results of the Attacks:

On 9/10 June : The main effort was directed against the central section
of the city and against Charlottenburg.

The following amount of bombs was dropped according to

reports: 17 high-explosive bombs,
30 demolition bombs,
100 stick-type incendiary bombs,
2 liquid incendiary bombs.

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Damages: 49 houses destroyed,
 255 houses damaged,
 47 persons killed,
 104 persons wounded,
 1 300 persons homeless.

On 11/12 June : The main effort of the attack was directed against the
 district of Neukoelln.

The following amount of bombs was dropped according to
 reports: 17 high-explosive bombs,
 23 demolition bombs,
 20 liquid incendiary bombs.

Damages: 29 houses destroyed,
 480 houses damaged,
 33 persons killed,
 99 persons wounded,
 6 800 persons homeless.

On 16/17 June: The main effort of the attack was directed against the
 districts of Gesundbrunnen, Pankow, and Reinickendorf.

The following amount of bombs was dropped according to
 reports: 8 demolition bombs.

Damages: 5 houses damaged,
 8 persons wounded,
 50 persons homeless.

On 24/25 June : The main effort of the attack was directed against the dis-
 tricts of the central city, Schoeneberg, Neukoelln, and Temp-
 elhof.

The following amount of bombs was dropped according to
 reports: 9 high-explosive bombs and 5 demolition bombs.
 Damages: 21 houses destroyed, 676 houses damaged,
 1 person killed, 10 persons wounded, 70 persons home-
 less.

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Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

Exact data on the commitment of units of the home air defense are not available. It may be presumed, however, that each night 2 to 5 single-engine night fighter aircraft of the 3rd Group/300th Fighter Wing based at Jüterbog were employed to provide night fighter protection over Berlin.

Enemy Losses: Enemy losses were not observed.

Losses of Friendly Forces: No data are available on such losses.

Weather Conditions:

On 9/10 June : 10/10 clouds, rain.

On 10/10 June: ?

On 11/12 June: Cloudless.

On 16/17 June: 10/10 clouds, rain.

On 24/25 June: Cloudless.

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3.) British Attack on the Hydrogenation Plant of Gelsenberg on

12/13 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 2401)

Enemy Effort

It was during the night of 12/13 June 1944 that the RAF attacked, for the first time, industrial point targets in the Reich's territory with about 200 Lancaster bombers of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Bomber Groups ~~launched~~ from the air base in Great Britain. The main attack was directed against the

Hydrogenation plant of Gelsenberg and took place during the period from 00:59 to 01:35 hours. The bombing altitudes of the heavy bomber aircraft ranged from 5 800 to 6 600 meters,

Secondary attacks were directed against Koeln and Essen.

A number of Mosquito bombers dropped bombs in the area of Koblenz.

In addition, a strong bomber stream penetrated into the area of Amiens.

Results of the Attacks: By dropping masses of 9-kilogram fragmenta-

tion bombs considerable damages and heavy

losses of personnel were caused in the hydro-

generation plant of Gelsenberg. The plant was

put out of operation for several months.

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Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

The following aircraft were committed in night fighter pursuit operations and to provide night fighter protection :

To repulse the attack on Gelsenberg:

By the 2nd, 3rd, and 7th Fighter Divisions: 115 twin-engine fighters

To operate against the bomber stream over the area of France :

By the 3rd Fighter Division: 68 twin-engine fighters

Total effort: 183 twin-engine fighters

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery

The following amount of ammunition was fired to repulse the attack on Gelsenberg: 20 678 rounds by 159 heavy batteries of the 4th, 7th, and 22nd Antiaircraft Artillery Divisions.

Enemy Losses:

During the attack on Gelsenberg: 16 aircraft definitely shot down,
3 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition, by antiaircraft artillery 3 aircraft definitely shot down.

During the approach flight over France: 8 aircraft definitely shot down

Total losses:

27 aircraft definitely shot down,
3 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces: 1 aircraft destroyed.

Weather Conditions: Bright to cloudless.

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4.) British Attack on Duisburg and Oberhausen on 16/17 June 1944 *

(See sketch: home side defense, supplement 243!)

Enemy Effort

RAF bomber units raided Duisburg and Oberhausen.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

Presumably owing to the confused picture of the air situation, only twin-engine fighter aircraft of the 3rd Fighter Division were employed in night fighter pursuit operations. A number of them ~~were~~^{was} employed too late.

Enemy Losses: 25 bomber aircraft definitely shot down by the 1st Night Fighter Wing.

