



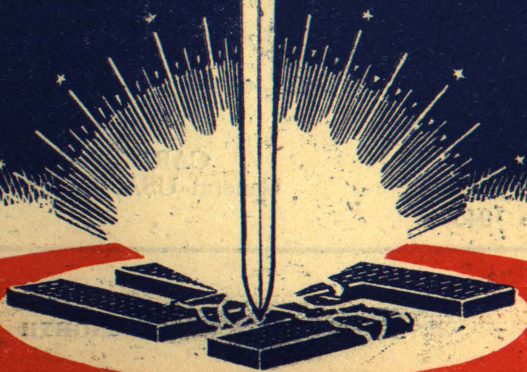
ARMY

TALKS FOR THE

EIGHTH AIR FORCE



USS TAF



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HEADQUARTERS
US STRATEGIC AIR FORCES IN EUROPE

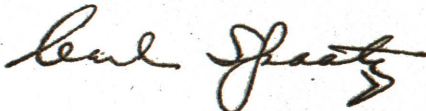
Office of the Commanding General
APO 633

To All Personnel of the Eighth Air Force :

The overall planning of the aerial war against Germany is always based primarily upon two main factors : available strength, and the ability of the men to do the job. The remarkable achievements of our ground and air men tell in terms more graphic than words why we have always been able to move forward towards victory with complete confidence that carefully laid plans can be accomplished successfully. When the situation calls for a maximum effort we know from experience that the determination and resourcefulness of our ground people will give us the strength we need. The record set in the recent February-March offensive was one of the most remarkable achievements of the war. There were almost as many aircraft available for combat at the end of 14 successive days of operations as at the beginning. We knew, also from experience, that the combat crews, tired though they were from the continuous grind, could accomplish the job. I am pleased to tell you that the cumulative effect of these concentrated efforts, on a desperate enemy, have had a telling effect on his ability to wage war.

Air power has been, and will be, a most decisive factor in every phase of the war. You have done more than advance V-Day. You have made it possible. You have made victory certain.

The Germans aren't licked yet. We can't rest on our laurels. When your opponent is reeling, then's the time for our greatest efforts. Your commanders go forward with pride and confidence in your proven ability to swing the knockout punch.



CARL SPAATZ,
General USA, Commanding.

2 April, 1945

ARMY TALKS FOR THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE

The purpose of this publication is to give each member of the Eighth Air Force a clear understanding of the significance of our mission and achievements. We want our personnel to know the facts. Through reading and discussion of the topics of ARMY TALKS each one will have a wider knowledge of the global war and the part played by the Eighth. Each will be better equipped as a soldier in our common cause and as a citizen after the winning of total victory.

J. H. DOOLITTLE
Lieut.-General USA, Commanding

★ UNITED STATES ★ STRATEGIC AIR FORCES IN EUROPE



THE German air defense controller was a worried man on the morning of February 25, 1944. The Allied air forces had kept his fighters at full stretch during the past five days. Again this morning the sun was climbing into a clear sky and targets all over Germany lay open to visual bombing. He must expect attack from two directions, west and south, and his fighters had to be spread out accordingly. The attacks of the last few days had been made on aircraft plants and it looked as though the same type of target might be singled out today, but where would the blows fall—Berlin, Leipzig, Regensburg, Stuttgart?

A thousand miles apart, two great forces are making their patterned ascent into the sky. In Southern Italy the B-17s and B-24s of the Fifteenth Air Force are leaving their fields. By 1000 all are airborne, with the Forts leading the procession northwards. At the same time the Eighth Air Force bombers are assembling over England, climbing through the mist to their assembly points, ready to head over the coast at 1035.

The first sign of trouble appearing from the west is a bomber force headed out over the North Sea on the familiar route which would take it across Denmark and probably down to targets in North-east Germany. The air controller makes his plans accordingly. Fighters are ordered up from fields in North France, Belgium and Holland to intercept the bombers on their northern route, while the large concentration of fighters in Northern

Germany are alerted and held ready for trouble. Unfortunately for the air controller, the seemingly large force of heavies is a "spoof mission" by a few Liberators. They are heading north without escort for the sole purpose of throwing the German defense system off balance. They are succeeding. When the controller's screen picks up the main Eighth thrust crossing the south coast of England half an hour later he has already committed a large part of his fighters to the defense of the wrong areas.

