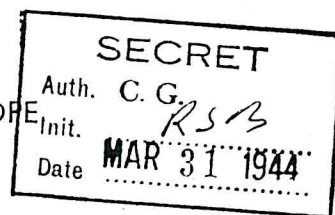


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HEADQUARTERS

UNITED STATES STRATEGIC AIR FORCES IN EUROPE
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
APO 633



31 March 1944

*To. ACM Tadder -
Please advise
DZ*

SUBJECT: Use of Strategic Bombers in Support of OVERLORD
TO : General Dwight D. Eisenhower

1. It is accepted that the attack of the GAF (and Ball Bearings) and railroads in France are prerequisites to the success of OVERLORD.

2. No conclusive answer has been advanced as yet, however, to the question; "In supplementation of the attack of railroads in France and the GAF, will the attack of railroads in Germany or oil in Germany have the most effect upon OVERLORD?"

3. The Rail Experts state that, at best, the attack of a few of the hundreds of rail targets in Germany will have only a very limited effect upon the movements against OVERLORD. At the same time, the effect of attacks on oil is considered to be difficult to determine as to time of impact, and hence indefinite as far as effect on the early stages of OVERLORD is concerned. There is, therefore, no quantitative measure of the effect of either, although the fact that the rail attack will have some effect in time is more apparent. That does not preclude an effect from the oil attack, however, of which there is a good chance in view of the known present fuel tightness.

The effect from the oil attack, while offering a less definite impact in time, is certain to be more far-reaching. It will lead directly to sure disaster for Germany. The rail attack can lead to harassment only.

4. In weighing these two, it appears that too great a price may be paid merely for a certainty of a very little. This is especially true in view of:

a. The possibility of increasing the available effort through:

(1) Use of Eighth Air Force Fighter Bombers in attacks against French railroad targets.

(2) Use of RAF Bomber Command in daylight attacks against French railroad targets.

(3) Use of Eighth Air Force Fighter Bombers in attacks against the Synthetic Plants in the Ruhr.

(4) Use of RAF Bomber Command in attack against Synthetic Plant at Stettin and possibly the Ruhr.

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E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) for (E)
OSD Letter, 7 May 58, 1972
NARS Date: *10/17/73*
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Ltr to General Eisenhower, dtd 31 Mar 44

b. The possibility of interdicting the transportation lines in the Roumanian area.

c. The possibility that the Russians will either secure Ploesti or bring it within range of their light air units.

5. The interdiction of the transportation lines about Ploesti would serve a four-fold purpose; It would hamper German ground operations in the area, reduce the flow of refined products from Ploesti, restrict the flow of crude to refineries outside that area, and contribute to the general dislocation of the German rail system. If Ploesti should be taken or neutralized, that would justify attacks upon the synthetic plants in Germany in preference to any other targets, for they would then become almost the sole source of refined products. These possibilities, therefore, lend weight to the advantages of early attack upon the Synthetics in order to obtain the earliest possible impact. That impact might well be far earlier than currently estimated.

6. In view of the above, and of the great extent to which attack on rail transportation and motor fuel supplement one another, recommend that, for the present, priority for attacks by USSTAF be given to;

a. For the Eighth Air Force;

- (1) GAF and Ball Bearings.
- (2) Rail transportation targets (19) in occupied countries.
- (3) Synthetic Oil Plants (13).

b. For the Fifteenth Air Force;

- (1) GAF and Ball Bearings.
- (2) Rail transportation in Roumanian area and selected targets in southern France.
- (3) Synthetic plants in southeast Germany.
- (4) Political targets in the Balkans.

7. An identical letter has been furnished to Sir Charles Portal, Marshal of the Royal Air Force.

*Copies of this letter furnished
AEM Tedder
9 Apr 1944
MAP*

Carl Spaatz
CARL SPAATZ
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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