(Incomplete information!)

Losses of Friendly Forces: Not known.

Weather Conditions: Unfavorable for defensive action.

.....
 Note: * Source: Diary of the former aircraft radio operator Erich Handke.

5.) British Attack on the Ruhr Area on 17/18 June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 241!)

Enemy Effort

The night attacks were conducted by approximately 400 British aircraft flying in two bomber streams. The following were the targets of the bomber aircraft:

Holten, hydrogenation plant. 200 aircraft attacked during the period

from 01:17 to 01:35 hours. The bombing altitudes ranged from 6 000 to 7 000 meters.

Duisburg, industrial installations. 200 aircraft attacked. The bombing

altitudes ranged from 6 000 to 7 000 ~~meters~~ meters.

In addition, about 30 Mosquito bombers carried out a nuisance raid against Berlin during the period from 01:40 to 01:45 hours.

Results of the Attacks: The major part of the raiding bombers missed

the targets in Holten. The damages in Duisburg and Holten were ~~slight~~ ^{limited}, since 25 % of the explosives dropped were dud bombs.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

The following aircraft were committed in night fighter pursuit operations and to provide night fighter protection:

By the 2nd, 3rd, 7th, and 8th Fighter Divisions a total force of 207 twin-engine fighter aircraft

Activities of the Antiaircraft Artillery

The following amount of ammunition was fired:

14,244 rounds by 143 heavy batteries of the 5th and 22nd

Antiaircraft Artillery Divisions.

Enemy Losses: 37 aircraft definitely shot down,

4 aircraft probably shot down,

In addition, by antiaircraft artillery:

3 aircraft definitely shot down.

Total losses:

40 aircraft definitely shot down,

4 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces:

7 aircraft destroyed,

1 aircraft damaged.

Losses of personnel: 11 killed,

6 wounded.

Weather Conditions: 10/10 clouds in the target areas.

6.) British Attack on 19/20 June 1944 *

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 2431)

Enemy Effort

The British operations were presumably ~~making~~ raids of heavy bomber aircraft against installations of the transportation system in the border zone of West Germany.

Commitment of the I Fighter Corps

The following aircraft were employed:

17 twin-engine fighter aircraft.

In addition, by the II Fighter Corps in France:

50 twin-engine fighter aircraft.

Enemy Losses: 15 aircraft definitely shot down by units of the I Figh-

ter Corps

22 aircraft definitely shot down by units of the II Figh

ter Corps.

Total Losses: 37 aircraft.

Losses of Friendly Forces: Not known.

.....

Note: * Diary of the former Chief of the Luftwaffe Operations Staff,

Generalmajor Koller.

7.) British Attack on Hydrogenation Plants in the Ruhr Area on 21/22

June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 242!)

Enemy Effort

The following were the targets for the attacks conducted by about 350 RAF bomber aircraft employed from the air base in Great Britain in "Boomerang"-tactics:

Scholven, hydrogenation plant. Time of attack: 01:31 to 01:55 hours.

Wesseling, hydrogenation plant. Time of attack: 01:31 to 01:52 hours.

A nuisance raid was conducted by 30 to 40 Mosquito bomber aircraft against Berlin during the period from 01:35 to 01:40 hours.

Results of the Attacks: Negligible damage was caused to all targets raided in the Ruhr Area.

In Berlin: The main effort of the attack was directed against the central section of the city as well as against the districts of Kreuzberg, Steglitz, and Reinickendorf.

The following amount of bombs was dropped according to reports:

10 high-explosive bombs,
20 demolition bombs.

Damages: 40 houses destroyed,
244 houses damaged.

58 persons killed,
146 persons wounded,
2 300 persons homeless..

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Commitment of the I Fighter CorpsThe following aircraft were employed for night fighter pursuit operationsand to provide night fighter protection:

By the 2nd and 3rd Fighter Divisions a total strength of

161 twin-engine fighter aircraft.Activities of the Antiaircraft ArtilleryThe following amount of ammunition was fired:

For the repulsion of the attack on the Ruhr Area:

12 669 rounds by 219 heavy batteries of the 4th, 7th, ^{and} 22nd Antiaircraft

Artillery Divisions.

For the repulsion of the nuisance raid on Berlin:5 509 rounds by 67 heavy batteries of the 1st Antiaircraft Artillery

Division and of the 2nd Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade.

Enemy Losses: 55 aircraft definitely shot down,

3 aircraft probably shot down.

In addition, by antiaircraft artillery:

8 aircraft definitely shot down.

