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REPORT FROM CAPTURED PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL BRANCH  
ISSUED BY THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, U.S.  
WAR DEPARTMENT BY COMBINED PERSONNEL OF U.S. AND  
BRITISH SERVICES FOR USE OF ALLIED FORCES.

Information on GAF policies and experience,  
with opinions regarding air warfare, obtained  
from a Field Marshal of the GAF captured 4  
May. Allied source. Received in Britain,  
3 June 1945.

MILCH

USAF HRA 170.2281-4 7/1/45

The Junkers Motor (Jumo) 004 was not constructed until 1941; it was started then, and in my opinion it must also have had its tests in that year. I don't know anything about it, because I saw only the airframe and there were dummy engines installed in it, I believe, which is an indication that the engine must have reached a certain stage of development even at that time.

It then took three or four years until they really got it in shape. Galland flew the '262' with those power units in April 1943, and was so enthusiastic that he wrote to me; he also spoke to me afterwards, suggesting that production of this aircraft should be hurried on as much as possible. To begin with, the '004' was used only for the '262', but later on for the Arado, too. Actually the Arado was supposed to get the BMW double power unit afterwards.

Obviously, nothing that is not almost pure speculation can be said about what might have been the future policy, or technical development of the GAF had Germany won. It was not a question we ever discussed. I personally believe that the immediate future would have belonged to the jet-propelled aircraft, including the jet-propelled bombers, with a certain transition period, of course.

Our arrangement as regards Japan was that at the beginning of the war - before the Japanese were in the war - certain things were always given to them. Those communications went from the OKW via the 'Abwehr', which at that time was under Admiral Canaris. They applied to us and we then gave the information to this office, so that one central office could handle the individual matters with the Japanese. After Japan's entry into the war it was said: "Everything can be given to the Japanese." Before that certain things, such as the jet-propelled aircraft and so on, were kept secret. Then everything was to be given, it was said to be by order of the Führer. However, after a few months an order was given to the effect that permission must be asked before giving anything to the Japanese. I can't say exactly when that happened, but I should reckon it was six to nine months after the Japanese entered the war. A brake was suddenly put on, and we asked ourselves: "Now, what's the matter, are there disagreements?" But I never heard anything about it, and it didn't last long. About three months later the order came: "They may now be informed of everything without restriction." It remained like that until the end. I never heard anything different the whole time I remained there.

Whether, specifically, the Me 262 was ever put in their hands, I can't say; but I presume they've got it, because they must have known about it, and have demanded it immediately. They weren't shy about asking. I received no special report that the details of the '262' had been handed over in my time. I presume they were only handed over after the middle of 1944. They

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certainly got the MK 108 cannon. I know, because it was still during my time. They asked for it immediately. They were much keener on weapons than aircraft. I don't believe they were interested in the 5.5cm cannon. I believe they probably had no mountings for that. But they were extremely keen on the 3 cm, and earlier they somehow managed to get fairly large deliveries of the MG 151. But I don't know how they got them over there.

So far as I know, things always were taken to them by U-boat. In theory, via Constantinople was still possible, but I don't believe that. I never heard that the Japanese were particularly interested in our underground factories. I don't know if they ever got the V-weapons. I didn't hear in my time that they'd got them, but I presume they certainly had, because the order was: "Everything can be given to them." From what I know of the Japanese, they took everything too.

The project of a purely strategic Air Force was often discussed in GAF circles, both before and during the war, and we were not satisfied with what was being done in that respect. For instance, we and the Ministry for Production were always demanding that the big electricity plants in the Urals and this side of the Urals should be bombed. Such a raid never took place, even when it lay within range of our aircraft. We personally didn't expect much from the bombing of towns. If you look at Russia there's actually hardly a town worth bombing. The factories are all outside the towns. Of course you would kill so-and-so many people anyhow, just as the night-bombers killed a great many of our people, but that's not the purpose of air warfare.