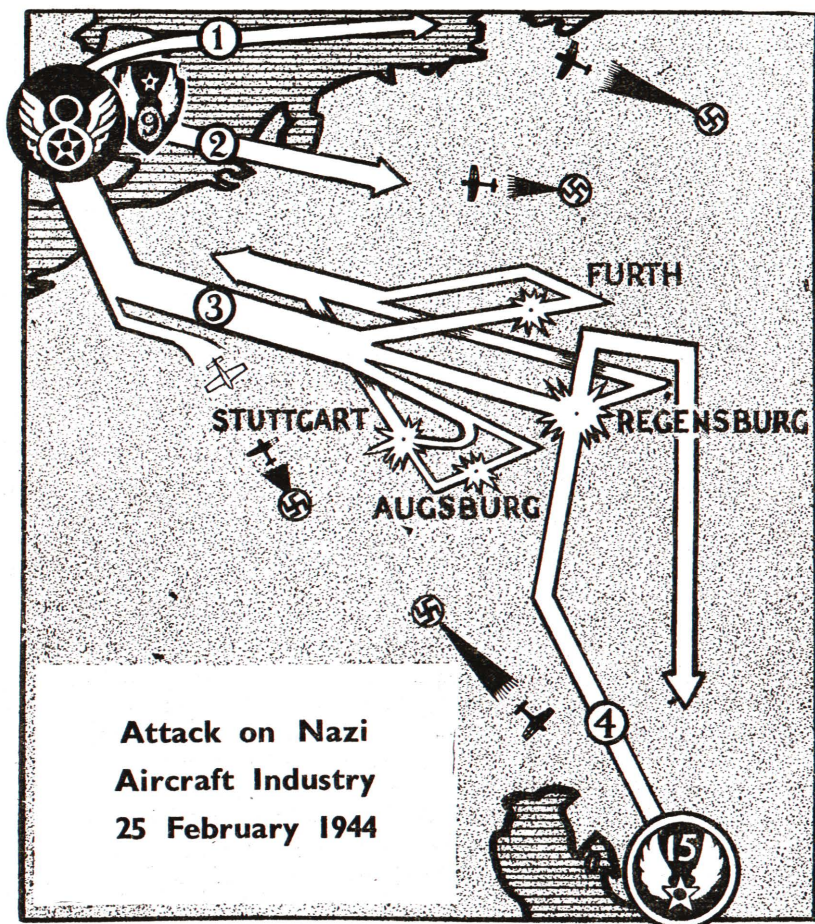
The confusion is increased through an attack by Ninth Air Force B-26s now moving in over Holland to bomb airdromes there between 1030 and 1130, and engaging enemy fighters in the process. The main force of the Eighth has picked up its first relay of escort planes over the French coast and is 75 miles inland before any enemy fighters begin to make contact. Intermittent attacks are made on the lead elements, but not in sufficient numbers for many to break through the fighter screen.

DOUBLE BLOW

In the meantime the Fifteenth has been bearing the brunt of the opposition. The first enemy to be overcome is the weather. The passage over the mountain ranges guarding the Reich's southern approaches is rarely an easy task. Today the heavies have had to make a quick climb over the clouds above the Adriatic; across the Austrian Alps the clouds are yet heavier and some of the planes are forced to turn and attack secondary targets at Graz, Fiume, Pola and Zara. The German fighters appear as soon as the southern column reaches Fiume and stay with them in relays for the next four hundred miles. The air controller is now in little doubt as to their target. They are heading for the Augsburg-Regensburg area, both important aircraft centers. He has committed his available resources in Yugoslavia, Albania, Austria and Southern Germany—between 250 and 300 fighters—in an effort to break up the attack. But the main force keeps right on, passes east of Augsburg and goes straight for Regensburg, as the two columns of bombers form one procession south of the city, with their relatively small Thunderbolt and Lightning escort still giving protection against the fierce enemy fighter attacks. In cloudless skies the lead ships arrive over Regensburg at 1210 and for nearly an hour the force of 149 Forts and Libs pound the great Regensburg-Prufening Me-109 components plant.

Less than an hour after the last formation has swung west and south, fighting its way home, the first of 267 B-17s of the Eighth's 3rd Division arrive to complete the devastation of the same plant and to hit the Me-109 assembly plant at nearby Obertraubling. The planes come over their target areas in two compact streams, almost without fighter opposition, which has already been drawn off and exhausted by the Fifteenth. In a quarter of an hour their work is done.

At the same time, the 1st Division, after feinting eastwards, has doubled back, divided, and is creating havoc at two Messerschmitt plants at Augsburg and a ball-bearing plant at Stuttgart. The weight of the 2nd



This operation illustrates the basic USSTAF principle—the Air Forces, working together, can achieve what none can do separately.

1. A “spoof mission” of Eighth bombers confuses the enemy and draws off part of the fighter defense to the north.

2. Ninth B-26s add to the confusion by attacking airfields in the Low Countries.

3. The main force of the Eighth, taking heavy toll of lessened enemy fighter opposition, heads for the targets.

4. Compelling the Luftwaffe to meet two major attacks, the Fifteenth bombers swing in from the south, buck the fighters and strike the targets just ahead of the Eighth.

Division Libs is being directed against the Me-110 components and assembly plants at Furth, a few miles to the north. The intensity of the combats of the preceding days, together with the brilliant timing of the attacks, leaves little serious work for the fighter escort on the return journey. Protection is given during the later stages by RAF Mustangs and Spitfires which have been provided to strengthen the cover for the unusually large force of heavies.

When the profit and loss tables are drawn up they show the success of the bold stroke—bombing results are “good to excellent,” with the Regensburg and Furth plants virtually exterminated and the Stuttgart and Augsburg plants so severely damaged as to be out of production for a long time. The two Air Forces have lost 70 bombers and eight fighters between them, but their claims read—152 enemy fighters destroyed, 21 probables and 88 damaged.