Total losses: 63 aircraft definitely shot down

3 aircraft probably shot down.

Losses of Friendly Forces: 2 aircraft destroyed.Losses of personnel: 4 killedWeather Conditions: 9/10 to 10/10 clouds in the Ruhr Area, ~~in the Ruhr Area~~ andno visual ob-
servation of the ground in the Ruhr Area. Cloudless
in Berlin.

CHAPTER III

Preparations for the Repulsion
of the Invasion in the Area of
The Home Air Defense *.

1.) Directives of the Luftwaffe High Command

The Luftwaffe High Command issued preparatory directives for the case of an Allied landing in Western or Northern Europe as early as in the summer of 1943. These directives covered the principal chains of command and assignments within the Luftwaffe for the various contingencies of Allied invasions. The defensive measures provided were to be taken by the Luftwaffe at once upon receipt of the following code words:

"Impending Danger North" : Invasion in Norway or Denmark.

(Dr. G. Nord)

"Impending Danger West": Invasion in the Channel coast areas of

(Dr. G. West)

Holland, Belgium, and France or in West

France.

.....

Note: * Sources: Report of the former Chief of the Transfer Staff with the I Fighter Corps Headquarters, Colonel (ret.) Otto von Lachemair and notes of the author.

"Impending Danger South" : Invasion in South France

(Dr.G. Sued)

In the event of an invasion the I Fighter Corps Headquarters would only have to transfer day and night fighter units to the command staffs appointed to command the operations within the zone of the invasion.

The preparations for the repulsion of the invasion to be made in compliance with the detailed directives ~~which were~~ issued by the Luftwaffe High Command to an ever increasing extent were a considerable burden for the I Fighter Corps Headquarters up to the end of 1943. In view of the decisive importance of the successful repulsion of the invasion for the overall warfare and of the increased strain imposed upon the staffs and units of the home air defense by the intensified air war over the Reich's territory the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps decided to organize a transfer staff.

2.) Measures taken by the I Fighter Corps Headquarters

mission of
It was the ~~mission~~ the transfer staff to take all measures necessary in preparation for the transfer of flying units from the sector of the I Fighter Corps and, from 1 February 1944 on, from the total area of the home air defense into any possible zone of invasion. This staff was formed in the strength of 1 colonel, 3 captains, and a limited number of staff personnel on 8 December 1943 and was placed under the direct control of the

Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps.

The following were the detailed missions assigned to the transfer staff attached to the I Fighter Corps Headquarters:

- a.) Preparation of the orders and directives necessary for the transfer maneuvers in compliance with the guiding principles issued by the Luftwaffe High Command and the Air Fleet Command Reich.
- b.) Submission of reports on preparations accomplished and of suggestions as to modifications of the plans to the Air Fleet Command Reich.
- c.) To establish contact with the command staffs in the areas into which the units were to be transferred within the possible zones of invasion.
- d.) Preparation of an alert time-schedule for the flying units in the entire area of the I Fighter Corps and later in the ~~subordination~~ of the home air defense.
- e.) To insure the additional training of the fighter units in bombing and strafing attacks on ground and water-borne targets as well as in re-equipping aircraft ^{as} ⁱⁿ required ~~for~~ the case of an invasion.

f.) Preparation of the transfer of the flying units and the motorized units of the ground organization. For this purpose it was necessary to:

To insure the availability of additional equipment, ammunition, and motor vehicles for the units,

receiving
to reconnoitre and establish the airfields in cooperation with the receiving command staffs,

to establish the air and march routes to be used for the transfers,

to insure the adequate supplying of the units during the transfers and immediately upon arrival at the receiving airfields.

g.) Measures to secure the signal communications and facilities for the case the code-word order is given.

h.) Support and supervision of the preparatory measures taken by the units.

i.) Conduct of alert drills.

The Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps attached great importance

to the preparatory work of the transfer staff and took the opportunity with unit commanders offered by numerous conferences to point out the eminent importance of all preparations for the repulsion of an invasion.

3.) The Activities of the Transfer Staff with the I Fighter Corps

Headquarters

The preparations for the transfer of flying units from the base of operations in the Reich's territory to the base of operations in France and the conversion of the fighter units and their equipment for an other type of employment was nothing unusual. Even so, the conditions existing ~~for~~ during the period of preparation for the case "Dr. G." were unusual for the units in the home air defense.