The losses in our own towns weren't so great, with the exception of Hamburg, and now lately Dresden. The night attacks on Berlin did not result in a great many people being killed. The determination of the people was rather increased than decreased by the attacks, in spite of the adverse moral effect on working efficiency which might have been expected from their being forced to spend whole nights in the shelters.

It is not that serious consideration was never given to the possible formation of a strictly strategic bombing arm; originally that was planned by our staff, in 1936, 1937, 1938 etc. But with the exception of attacks on England and an occasional attack on the factories at Paris and Warsaw we actually never carried out any major strategic operations. The intention to do so probably continued to exist, but we couldn't manage it. The numbers of aircraft were probably too small, or their range was insufficient, and from a purely operational point of view probably little account was taken of the idea afterwards.

My opinion on fundamental GAF policy was never asked; otherwise I would have said: "We are in no way ready for war. The air arm needs at least another eight to ten years to be properly equipped with personnel." In America, for example, where so much was accomplished in two or three years, there were quite different foundations. They started flying mainly in the Great War and continuously improved their air force in quality and strength, just like the English who had extremely good personnel in the different ranks. We didn't have those ranks at all; we first of all recruited the old army generals and gave them the senior posts. Most of them had had nothing whatsoever to do with the GAF before that. They had already been pensioned off, and were recalled and then given up again. The percentage of flying personnel from our own air force was very small. Our people who in 1933 and 1934 started training, and doing anything at all, were at that time young people between 18 and 22 years old. This is the first generation in which there are several hundred people of whom one could say that they were fully trained in flying and could put up some performance at flying. The majority of the old officers

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who had flown in the last war were not pilots at all, but observers and reconnaissance men, and consequently knew nothing whatsoever about the purely technical business of flying.

Unfortunately at that time we only used the officers as observers and on the whole the NCOs as pilots, except for the very junior 'Leutnants' (2nd Lieutenants), who could also become pilots. It was no longer possible for a senior 'Oberleutnant' (1st Lieutenant) to be a pilot; if he was an artillery man, for instance, then he had to be an observer whether he wanted to or not. Those were the people who could



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The first main point was this: the training and advanced training should have been quite different. We gave our people far too few flying hours, above all afterwards, during the war. We continually tried to get that increased, but without success. The second point was: we should have had a much stronger fighter arm. The fighter arm was too weak. The third point was that we should have started earlier to do things on a much bigger scale on the technical side. The fourth was that we were completely lacking one thing: we had nothing corresponding to the bomber stream for night attacks, or the carpet-bombing method by day, which was even better. That of course caused a lack of discipline among the young chaps. If you allowed every boy to fly wherever he liked at night, and he completely lacked the necessary means for locating the target, it was practically impossible to obtain a concentrated effect. Even having the bomber streams did not quite ensure that everyone really reached the target. Over a third did not drop their bombs where they should have done.

The slowness of our technical development, even with totalitarian government is explained simply because all those suggestions were rejected by our own C-in-C., by Goring. The Fuhrer took comparatively little interest in individual questions relating to the GAF. He was mainly interested in the army. As regards the navy he was able to leave matters, probably with rather more justification, to the commanders-in-chief, and he always helped those two a great deal and they both always got their own way. In our case Goring always told him that everything was going splendidly and that he could manage perfectly well on his own, and didn't need any support from the Fuhrer; as a result of that if ever there wasn't enough of anything to go round, things were always decided against us. The navy always got their own way, and they had a wrong programme even in peacetime.

Let me try to give an idea of some things that in Goring's place, I should have done differently. First of all: - I'm not just saying this now after the event, but my people knew that I said it before; "We should be crazy to enter into a war at all now." For it was quite obvious that England would go to war on account of Poland. Germany was in no way ready for that. I visited England in 1938, and also spent nearly a week in France and was frequently in Italy, and before 1933 was often in Russia, so I had a different outlook. I myself reported to the Fuhrer at that time about all these questions and he took a great interest in it, whereas Goring told me that my journeys didn't interest him and I needn't lecture him about them. After each of my journeys, to France and England, the Fuhrer kept me for two hours.