AIR SUPREMACY

That is only part of the whole story of “Blitz Week,” February 20-25, 1944. During those days the Eighth and Fifteenth flew 4,700 bomber sorties and 3,600 fighter sorties, dropping 10,000 tons of bombs on factories producing 63 percent of single-engine planes, 87 percent of twin-engine planes, and 60 percent of ball bearings. The enemy lost 918 fighters in the air alone, at a cost to our forces of 250 heavies and 37 fighters. The immediate result was not merely to cripple the existing operational strength of the Luftwaffe, but to cut future aircraft replacements in half. Many months were to pass before the German Air Force would replenish its defensive strength, and by that time the Allied ground forces were firmly entrenched on the Continent and our air power had gained a stranglehold on the flow of the Nazi war machine's life blood—oil.

When the historians evaluate the campaigns in the European theater in the Second World War they may attach greater importance to the accomplishments of this Blitz Week than to some of the battles which were headlined at the time. The February attacks, and those which followed them in March, had all the majestic sweep of Patton's Normandy break-through, or of the Russian advance in Poland. They combined the dogged determination of the El Alamein campaign with the swift cunning of the D-Day landings. They had the breathtaking urgency of the Arnhem and Bastogne battles. But because few understood the strategy behind the missions, or the importance of air supremacy, Blitz Week, the first full-scale test of strategic bombing, has not yet been fully appreciated.

The February-March assault on the Luftwaffe and the German aircraft industry was the first triumph of a newly formed headquarters charged with the control and use of American strategic air power in this theater—US Strategic Air Forces in Europe. USSTAF was faced with a gigantic task, and a critically important one. The Eighth in the UK and the Fifteenth in Italy were being slowly built into great heavy bombardment forces, but neither numbers nor even quality of planes and personnel

could alone guarantee victory. Striking power must be used in just the right way, and its growth must be directed to meet the most urgent needs of changing warfare. USSTAF was intrusted with a dual mission—concentration of purpose and concentration of resources. The year 1944 was to see the brilliant achievement of both aims.

FIRST JOB

The first job to be tackled, when USSTAF was activated at the beginning of January, 1944, was obvious but not easy. The German Air Force must be greatly reduced in strength. Until this was accomplished the heavy bombers could not strike successfully at the industrial power of the Reich, and their very existence was threatened by the rapid growth of the German fighter force. Further, the invasion of the Continent was impossible until the Allies gained air supremacy, and the scheduled date of D-Day was now less than six months distant. The first spell of good weather for many weeks found USSTAF ready with bold and comprehensive plans. The vital aircraft production centers were known, the timing of the great assaults, spanning a thousand miles, was worked out with mathematical precision, and the full weight of our Flying Fortresses and Liberators, with their fighter escorts, was launched systematically at the aircraft industry targets. It was a life and death struggle. If it had failed our strategic air power might never have recovered the initiative and the value of large scale daylight precision bombing might again have been plunged into doubt. General Spaatz and General Anderson knew the risks. The decision was made, with the full backing of the Eighth and Fifteenth. The campaign was won and the way was at last opened for D-Day and for the all-out employment of strategic bombing for the purposes endorsed at the Casablanca and Cairo Conferences—the blasting of the industrial and economic resources of Germany.

OIL IS TOPS

The new freedom to strike at any type of strategic target gave added importance to USSTAF's direction of the US air assaults. From the beginning the recommendations of this headquarters weighed heavily in the decisions of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. It was realized that in 1943, a year of experimentation, American effort had been directed at too many types of targets. USSTAF fought for concentration on one main target system. All the possibilities were reviewed and the decision made. Oil was to be the chief object of attention of our heavy bombers. The reasoning was simple. If the enemy's supplies of fuel and lubricants could be cut off or drastically curtailed, it meant paralysis of most industrial production and motorized transportation, with disastrous results to all branches of Germany's war effort. There were many who doubted the ability of strategic bombing to destroy wells, refineries, synthetic plants and storage centers in sufficient numbers to accomplish these results. USSTAF insisted and won the day.

On April 5, 1944, the Fifteenth went after the Ploesti refineries. It was the opening attack of the sustained oil campaign which sent the heavies ranging

from the Ruhr to Rumania after every major source of supply and production. Ten days after the Ploesti mission the Eighth was placed at the disposal of the Supreme Commander for pre-Invasion preparations, but by July General Eisenhower, without awaiting a new directive from the Combined Chiefs of Staff, released the strategic air forces for their prime mission, and USSTAF had them hammering again at oil. Through July and August the campaign went on, although the Fifteenth was called on for help at the landings in Southern France during part of that time. In September oil was still the number one priority, and by the end of the month it was estimated that German production was cut to less than one quarter of its pre-attack level by the air assault and the loss of Ploesti to the Russians. The enemy's situation was made all the more critical by the loss of gas and oil stored in France and Belgium.

Month after month the assault has continued, as the enemy has worked feverishly to repair and disperse his production facilities. The RAF has shared fully in the offensive. Its Bomber Command started with attacks on the synthetic plants of the Ruhr and steadily lengthened its missions until, in the early months of 1945, it has been making highly successful daylight raids on the refineries of central Germany. There has been plenty of evidence that the Germans have long since realized the danger from the Allied assault. The flak defenses have been doubled and doubled again at the important oil targets, until some are now guarded by more guns than the great cities, even Berlin. Bitter fighter opposition has been encountered on the way to these targets and more and more elaborate smoke screen devices have been installed.