The fighter units of the home air defense were almost daily engaged in fierce combat against the Allied ^{air} attacks against the Reich's territory. They had to sustain heavy losses during this combat action. This mission had absorbed commanders and units to such an extent that every-
essentially thing not required at the moment was liable to be classed as of secondary importance. The tense overall armament situation of the Luftwaffe did not permit the full exploitation of all available resources during the preparations for the transfer maneuver but necessitated ample improvisation in almost every field to put the fighter units in adequate condition for employment in the case "Dr. G".

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A great number of written orders, supplements, and amendments issued by the Luftwaffe High Command as a necessary result of the constantly changing overall situation in the home air defense did not only impair, on principle, the ~~insuring~~ ^{insuring} of the transfer action but caused a lot of confusion in the staffs and units of the home air defense which were under a heavy strain.

The unusual conditions previously mentioned necessarily determined the method of procedure employed by the transfer staff of the I Fighter Corps Headquarters. Initially, a fundamental clarification of all discrepancies in the transfer orders and in the preparatory measures for the case "Dr. G." was effected during conferences with the staffs of the Air Fleet Command Reich and the Luftwaffe High Command. Subsequently, an officer responsible for the transfer preparations was appointed in ~~the~~ ^{each} fighter divisions, wings, fighter groups, and fighter squadron. An officer of the transfer staff remained with the I Fighter Corps Headquarters to receive the orders, to receive and forward reports as well as to receive and answer inquiries relating to the case "Dr. G.". On the other hand, the chief and two officers of the transfer staff were constantly moving around by aircraft or by motor vehicle to give immediate assistance to the troops and to clarify problems encountered by the latter. This activity showed

its results especially in respect to the speeding up of the additional equipment of the fighter forces with arms, ammunition, other kinds of matériel, and motor vehicles in close cooperation with the supply agencies of the Air Fleet Command Reich and of the I Fighter Corps Headquarters. Later, the transfer staff inspected the fighter units only for the purpose of controlling their readiness for transfer action and of supervising their alert drills.

The Chief of the Transfer Staff, Colonel Otto von Lachemair, reported to the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps at the end of March 1944, that the preparations for the transfers planned for the case "Dr. G." had been completed for the time being and that the time required from the moment the code-word order is given when the fighter units would be ready by the Corps Headquarters to ~~the extent of the readiness~~ for transfer action ~~and the extent of the fighter units~~ would amount to ^{measures were} approximately two hours. Thus, the following ~~was~~ insured in the units intended for transfer and based in the area of the home air defense from 1 April 1944 on:

- a.) Briefing of the staffs and unit commanders on their missions in the case "Dr. G."
- b.) Complete availability of equipment, arms, ammunition, and motor vehicles for conversion and transfer purposes.

- c.) Completed training of the units for defensive action in the case of an invasion in spite of the heavy strain imposed on them by their commitment in the home air defense.
- d.) Thorough knowledge of the transfer airfields in the possible zones of invasion and of the routes used during the transfer.
- e.) Supply of the units during the transfer and in the initial phase of the commitment in the possible zones of invasion.
- f.) Completed establishment of contact with the command staffs in the possible zones of invasion down to and including the air base commands at the receiving airfields.

The transfer staff had an opportunity to constantly improve and supervise the preparatory measures taken by the staffs and units for the case "Dr. G." during the months of April and May 1944.

In view of the unusual conditions the Air Fleet Command ~~Reich~~ and the I Fighter Corps Headquarters had, by D-Day, reached a maximum degree of preparedness of the day and night fighter forces in the area of the home air defense for the case "Dr. G."

Regarding the morale of the troops in the home air defense,

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the Chief of the Transfer Staff, Colonel (ret.) Otto von Lachensair gave the following comment after the war:

" Upon orders by the I Fighter Corps I inspected almost all fighter units in the area of the home air defense during the months preceding D-Day and, having served as commander of troops for many years in war and peacetime, I consider myself able to ~~form~~ some degree to form a competent judgment. Combat morale and bearing of the troops in the home air defense were admirable. This did not apply only to the flight crews but was also true of the ^{technical} ground personnel.

An understanding commander would not have been surprised to find low spirits and despondency. There were only two sources from which the fighter units could gather strength to keep up their unique attitude. These sources were:

The serious recognition of the necessity of their ~~firm~~ ~~stand~~ ~~fight~~ fight for the bleeding homeland and the knowledge of their fair attitude shown in combat which was beyond any reproach and the confidence in their commanders up to their commanding general who ordered their unequal combat commitment but also appreciated their accomplishments and protected **their** honor as soldiers. At that time, there not much to inspire the heart of a young soldier with enthusiasm. The fighting became more unequal from day to day, the numerical superiority of the attackers became overwhelming, the homeland was more and more destroyed, the successes

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obtained necessarily became more and more limited, the confidence decreased steadily, and finally the ^{disgraceful} reproaches by the top-level German command appeared as the worst enemy.