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On the journey to England, and also the one to France, I was accompanied by Udet.

The Führer subsequently said that what we had told him was extraordinarily interesting and was a much better and fuller report than what his ambassadors had given him. The ambassador in London at that time was, of course, Ribbentrop. So I said to him: "If you don't get rid of him soon, you'll have trouble with England." I saw him there; I even lived in the Embassy at his invitation, but the day I arrived he went to Germany and only returned after I had gone. I was offended by that. I spent a long evening with Churchill. Lord Trenchard, with whom I was on very good terms personally, the C-in-C of the Royal Air Force in the last war, invited me to his club and said: "You're going to have both your best enemies sitting next to you." Churchill was on my right, and Amery on my left. Churchill asked me: "You're very fond of gliding in Germany, aren't you?" "Yes!" "Couldn't you stop using aircraft with engines and change over to gliders altogether?" So I said: "We should be delighted to, on one small condition: that England should revert to sailing ships instead of motor and steam ones." Then he laughed like anything and said: "One up for Milch!"

In my opinion Germany could only lose by a war, and could gain nothing. Germany was not equipped for a large-scale war at all, either in the air, or the army, or navy. Everywhere the age-groups who should have been in command were lacking, and also there was a lack from the technical point of view in all three arms of service, and consequently we weren't ready for war. But, when war was once an accomplished fact, there are other ways in which I should not have acted as Göring did. The first would have been a technical measure. I would have said: "Now the GAF is to be multiplied by ten", that is to say production would be increased ten times. The production can't be great enough. That would also have to be assented to by the Supreme Command, by the Führer himself. I should have stepped up the production of fighters, bombers, transport aircraft, all three. As to numbers, I would have said: "Every effort is to be made to obtain at once a minimum monthly production of 2000 to 2500 fighters, 800 to 1000 bombers and 200 transport aircraft." Those were figures which were possible from the beginning. That would have been the first step.

The second would have been: to put training on a broad basis, for there would only be point in having more material if there was also more personnel. Nothing further can be said about the bombing warfare carried out in Poland and France in the first stages, because the success was speedy there, but the first great failure was from the time of Dunkirk onwards. The day of Dunkirk I flew there as Inspector General and had a look at things, came home and reported to Göring. Thereupon he said to me: "That must have been a frightful debacle for the English army." I said: "The English army? I saw six or seven dead negroes (sic) and perhaps 20 to 30 other people dead; the rest of the English army has got across absolutely intact to the other side. They left their equipment and got away." That was contrary to all the previous reports. Then he said: "Then do you mean to say that it isn't after all the greatest reverse that England has ever had?" I said: "The fact that the English have been thrown out of France is a terrific reverse, but the fact that they succeeded in getting home practically the whole of their army is an achievement which it would be hard to emulate." "What conclusion do you draw from that?" "I recommend that this very day all our combined air forces of both 'Luftflotten' - those were Flotten II and III under Kesselring and Sperrle - should now at once be moved to the Channel coast, and that England should be invaded immediately." "Well", he said, "how would you get them across?" I said: "The navy must do that for the ground forces, but we can go across as we are." "How do you visualise doing it?" I said: "I would first of all immediately send over our paratroops with everything we have, and would transfer a few fighter groups over there with them." "Hm." So he said: "But that can't be done." I find fuel and food over there." So he said: "But that can't be done." I said: "If we leave them in peace for four weeks it will be too late."