DISASTROUS RESULTS

The effectiveness of the campaign has been shown in other ways. The Allied ground forces have captured great quantities of motorized equipment, in perfect shape, but stalled for lack of fuel or lubricants. After the crushing February and March attacks on the Luftwaffe the Germans went to great pains to disperse their production and assembly plants in small units and to construct underground factories. In this way they have been able to build up the numerical strength of their fighters. But the critical shortage of aviation fuel, always the top priority in the oil target system, has had two disastrous results for the enemy. New flying personnel have to go into combat after very inadequate training, and the strength of Germany's operational aircraft can rarely be utilized to anything like its full extent. That is why our combat crews, while meeting considerable fighter opposition on occasions, may fly many missions without catching a glimpse of the Luftwaffe. Finally, captured documents and interrogation of prisoners of war are constantly revealing the ever more stringent oil conservation program of the enemy. Charcoal burners, bicycles and horses have been increasingly used, ineffective as they are for the needs of a modern mechanized army. They reveal the desperate straits of an oil-starved foe. It is estimated that by February, 1945, when German production was down to the all-time low of approximately a quarter of its former level, certain types of synthetic oil

were being rushed straight from the plants to the battle fronts, so that the destruction of the installations concerned immediately immobilized military equipment at the front.



The choice for second place in USSTAF's target system priority list was a logical follow up to the selection of oil. Communications, especially rail centers and marshalling yards, together with railroad equipment, bridges and canal system—these have proved on many occasions a bottleneck of both industrial and military effort, and therefore a suitable target for strategic bombing. The chief problem about these targets, however, has been the complexity and vast scale of the communications network, with the result that the target system seems to provide endless projects, and in fact absorbed nearly one-third of the total bomb tonnage dropped by U.S. Air Forces in this theater during 1944. Another difficulty has been the enemy's ability to effect repairs very rapidly in many cases. Nevertheless, the destruction of communications and transportation facilities has on many occasions been a decisive factor in the course of the war in Europe.

An outstanding example of what can be accomplished through concentration and co-ordination of airpower, both strategic and tactical, was revealed in a recent series of missions planned by USSTAF. Twelve months after its first great job against the Luftwaffe, USSTAF directed an operation in mid-February of this year, involving more than 3,600 bombers and 4,800 fighters. The purpose of the operation was the destruction of enemy transportation facilities all over Central and Western Germany, thus immobilizing vital resources for both military and industrial use. The missions were flown with the same skill as they had been conceived and planned. At a cost of 40 bombers and 49 fighters, 212 carefully picked transportation targets were successfully attacked; two-thirds of them



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Commanding General :
GENERAL CARL SPAATZ

Deputy Commanding
General, Operations :
**MAJOR GENERAL
F. L. ANDERSON**

Deputy Commanding
General, Administration :
**MAJOR GENERAL
HUGH J. KNERR**

*

GENERAL SPAATZ is Strategic Air Power in person. His life is at the service of air power twenty-four hours a day. His razor-keen mind is ready for decisions at three in the afternoon or three in the morning. No desk, schedule or red tape confine his movements or judgements.

People are his relaxation—he draws inspiration from a vast circle of friends—both famous and unknown. Nothing concerns him so much as the well-being of the individual man, whether he is a tail gunner, a fighter pilot, or a mechanic. He likes to know just what they do and think. He has always had the utmost confidence in his combat and maintenance crews, and, as he says, that confidence has been fully justified.

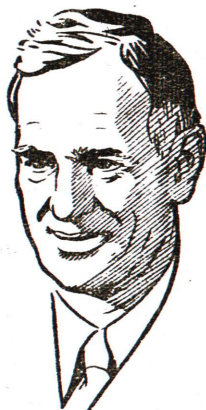
His career has given him a perfect background for understanding the vast problems of air warfare—West Point, combat pilot in the last war, assistant to the Air Corps chief, Commanding General of the Eighth, the Northwest African Air Forces, and the Twelfth, and deputy commander of the Allied Air Forces in North Africa.

The General's philosophy of the use of air power has crystallized into a few basic convictions which apply to any struggle between major powers : the air war must be won first—without air supremacy neither sea nor land forces can operate successfully. With control of the air, bombing of the enemy's production facilities may destroy both his will and his means of resisting. If he continues to fight without adequate resources, air power will spearhead the final assault of land and sea forces. *Air power is the decisive weapon of any nation at war.*

T THE TOP

GENERAL ANDERSON'S qualifications made him the obvious choice for Deputy Commander of Operations. He has grown up with the conception of high altitude precision bombing—he started the first bombardier instructors' school. He had more to do than anyone with the building up of the Eighth's great force of heavies during the months when the Forts and Libs and their American crews were proving to the world the power of precision bombing.

Since his transfer from head of VIII Bomber Command to his present post in January, 1944, General Anderson has been responsible for the control of operations which have broken the back of German air power and industrial strength. His mind is continually grappling with the overarching problems of air power, looking ahead to its significance for both peace and war. His wide knowledge, together with his warm humanity, have enabled him to render distinctive service as General Spaatz's deputy in frequent contact with officials of European countries.



GENERAL KNERR is the "business brains" of the team. His passion for efficiency and his outstanding ability for organization have left behind him a wake of reconstructed commands. At the urgent request of the Secretary of War he returned to active service in 1942, and, after tackling large scale supply difficulties in the States, the General remodeled Air Service Command in this Theater.