The very statement which remains important is that the morale of the air units of the home air defense was unbroken. Without any ~~midgivings~~, the straightforward accomplishment of any mission could be demanded of the fighter units. The mission would have been carried out even with enthusiasm ~~if~~ ^{whenever} only a ~~slight~~ minimum prospect ^{for success ~~which was~~} ~~involved~~ ^{involved.}"

4.) The D-Day at the I Fighter Corps Headquarters

The first report indicating the possibility of the beginning of an Allied landing on the Channel coast arrived at the I Fighter Corps Headquarters on 6 June at 01:00 hours. Radar stations of the I Fighter Corps at the Channel coast had, at this time, intercepted a great number of small targets which were slowly moving forward in the western section of the English Channel. This report reached the I Fighter Corps Headquarters so early, since all ~~the~~ radar station leaders had been directed to report by wire with top urgency to the corps headquarters all intercepted objects ~~which were suspected to be related to the invasion.~~ suspected to be related to the invasion. The number of reports on concentrations of ships in the Channel had increased by 04:00 hours to such an extent that the impending beginning of an invasion was to be expected. At this time the

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commanding general reported the presumed beginning of the invasion to the Air Fleet Command Reich,

the Luftwaffe High Command,

the Fuehrer Headquarters (General der Flieger Bodenschatz),

Third
the Air Fleet Command (Generalmajor Flocher).

The beginning of the Allied landing in^{North} France was considered as a certainty by the ~~xxxx~~ corps headquarters by about 06:00 hours. Expecting that the code-word order "Dr. G. West" (Impending Danger West) would be issued soon the corps headquarters established that bad weather conditions would develop on 6 June and that clouds forming in several layers over the central German mountain range would jeopardize the transfer of fighter units from the Reich to France from noontime on. The corps headquarters reported this fact to the Air Fleet Command Reich and suggested at the same time efforts to obtain the transfer order for the fighter units from the Luftwaffe High Command without delay. At the same time, the corps headquarters warned the fighter units in its sector that the transfer to France according to the case "Dr. G." was to be expected ^{as early as before} ~~at the same time~~ ~~xxxx~~ noontime.

The code-word order "Dr. G. West" (Impending Danger West) was never ordered by any command staff superior to the corps headquarters.

However, the corps headquarters issued this code-word order on its own responsibility on 6 June, between 10:00 and 11:00 hours.

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When, at this time, the Inspector General of the Fighter Forces, Generalmajor Galland, appeared at the corps headquarters, he voiced considerable misgivings about the issuance of this code-word order without any directive from higher headquarters. Shortly after, the Commanding General of the I Fighter Corps was called up by the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe who inquired as to which and how many units were en route to the West. The Commander in Chief did not seem to know that his high command had not yet ordered the transfer. However, he approved the independent action of the corps headquarters.

Beginning at noontime on ~~the~~ 6 June, the corps headquarters received a number of ~~separate~~ orders for the piecemeal transfer of the units ~~as if nothing had been prepared before.~~
~~as if nothing had been prepared before.~~
~~units ~~as if nothing had been prepared before.~~~~
~~before.~~ In general, the individual orders received for the transfer of the fighter units of the I Fighter Corps conformed to the preparatory measures taken for the case "Dr. G. West". Slight alterations became necessary as a result of enemy bombing raids on airfields in France by which the latter had been put out of operation. Senseless attempts to effect fundamental ~~changes~~ modifications of the prepared transfer plan ~~which were caused by the nervousness of a number of~~ staff officers of the superior command staffs and of the Third Air Fleet Command could be prevented.

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The transfer operations began in the early afternoon of 6 June 1944. Bad weather conditions delayed the take-off of a number of units until evening and thus prevented a uniform and systematic conduct of the ~~transfer~~ ^{overall} transfer operation. Approximately 400 single-engine fighter aircraft left the area of the I Fighter Corps Headquarters. About two thirds of this number reached the air base in France in the evening of 6 June and in the morning of 7 June. The rest of them had been put out of operation by emergency landings or accidents due to bad weather and ~~was~~ ^{was} thus not available to the Third Air Fleet Command for the time being.