That wasn't done, but it took several more months then until the air force assembled on the coast - as though we were drunk with victory. That, in my opinion, was the first decisive cardinal mistake of combined leadership, that no invasion operation was started, on the fourth day after Dunkirk at the latest, in which the bulk of the bombers should have been used for laying mines in the Channel to the left and right of the route by which our transports would have crossed. To my mind, we people in the GAF had one put over us by the navy. I got the impression that Grossadmiral Raeder had made



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At that time I estimate that the GAF had 1000 fighters, about the same number of bombers, and a really large number of Ju.52 transport aircraft and of gliders. I can only give a rough figure. The GAF was then supposed to win supremacy in the air; it came over and naturally always had heavy battles with the English fighters, although the number of aircraft shot down was in our favor at that time. I believe Galland reckoned a ratio of 2:1 in our favor. The navy, who still hadn't completed their preparations, kept on saying: "If you please, battles are still taking place, so we can't invade yet." With that excuse the matter was postponed over and over again. Then came the autumn, with weather which made it difficult, and I believe the navy breathed a sigh of relief, because they simply hadn't done a thing, but the fact that we couldn't invade was laid at the GAF's door. But the thing wasn't taken seriously by the GAF command either. I could see that when I visited airfields and 'Korps' HQ Staffs. The idea wasn't being worked on at all. In my opinion that was the first big military mistake we made; the second was the attack on Russia. That was admittedly even more catastrophic.

Among errors specifically attributable to the GAF as such, I should put in the first place the fact that aerial attack on England started too late, it could have started several months sooner. In the second place there was no concentration of attacks; the wish was rather to go everywhere once, and attack everywhere once, starting with small-scale raids and then going over to large-scale raids; the defending forces over there naturally recovered accordingly in the meantime. In addition there was the far too early change-over from day raids to night raids, which was, in my opinion, by no means justified by the day losses. When 4-500 aircraft operated the average losses were round about 20 aircraft, not more, bombers and fighters included. There may have been isolated days when the figure was higher. I got the impression that a far-reaching lassitude had set in in our Command, which afterwards spread also to the units, so that afterwards the night raids were welcomed by all as being less costly in losses.

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Such was certainly the feeling of our Command. They gave the order to switch over to night raids, because they believed the day losses were too high and that they couldn't be withstood long enough. But it was a decision based more on the guess of the Command than on actual calculations and psychology. Production at the time was very poor. The total production was round about 780 to 800 aircraft, of which perhaps not even 200 were fighters, and perhaps about 300 were bombers. 300 bombers wouldn't have made good the losses then; production was by no means sufficient, but, taking account of that, such raids shouldn't have been started at all if they couldn't be maintained to the end. I should have continued day raids, but only on quite definite concentrated targets and only on those targets which could prove dangerous to us, in the belief still that there would be an attempted invasion; for, apart from the invasion, the raids at that time had no very great point.

I believe that daylight raids would have been more successful because the units could then fly in close formation. At the time we insisted on closest formation flying, and not such carpet bombing as the Allies carried out; that wasn't our idea and it wasn't mine. We wanted the closest formation flying in order to have the bombers more easily protected by fighter escort, and above all to exert the maximum moral pressure to go for the actual targets, which were comparatively small; for example, I considered raids on aircraft factories to be wrong. I said: "Only the aircraft engine works and the one ball-bearing factory at Chelmsford; that is the only side of the RAF which we will attack, but in addition all gasoline dumps must be attacked continually, and all large marshalling yards." I expected no results from raids on lots of isolated factories and so on, but they were raided too. Then too, the problem of fighter escort was quite wrongly solved. The sort of escort which was insisted upon then, - that is, to remain close to the bomber formation and give purely defensive cover, - is no job for a single-engined fighter with the fire-power it has; on the contrary, a single-engined fighter, which has all its guns firing forward, can only be used on the offensive.