As Deputy Commander for Administration he has set a world pattern for supply and maintenance service in the field, and has both speeded up the conduct of business and held down the overhead of personnel to the lowest of any Air Force, on any basis of comparison. As Commanding Officer of the 2nd Bombardment Group and Chief of Staff of the original GHQ Air Force, he developed much of the fundamental doctrine of bombardment aviation, and as Chief of the Field Service Section participated in the conception and procurement of the modern heavy bombardment airplane.

with exceptionally good results; fighters destroyed 285 locomotives, 1,065 railroad cars and 254 motorized transports, as well as damaging large numbers of each and attacking auxiliary targets.

TACTICAL TASKS

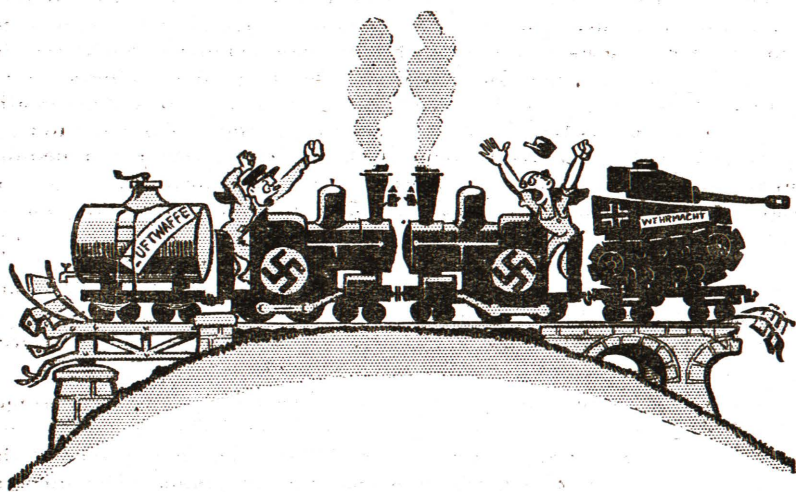
Although the main task of USSTAF has been to concentrate air strength and put strategic punches where they will count for most, there has never been any hesitation about swinging the weight of heavy bombardment into vital tactical tasks, when military conditions called for it. Naturally the central control of USSTAF has greatly facilitated the necessary changes in plans and functions. By the end of March, 1944, the Allies held air supremacy over Europe, thanks to the strategic bomber attacks on the aircraft plants and the aggressive tactics of the long range fighters, which accompanied the heavies, in drastically cutting existing Luftwaffe strength. The way was thus prepared for the invasion of the Continent, and for six weeks before D-day USSTAF devoted its heavies, as well as US medium bombers and fighters, to the task of disrupting communications, so that the invasion bridgeheads would be isolated from enemy pressure. The heavies of the Eighth were given two main missions—destruction of repair and maintenance facilities at the 20 most important rail marshalling yards in Northern France, and the knocking out of airfields within a 150-mile radius of the bridgehead. The objectives were accomplished, but in order to prevent the enemy from realizing the exact location of the invasion area a great deal of additional missions had to be flown.

On D-Day the Eighth was given the job of destroying the Loire bridges and the Ninth was directed to those over the Seine. The heavies, as well as the fighters, were used to break through obstacles in the way of the landing forces and neutralized critical defensive strong points. The amazing flexibility which the B-17s and B-24s displayed in performing tasks for which they were not designed was a tribute both to the skill of the fliers and to the foresight of USSTAF in encouraging technical developments which permitted successful operations despite heavy overcast.

BREAK-THROUGH

During the assault on oil, from July to September, both Eighth and Fifteenth undertook special tactical missions in cooperation with the ground forces. Eighth heavies did an unprecedented job in preparation for the St. Lo break-through on July 25, by laying down a carpet of 3,400 tons of small bombs ahead of the ground forces. After the break-through Liberators ferried 10,000 tons of supplies to the rapidly advancing armored forces, to keep them rolling. The bombers of the Fifteenth performed a similar service for the southern armies, when they moved ahead of ground supply channels. On September 17 the Eighth bombers blasted the larger flak installations in preparation for airborne troop operations in the Low Countries, while fighters picked off the smaller flak targets. Then they joined in forming a tremendous air umbrella for the troop carrying and paratroop operations. Subsequently bombers dropped supplies to the isolated ground units.

All these operations give a vivid impression of the many requirements made upon USSTAF's resources. They were, however, always secondary to the main strategic bombing plans. In June USSTAF initiated a further important move aimed at securing yet better coverage of the strategic targets of the Reich. After long and careful preparation bases were established in Russia to receive bombers on long missions which carried them deep over Eastern Germany, Poland and the Balkans. The first shuttle mission was flown on June 2 by the Fifteenth. The bases could



... interdiction of enemy transportation facilities.

only accommodate relatively small numbers, but the strategic and psychological value of the missions was considerable. The triangular routes between the UK, Russia and Italy placed every mile of enemy-held territory within reach of the long distance bombers. Further, Eastern Command was a symbol of Allied cooperation which certainly did not bring comfort to the enemy.