The reason why the code-word order "Dr. G. West" had not been given as early as in the early morning of D-Day was never known. In such case, the day fighter forces of the I Fighter Corps could have conducted ~~the~~ the transfer operation under adequate weather conditions with probably slight losses and would have reached the airfields in the area of the Third Air Fleet Command as early as by noontime of 6 June. It was to be assumed that the top-level German command considered the initial Allied landings as deception maneuvers and expected the main effort of the invasion at another place. This could explain the delay in the transfer of the fighter forces from the Reich to France.

Colonel (ret.) Otto von Lachemair, the Chief of the Transfer Staff with the I Fighter Corps Headquarters, concluded his report on the 6 June 1944 with the following words:

" The transfer operation was, as everything at that time, only a drop in the bucket, a mere action of a poor man. This drop was unable to bring about any change in the overall situation. Its effectiveness could be increased only by the speed at which it fell ".

5.) The Transfer of Fighter Forces from the Area of the Air Fleet Command Reich (I Fighter Corps Headquarters) to the Area of the Third Air Fleet Command *.

a.) Day Fighter Units

Transfer on D-Day (6 June 1944)

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 244!)

Staff Unit	From Airfield	To Airfield	Notes
Staff 1st Fighter Wing	Lipp Springs	Clastres near St. Quentin	
1st Group/1st Fighter Wing	Lipp Springs	XXXXXX Alencon	
2nd Group/1st Fighter Wing	Stoermede	Alencon	
3rd Group/1st Fighter Wing	Paderborn	Clastres	Transfer definite, Airfield of Clastres not definite.
Staff 3rd Fighter Wing	Salzwedel	Evreux	
1st Group/3rd Fighter Wing	Burg near Magdeburg	Evreux	
2nd Group/3rd Fighter Wing	Sachau	Dreux	
3rd Group/3rd Fighter Wing	Woerishofen	Mareilly	
4th Group/3rd Fighter Wing	Salzwedel	Area of Evreux	Assault Group, transfer definite, exact transfer airfield unknown. Retransferred into the Reich, airfield of Oettingen, in the middle of June.

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 Note: * Situation maps of the Luftwaffe High Command of 1 June 1944
 and 2 July 1944.

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Staff	From	To	Notes
Unit	Airfield	Airfield	
Staff 11th Fighter Wing	Rotenburg	Le Mans	
1st Group/11th Fighter Wing	Rotenburg	Le Mans	
2nd Group/11th Fighter Wing	Wunstorf	Mons en Chaussee	
3rd Group/11th Fighter Wing	Oldenburg	Area of Le Mans	Transfer definite. Exact transfer airfield unknown.
10th Squadron/ 11th Fighter Wing	Aalborg	Le Mans	
Staff 27th Fighter Wing	Fels on the Wagram	Champfleury	
1st Group/27th Fighter Wing	Fels on the Wagram	Vertus	
2nd Group/27th Fighter Wing	Wiesbaden-Erbenheim	Area of Vertus (?)	
3rd Group/27th Fighter Wing	Boergoend *	Gonnantre	* It is possible that 3rd Gr./27th F.W. and 4th Gr. 27th F.W. were stationed at airfields in the area of Vienna on D-Day.
4th Group/27th Fighter Wing	Graz *	Champfleury	
1st Group/5th Fighter Wing	Woerishofen **	Mons en Chaussee	** It is possible that 1st Gr./5th F.W. was stationed at the airfield of Herzogenaurach on D-Day.
2nd Group/53rd Fighter Wing	Eschborn	Angers	

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b.) Night Fighter Units

Transfers ~~from~~ during the Period from D-Day to the Middle
of June 1944

(See sketch: home air defense, supplement 245!)

Staff Unit	From Airfield	To Airfield	Notes
1st Group/301st Fighter Wing	Neubiberg	Epinoy	Single-engine night fighter aircraft
Staff 2nd Night Fighter Wing	Deelen	Coulommiers	Twin-engine night fighter aircraft
1st Group/2nd Night Fighter Wing	Langensalza	Chateaudun	"
2nd Group/2nd Night Fighter Wing	Kassel-Rothwesten	Coulommiers	"
Staff 5th Night Fighter Wing	Doberitz	Hagenau	
1st Group/5th Night Fighter Wing	Stendal	St. Dizier	Twin-engine night fighter aircraft
3rd Group/5th Night Fighter Wing	Mainz-Finthen	Leon-Athies	Twin-engine night fighter aircraft.