It has been claimed the Americans employed such fighters with success on the defensive; but that is not quite accurate. They did it for a time, but they quickly gave it up. They rendered the areas safe, that is to say, they had their bomber formation flying along and had their fighter formations out to the right and left. Their fighter formations didn't keep to the bombers' speed. Generally speaking, they had fairly large fighter formations on all sides and also sometimes above the bombers, but they protected the bombers by the fact that they were always ready to use their full speed in attack and to hurl themselves on any fighter that came up. The way they were doing it at the end, - that is, protecting the area in which the bombers are operating, - is to my mind the only right method for a fighter. A man like Galland could undoubtedly judge that better than I can, but we were in agreement at the time, that the method of sticking close to the bombers was wrong. Nor is the fighters' range sufficient for that either; and the fighters then often left the bombers at a time when the enemy defense aircraft had just taken off; then the fighters weren't present at the critical moment or else they didn't contact each other afterwards. Moreover, there hadn't been sufficient training. The bombers weren't sufficiently trained in flying in 'Geschwader' formation, nor were the fighter formations properly trained.

I used to stand on the Channel coast and watch, and afterwards I reported: "We must have gone mad; the fighters are all coming back on their own in 'Rotte' (2 plane) formation from England." Two

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approached, then two more behind, then another two more behind, then another two over there, instead of coming back in one nice large formation. And in the same way the bombers and fighters never came back together. To recapitulate: first our production capacity, then our training, then the actual flying methods of the bombers, and of the fighters, and then the choice of targets; those were probably the main faults. And, if one wanted to attack at all, one ought to have done so before England had recovered from the shock.

At a later period there were further blunders. When we turned to the East we could no longer continue our work in the West. That meant giving up everything one had started. We knew that English production had dropped off to a certain extent. That is, a certain job had been started and, when 30 - 40% of the work had been done, the job was given up. When that happened, all the effort and all the losses that had been suffered in the course of it, were useless, and wasted. Those are not things which I am saying to-day but didn't say at the time. The moment the attack on Russia started, the war was lost for us. There were many things we might then have done, but did not. At that time we hadn't even stepped up production! It was only at the beginning of 1942 that our production became higher than the peacetime production. That is to say, we were asleep in 1939, 1940 and 1941. That this should have happened under the Nazi regime was possible only because there was no co-ordinated leadership. Every important decision was ultimately referred to one man alone, who wasn't able to keep a grasp on everything. Hitler wasn't really in the picture as regarded our problems, and it wasn't congenial to him either. His choice of people was in many spheres clumsy.

If I had the American Air Force at my disposal, I should now use it against Japan just as it was used against Germany, after having learnt a certain lesson as regards the choice of targets. That is, it should attack right from the beginning those targets which in Germany were attacked at the end. There are two targets the bombing of which brings everyone to their knees: fuel and communications. Of course, the situation in Japan may differ somewhat, I can't say. I don't know the country. I have become fully convinced that Germany was vanquished by the American air raids. With a few exceptions those raids, concentrated upon purely military targets, were carried out in such a way that we had nothing but our eyes to weep with. Our network of communications was mortally wounded by them alone, never by the night raids. Nor did the night raids make our production drop, the damage was quickly made good.

The English started the large-scale raids; the fact that we no longer have any towns and that a great many of our people have been killed, is due to the English, but the attacks on purely military targets, which led to collapse, were the American ones. There are two targets which are vulnerable in Germany: the synthetic oil plants, and communications. The invasion in the North of France would never have been so successful if communications had still been working properly. Then the Allies first of all completely destroyed the area to the left of the Rhine in Germany, then completely destroyed the area to the right of the Rhine as far as the Ems, then as far as the Moser, then as far as the Elbe, and did it so systematically that we could no longer carry on any transport. We took a million workers out of armament factories in order to put them on repair of communications, but it was too late to win the race. We already had 800,000 people on the job and wanted to repair the lines again with 1,600,000. Then came your rapid advance and it was too late.