The vast scale and the complexity of the air operations in Europe since January, 1944, has emphasized USSTAF's value as a directing agency. It is impossible to apportion credit between the headquarters and the commands operating within its control, but it is certainly true that the concentration of purpose and of resources provided by USSTAF has played a great part in making 1944 a decisive year for Allied air power in Europe, just as it may help to bring the final decision in 1945. Yet the control which USSTAF has exercised over its commands differs greatly from that of most headquarters. General Spaatz and his two deputies have always left a great measure of independent decision to the Air Forces. In the choice of targets, for example, the function of the Intelligence Directorate of USSTAF has been to coordinate and study information, to prepare priority lists, through sub-committees, of the targets of each type, and so

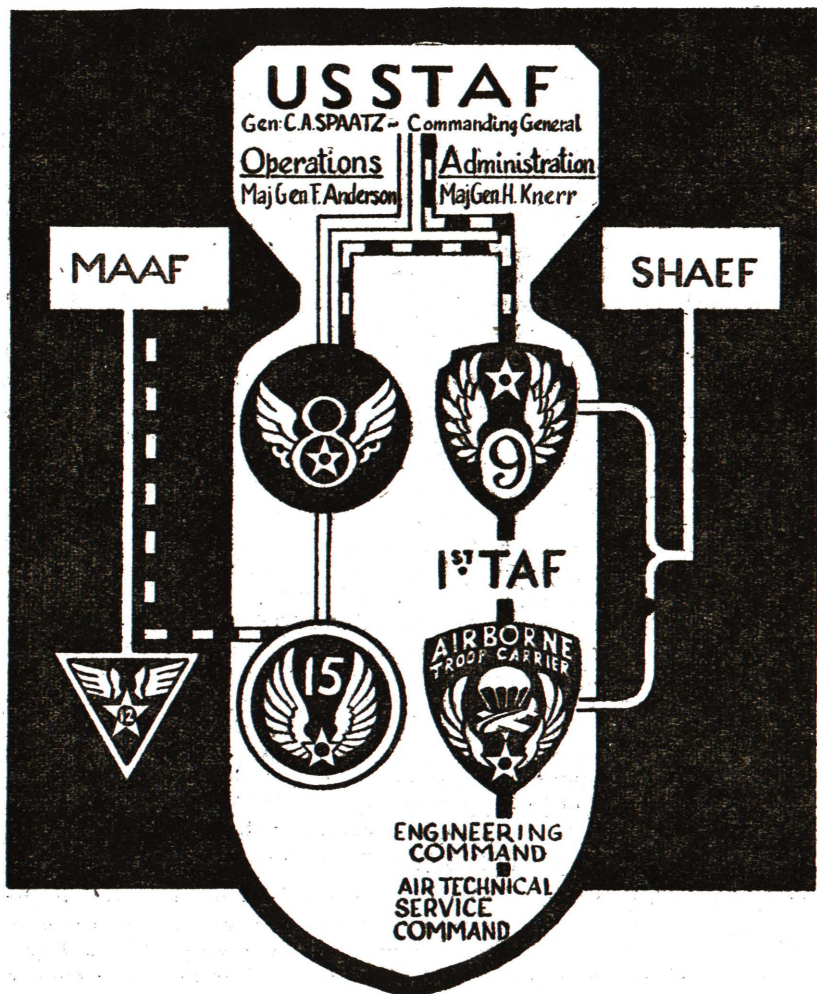
to recommend to the Eighth and Fifteenth the vital points for attack. The selection of a particular target, the route and the numberless details of the mission are left to the air force concerned to decide. On such occasions as the complex mission of February 25, USSTAF may present a more detailed plan which involves timing of the attacks by the Eighth and Fifteenth on the same targets, but even then the commands concerned are fully responsible for all details.

In its operational control USSTAF has not only given broad direction, but has been the means of coordinating many procedures between the commands. The work of the Weather Directorate provides a good example of this phase of the headquarters' responsibilities. As US air forces moved on to the Continent they found few of the well established facilities of the UK weather stations. The tactical air forces had to be supplied with weather information, as did air transport fields, troop carrier units and other types of organizations. Establishing weather stations, creating regular information services, allocating personnel and equipment between commands—these were some of the headaches with which USSTAF had to deal.

THE COMMANDS

In addition to operational control of the two heavy bombardment forces, USSTAF has from its beginning been responsible for administrative control of *all* the US air force commands in the ETO. In other words, USSTAF has been responsible for the procurement of men, equipment and supplies of all kinds. Administrative control has involved supervision of all personnel services, technical and maintenance services, financial and medical services, maintenance of records, and many other duties. Some of these responsibilities have been delegated by the Deputy Commanding General of Administration to Air Technical Service Command and to the newly created Engineering Command, which nevertheless function in the closest relationship to the Administrative Directorates.

These responsibilities take on new meaning when you look at the tremendous volume of work which went into the varied operations of US Air Forces in Europe during the first twelve months of USSTAF's existence. The commands which come under the administrative control of USSTAF represent all phases of air warfare in Europe; the Eighth, with its heavy bombers and long range fighters, pioneering strategic bombing from its bases in the UK; the Ninth and First Tactical Air Forces, whose brilliant cooperation with the armies has helped them hammer their way into the Reich; IX Troop Carrier Command, whose transports and gliders have carried airborne and paratroops into action and often remained their life-line as they fought through enemy territory; Engineering Command, composed of units which have followed close on the heels of the advancing Allied forces, preparing bases for further blows at the enemy; Air Technical Service Command, which has "kept them flying" and in doing so has established the world AAF record of less than one percent of combat planes grounded through lack of parts; and finally, 70th



USSTAF exercises two types of control—operational and administrative. The Eighth is under both operational and administrative control. The Fifteenth is under the operational control of USSTAF, but administrative direction, together with that of the Twelfth, comes under the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces Commander.