We were entirely dependent on the railways. Canals and waterways

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only came in question for goods for which there is no great hurry, and for bulk goods. There was one other possibility: transport by truck. Trucks were altogether one of the weakest points of our production. They are also the only things of which production kept decreasing during the whole of last year, whereas the production of other goods for war purposes still kept increasing until the end was quite close. We couldn't change over from railway transport to trucks: Consequently we actually suffered just as much in the last few months from the bombing of the railways, and above all of the railway bridges over the rivers, and the destruction of the large marshalling yards, as we did from the shortage of fuel resulting from the bombing of the synthetic oil plants. The fact that the Allies attacked our air-frame industry undoubtedly restricted our activity, but did not destroy it. The fact that they attacked engine factories was very much harder on us, but still not decisive; but when they attacked the synthetic oil plants we could reckon the end was due. We had sufficient reserves in the GAF to last about 2½ months with very economical use, after that the industry would have to be running again or we would be sunk. We couldn't get things running again. The Allied intelligence system was marvellous: if a plant had been running again for one or two days, it was bombed again.

English night attacks on synthetic oil plants were also made but they weren't so effective as those of the Americans by day. After all each English aircraft drops its bombs quite individually, just as we did. That's not so simple at night, and an enormous number of bombs missed the target. I don't want to condemn the English method of bombing as ineffective, but what broke us down was the American system of bombing. I estimate that, on the average, of the total of American bombing, between 25 and 30% missed the target. In those cases the whole bombing missed the target area altogether, or else just hit the edge of it. But in about 70% of all their bombing the Americans hit the target properly. There was crater upon crater and that really smashed the target to bits. This method is only possible by day. The English had an extremely good intelligence service. It's not due to bad flying on the part of the English, or to less ability, but to the fact of the two systems of 'day' and 'night' bombing. The method of day bombing which we used, that's to say that each aircraft drops its bombs individually, certainly ensures that not all the bombs miss the target, but it also meant that it was never possible to obtain a really concentrated effect. In Japan, as I have said already, I would attack the same targets as the Allies did with us. If one attacks communications, a country like that is bound to crack up. The fuel dumps will also be attacked; and they constitute the life-line. Furthermore I should carry out day attacks with fighter escort there, in exactly the same way as was done in Germany, and use that method only. What was thus achieved by day, one could never achieve by night. That's quite out of the question.

Among American mistakes in bombing policy, and especially in choice of targets, I should count that at first they attacked things of only secondary importance, such as air-frame factories, etc. That must be continually repeated on all of them, and they are much too dispersed for it to be possible to smash them all. One can damage them; the English did that too; they kept on causing damage but the English attacks were not decisive. But afterwards they only attacked targets of primary importance, in the right order, and also at the right time, for they always know - that may have been due to the good English intelligence service - that such-and-such a factory was producing again; or that such-and-such

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a station was now in use again. I do not think it would have been an improvement to keep on and on attacking without waiting to see if something was in order again, rather than to wait as was the Allied practice. Otherwise one would have made useless attacks. Goering, I am told, is of the opinion that when the enemy had attacked the Leuna Werke at Merseburg for instance, they should not have given them a moment's respite, just as at Dresden. But actually Leuna never came into production again at all. It sometimes ran for one or two days. More harm was done by waiting because in the meantime attacks were made on other targets which were also important. Above all the communication targets are far more numerous than the synthetic oil plants. Apart from that one would only have hit workmen engaged on the reconstruction there.

Nor would I have had a different ratio of production of different types of aircraft from what the Allies in fact adopted, as regards four-engined planes, fighters, etc. The two-engined aircraft worked mainly on close-range targets, and in combination with the army. For the interior and for the really strategic targets only four-engined bombers were employed, and we had the impression that the mixture of fighters and bombers was very good in comparison with our badly assorted GAF. If we had had all the fighters we needed, even American production would not have sufficed. I estimate that this production\* amounted to barely 2500 fighters a month, and according to my calculations that was 1000 too few. I had hoped that if my proposals had been carried out in time, we could have stopped the bombing attacks on Germany. I based my hope on the fact that enemy fighter production was too weak, and could not be stepped up quickly enough to neutralize that. As we were situated, and above all in view of the fact that we employed our aircraft wrongly, Allied fighter escort was more than sufficient, but the Allies couldn't have done with less. In our opinion the Fortress was superior to the Liberator. I also had the impression that the Fortress was used more for the difficult targets.

My impression is that the AAF has been built up as a whole in the best and most consistent way. One would naturally have to allow for the jet-propelled fighters playing an important part now, and to reckon with the fact that speeds generally will increase by at least 200 kph, possibly even 300 kph. One will have to study very carefully the influence of supersonic speed and the effect on flying of reaching the speed of sound. When that problem has been solved, and it can be solved, considerably higher speeds will be reached. That will mean doing away with current American types. In my opinion America will never quite be able to avoid having a strong Air Force. When the war with Japan is over she will have certain tasks in the Far East which can be carried out more cheaply and satisfactorily if a strong Air Force is at her disposal there. The Air Force must be so big that the task of bringing it up to a war-time strength can be performed in the shortest time, that is, over a period of one to two years. That is to say, the personnel cadres and above all the commanding-officer cadres must be big enough to prevent ever running short. In twelve to eighteen months one can train first-rate pilots, but the people to command them must be there beforehand, and that begins at the rank of 'Staffelkapitan' (Squadron Commander).

\*Note: The text does not make it entirely clear whether or not British production also is here meant to be included.

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For the way in which the war was conducted by the U.S., and for the way in which we once meant wage, it an independent Air Force is right. The way we conducted the war later on did not justify an independent Air Force. GERMANY's Air Force should have come under the army. But this does not apply to the U.S. because on the whole the Americans did conduct a strategic air war, just as the English did. From a purely military point of view I don't consider the question as to whether one has an independent Air Force or not all-important. Because with the U.S. it worked quite well, with the English it also worked well, and with us it would have worked just as badly if it had been under the army.

It is obvious to me that American bombing was carried out according to a systematic choice of certain targets because first the AAF bombed our air-frame factories in particular. Then came, I believe, the ball-bearing factories, always in a certain definite rotation, and then later on they made very heavy raids on all the chemical factories, (except, to begin with, the hydrogenation plants), chiefly LUDWIGSFELDEN and so on. Then for a time they bombed all the harbour installations very heavily, particularly U-boat bases and factories etc., and finally the hydrogenation plants and communication centres were the chief targets. I actually realised that this process followed a certain rotation when they suddenly bombed all the air-frame factories; that was in the middle of 1943. But then one only saw the change of target from month to month. At that time I got daily reports as to what was attacked and what damage was caused. It was thus quite clear to me what branch of industry they were trying to cripple but, when they took a new main target, the old ones were not entirely neglected. The raids on them continued for a time to a lesser degree.

On our side, in the way of protective measures for particularly important targets we had suggested placing stronger Flak defences, chiefly near the hydrogenation plants. Instead of 120-130 heavy guns, 400-500 were placed at LEUNA, POELITZ and so on. We achieved a certain measure of success, too. Raids on our aircraft industry began to be noticeably crippling for us as early as July 1943. At that time the maximum number of aircraft were produced, namely 2600-2700, of which rather more than 1000 were fighters, and we didn't get beyond that figure. We had a programme which showed an increase of at least 200-250 aircraft per month. This increase could not be achieved by the spring of 1944, our figures simply remained stationary. The damaging attacks in July 1943 were mainly those aimed at fighter factories. There were the FOCKE-WULF works in BREMEN and OSCHERSLEBEN, FIESELER in CASSEL, and so on. We hurried on the dispersal, as a counter-measure; and we had already begun planning an increased fighter production in February 1942.