USSTAF's administrative control also extends over the Ninth AF, IX Troop Carrier Command, Air Technical Service Command, Engineering Command, and the First Tactical AF, except for the latter's French component. Operations of the Ninth and First Tactical AF's and the Troop Carriers are controlled by the Supreme Commander, since their main mission is co-operation with the Armies.

Reinforcement Depot, which has handled several hundreds of thousands of Air Corps replacements in this theater.

HOUSEKEEPING PROBLEMS

During 1944 in the ETO we more than doubled our numbers of all kinds of aircraft, which were already considerable by the end of 1943. We doubled our gasoline receipts and more than trebled the weight of bombs received. The supply problems of Armament and Ordnance involved in these quantities were far greater than before, since large numbers of units were on the move during the year and new facilities had to be created out of nothing on the Continent. As USSTAF planned and studied the operations of the Air forces during 1944—involving nearly 700,000 aircraft made airborne and two and three quarter million hours flown, more than 570,000 tons of bombs dropped on enemy objectives—its Administrative Directorates had to make some housekeeping calculations in a big way. There was always the problem of building a stock-pile of supplies and equipment to meet new operational needs, and in the pressure of global warfare that is not an easy assignment. One of USSTAF's greatest contributions to the effectiveness of US air power in Europe may prove to be its fight to secure an adequate flow of critical supplies at the right time. Again and again it has exercised the full weight of its authority and experience to obtain from the "arsenal of democracy" the most needed items. So far, despite the stepping up of the offensive, USSTAF-Air Service Command has never had to deny an Air Force any of its essential requirements. This record has been achieved partly too through Stat Control's day by day check of all resources and the swift re-allocation of men, equipment or supplies between commands and to meet emergencies.

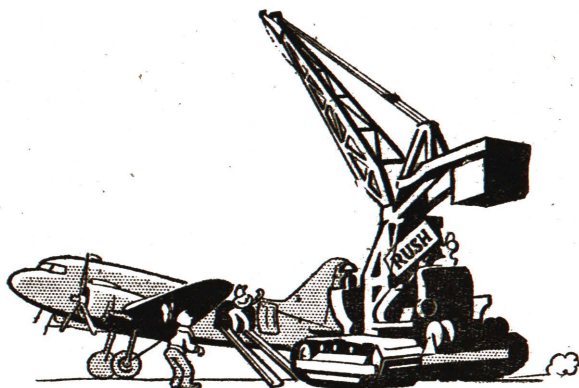
USSTAF has planned for maintenance facilities in the same spirit. Maintenance can be, and often is, the greatest bottleneck of combat operations. It is difficult to show in figures the high rate of efficiency which American ground service personnel have established. In 1944 a daily average of more than three out of four of our aircraft in the combat cycle were kept available for operations, despite heavy battle damage rates and all the difficulties of operating from new fields on the Continent. In addition to this repair and regular servicing work, many thousand fighters had to be assembled on arrival in the ETO and nearly 14,000 aircraft of all types had to be modified to meet operational requirements.

CLOSE KNIT TEAM

Air Service Command, under the direction of USSTAF, was also responsible for special transportation services. Its Transportation Wing evacuated 20,000 wounded across the English Channel to the U.K., carried 100,000 military passengers, sixty million pounds of urgent supplies and flew three million pounds of mail for front line troops. More than 350,000 tons of supplies moved through its Base Air Depot Area to operational bases.

These operations have been described as "big business" and nothing could better describe the nature of USSTAF's set-up. What might easily

have proved an unwieldy system of staff sections has been developed into a close knit team of directors, whose responsibilities are divided according to the main jobs which have to be done by USSTAF. It is a "functional organization" such as any large and progressive industrial concern might well be proud of. Eight directorates have been formed, four responsible to the Deputy Commanding General for Operations and four to the Deputy Commanding General for Administration. Each Director is fully responsible to the Commanding General for matters within his sphere and at the same time has direct liaison with the others on the many points which call for joint decision or action.



... Special transportation services.

The new functional organization has permitted many changes from the original staff system. "Personnel," for example, one of the Administrative Directorates, in addition to the regular functions of A-1, has been given responsibility for the individual school training programs, which normally would have come under A-3. The Director of Operations, however, is responsible for co-ordinating training of such operational personnel as flying control and personal equipment men. This is but one example of many similar realistic re-assignments of responsibility to meet the needs of USSTAF. The saving of waste motion has permitted USSTAF to hold personnel overhead to a minimum, and, together with the policy of allowing the Air Forces a large degree of control, has saved the headquarters from bogging down in a sea of red tape, and enabled it to concentrate fully on the planning, study and general direction of policy, for which USSTAF was created.