During the last three years the monthly rate of fighter production ran: 220 fighters at the end of 1941; 1050 or 1060 in July 1943. About 50 more on an average each month in the meantime. We then remained on that level until March/April 1944. Fighter production then rose until our peak month of August 1944 - 3000. Then another slight drop to about 2600 and finally 2800, but that meant production of all other types was dropped. The jet-propelled aircraft were then coming along in addition, that came to about 200 '262s' per month. About 1000 were completed altogether. But they were held up, because on HITLER's orders they were not allowed to fly as fighters for a long time. About 300 Arado aircraft were produced altogether; of which about 70 were produced in the last month, which was the peak month. Up to the Spring of 1944 these are my own figures, and then after that, from about the middle of 1944 onwards, they are SAUF's figures.

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My figures were checked. I received my reports straight from the industry stating what they had completed each month, and for that matter from the construction superintendent of the Ministry. They were the aircraft accepted. Simultaneously Oberst ESCHENAUER of the QMG branch of the General Staff kept a note of what the General Staff actually delivered to the units, and what had been accepted by it. The two of us



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Attacks on our ball-bearing factories did considerable damage. There were a great many attacks - the first were not so effective, but the later ones were very effective. They set about dispersing the ball-bearing factories, at first still on the surface. But these surface dispersal sites were apparently very quickly located by the intelligence service and were then also attacked. Thereupon they went into caves and subterranean places. The attacks would have had a more serious effect if it had not been for two things. The first was that, as regards GAF requirements, about 60% of all ball-bearings could easily be replaced by other appliances. But 40% of them were nevertheless beyond any dispute vital, for instance all the engine ball-bearings. Still we got over that difficulty through a second fact: there was an unusually large store of ball-bearings of all sizes from the smallest to the largest - above all for the army - somewhere near MAGDEBURG. It was a store so great that it sufficed to see us through several months. Thereby a crippling lack of ball-bearings for production - causing all production to stop - did not occur. Apart from that the manufacture of ball-bearings rose again very quickly. I estimate that we produced about 11 to 12 million ball-bearings per month. I happen to know the figures from the reports. All the attacks caused our production to drop to about 5½ to 6 million per month, but we very quickly got back to a production of about 9 to 9½ million monthly. I do not think that more intensive raids on the ball-bearing factories would have caused more disruption because compared with the other targets which I mentioned before, I don't consider that a vital target. Not as vital. And about the depot near MAGDEBURG the Allies never discovered.

If raids on the aircraft and ball-bearing factories had been abandoned, in order to concentrate instead on the synthetic oil plants from January 1944 onwards, we would not have been able to strengthen our fighter arm sufficiently to defend the oil plants, because our stocks of fuel were, as I said, only sufficient for 2½ months if used sparingly. I believe we produced a maximum quantity of 180,000 tons per month for the GAF. Of that figure about 90,000 tons was absolutely essential for the Air Force. But that means colossal restrictions in training, and colossal restrictions in ground traffic, because a whole lot of fuel which would normally have been left for ground traffic was purified for us. At that time it was impossible so to adapt production within 2½ months as to enable them to protect the fuel plants and at the same time have fuel for operational purposes. That means, therefore, that if as an alternative, synthetic oil plants had been attacked six months earlier, we should have been done for about six months sooner.

We realised that our gasoline plants had become the target when the first raid was made on them. For months we said each day: "Thank God, they haven't bombed the synthetic oil plants yet!" When the air-frame



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factories were bombed we said: "Let's hope they go on bombing air-frame factories; as long as they don't bomb the synthetic oil plants." The effect produced by this bombing of the oil refineries was incomparably greater than anything that could possibly have been achieved against ball-bearing manufacture. One really can't compare the two targets. I would estimate the ratio of their relative importance as 10 to 1, that is, the synthetic oil plants were ten times more important than the ball-bearing factories. Nor do I believe that there are any other targets, such as power stations, munitions, iron or steel factories, of which the bombing, had they been selected instead of those actually chosen, would have shortened the war. Because the heavier the production of an industry is in itself, the less the effect of the bombing.

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