The significance of USSTAF's work can best be measured in terms of the achievements of all commands under its control, which have always given fullest support to USSTAF's program. The story of their accomplishments is the evidence that USSTAF is fulfilling its mission—to direct the tremendous weight of U.S. air power in Europe to the points where it hurts the enemy most and leads most quickly to final victory. There are

other aspects of USSTAF's work which are not immediately reflected in current operations, but which have the greatest significance for the future. USSTAF has been responsible, not merely for the co-ordination of all US Air Force operations in the ETO, and with the Mediterranean theater forces, but also with all supporting agencies, such as the economic warfare representatives of the Office of Strategic Services. The headquarters, through its planning sections, has been quietly making a great contribution to the future security of the United States, in its studies of the use of air power and through its relations with the officials of European countries. The representation of USSTAF at the Big Three Conferences is itself a tribute to the diplomatic and planning missions which USSTAF has accomplished.

USSTAF has two further important planning functions to perform—to prepare for the use of air power during occupation of German territory, and to plan the redeployment of personnel and equipment to hasten the defeat of Japan. In the first task USSTAF's comprehensive studies of the German industrial and economic system will give invaluable aid in the necessary policing. Detection of any illicit industrial activities will be all the easier through the detailed information which has been obtained through Intelligence. USSTAF also has important responsibilities in determining requirements for a well balanced Air Force, including all types of combat and service units, which will remain in Europe to assist in the occupation of Germany.

NEW CONDITIONS

The second job, of planning for the transfer and use of Air Force units in the Pacific theater, is also in full swing. Because of the lack of continuous land facilities for the operation of ground forces in that area, Air Force units will be at a premium, and many who are now accustomed to "life in the ETO" will find themselves in strange and rugged environments in distant parts of the world. Representatives of Air Forces in the Pacific are now visiting headquarters in the ETO to advise on the new living and combat conditions.

Plans for the redeployment of all units under the control of USSTAF are now being developed in the Planning Directorate. Subject to the urgent requirements for certain types of units and the demands of military necessity, the decision as to whether a unit goes to the Pacific, stays with the occupation forces, or returns to the States for demobilization, will depend to a large extent on the unit's and individual's length of overseas service. Some units and individuals heading for other theaters may have a brief period in the States enroute. Nobody would envy USSTAF its job of working out these intricate plans, but there need be no doubt on two points: First, everyone's situation will have been carefully considered, and, second, USSTAF will see to it that the Air Forces which have so brilliantly demonstrated the use of air power in Europe will make a decisive contribution to victory in the Pacific.

FOR THE BULL SESSION



THIS month's issue of **ARMY TALKS** sails through the stratosphere of high policy. You might think at first sight that the problems of USSTAF are not your problems. But they are. You and your unit and your Air Force are very much the 24-hour-a-day concern of USSTAF and the decisions which are taken there affect your job plenty.

USSTAF may sound a long way off from your base, but the men who run that headquarters learned about air combat and strategic bombing and tough supply jobs the hard way. Many of them handled Forts and Libs and fighters and wrestled with supply and maintenance problems, in the tough pioneering days of the

Eighth. They have grown up with the business.

We don't claim that study of this edition will fit you for taking over the General's job, but it may throw light on some of the operations in which you and your unit have had a part. When you know something of the why and whereof of strategic bombing and the story of what the US Air Forces have accomplished in Europe, you see more of how much it takes in terms of planning and organizing. You feel less pushed around, less part of the forgotten outfit, if you can see where your job makes sense in the whole picture of air warfare.

How would you describe the importance of your base or your outfit in the setting of the air assault on Germany? What are the chief contributions it has made so far towards winning the war in the ETO? What points, if any, were new to you, in reading about the use of American air power in this theater?

There is a further point worth thinking about. Armchair strategy, one of America's favorite parlor games, would be a lot more realistic if people knew just how much air power can accomplish, and how much effort must go into building it. When we get back home a lot of us are going to be "experts," whether we want to be or not, on air power. We are going to be asked our opinion on a lot of big questions and have our answers taken very seriously. If we really know our stuff, not just our job, but the larger picture of the air forces, we may be able to do more than we realize in helping people to think straight and avoid some of the mistakes we made before this war.

“HEROIC WORK”

Message from General H. H. Arnold to General Carl Spaatz
for Lieut. General James H. Doolittle :

My heartiest congratulations to all combat and service echelons of the Eighth Air Force for the outstanding efforts put forth in the past five weeks. In spite of almost impossible flying conditions on some occasions, bomb tonnage and sorties represent a most admirable total. Hastening of the total defeat of the enemy can be the only result of such perseverance and devotion.

Message from General Dwight D. Eisenhower to General Carl Spaatz for Lieut. General James H. Doolittle :

I have just returned from a visit in the Julich, Duren, Munchen-Gladbach area.

As the Allied Armies advance into the former industrialized area of the Rhineland, they are everywhere confronted with striking evidence of the effectiveness of the bombing campaigns carried on for years by Bomber Command, and, since 1942, by the 8th Air Force. City after city has been systematically shattered. Against these our artillery is often used to blast out pill boxes, snipers and hidden tanks, but it could scarcely add to the completeness of the material destruction. Here and there, possibly because of their relative unimportance as industrial centers, certain towns have been largely spared. These present a remarkable contrast to the ruins of Aachen, Julich, Duren, Cologne and the other Rhineland cities that have been targeted by our big bombers day after day and night after night. The effect on the war economy of Germany has obviously been tremendous ; a fact that advancing troops are quick to appreciate and which unfailingly reminds them of the heroic work of their comrades in Bomber Command and in the United States Air Forces.

I should like for all your units to know that the sacrifices they have made are today facilitating success on all fronts.