

## THE UNITED STATES STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY

There are aboard the USS General H. B. Freeman 143 members of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey returning to the United States from their mission in Japan. Of this total, 83 are Army and Navy officers, 18 are enlisted personnel and 42 are civilians. In order to satisfy what curiosity there may be in the minds of the other passengers on the General Freeman about the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, there follows a brief account of the origin and operations of the Survey.

The mandate of the Casablanca conference, placed on the combined British and American Air Forces, was to unloose their powers on Germany with the object of destroying the entire economy of that country and also of destroying the civilian morale -- in other words, both the ability and the will to make war. This was done in various ways and there was considerable difference of opinion, both within and outside the Air Forces, as to the most effective type of bombing and the proper priority in targets. Early in 1944 there was a movement in Air Force Headquarters, both in Europe and in the U.S., to establish a commission to inquire into the effectiveness of the aerial effort immediately after the cessation of hostilities. This agitation culminated in a directive from President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Secretary of War to create such a commission with a civilian head, so that the Air Forces would not be in the anomalous position of making a critique of their own effort. The Secretary offered the position of Chairman to Mr. Franklin D'Olier, President of the Prudential Insurance Co., who accepted it on 19 October. Mr. D'Olier had come out of World War I as a Lt. Col. on the General Staff, with the Distinguished Service Medal for his work in organizing the Salvage program of the AEF, and had later become the first National Commander of the American Legion. He was given a free hand in the selection of his associates and selected a Board of Directors of prominent industrialists, economists and educators to head the various divisions into which he was organizing the Survey. Mr. D'Olier went to Europe on 7 Nov 1944, armed with directives from the Secretary of War, General Marshall and General Arnold to the Commanding Generals in the Theater, bespeaking for the Survey all possible aid in the furnishing of personnel and facilities for the work. Trained technicians and language men were procured in the Zone of the Interior and in Europe, until, at the peak of its operations, the Survey included about 250 civilian researchers and consultants, 500 officers and 800 enlisted men. In November, December, January, and February the Survey worked in its London headquarters preparing target data, outlining its objectives, studying German industry and government controls, and organizing and briefing field teams, at the same time sending teams into France and Belgium for trial surveys. As finally organized it had a Services Division with the usual G-1, -2, -3, and -4, a Military Studies Division which studied army plans and logistics, an Economic Studies Division which embraced studies of all important German industries, and a Civilian Studies Division studying German morale and civilian defense.

In March the Survey started sending teams into the Zone of the Armies and these teams advanced with the Task Forces, often under fire, occupying German industrial plants, securing and safeguarding records, apprehending and interrogating key personnel, and collating all studies into Plant and Industry Reports.

Communication Regional Headquarters were formed at Paris and Brussels, and Regional HQ were established gradually at Strasbourg, Cologne, Essen, Frankfurt, Bad Nauheim and Munich. Advanced field headquarters were established at such places as Hamburg, Hanover, Kassel, Darmstadt, Coburg, Wuppertal, Linz, Augsburg, etc., and field teams went all over that part of Germany occupied by the American, British and French troops. They made spectacular finds of hidden records in caves, mines, cellars, graveyards, etc., and in many cases were ahead of other intelligence agencies in the apprehension of important German personalities, the biggest find being the arrest and interrogation of Albert Speer, the Reichminister for Production and Armaments, at Flensburg. Before 8 May some Survey personnel were caught in the changing lines of battle and two men were killed and two wounded and captured. After 8 May other fatalities occurred when a Survey weapons carrier hit a land mine. Fifty-four Bronze Star Medals were awarded to Survey personnel in the European Theater. Close liaison was maintained by the Survey with the War Department and particularly with the Joint Target Group which was directing the aerial war against Japan. General Henry H. Arnold has declared publicly that the interim reports of the Survey were invaluable in the selection of Japanese targets.

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On the return of the European Survey to the United States it produced an Over-all Report and a Summary, backed by 200 volumes of Plant and Industry Reports, which were released to the public on 30 October. Metropolitan newspapers gave large headlines, full page commentaries and editorials to this report and much favorable comment was made on the objective and impartial manner in which the report was made. There was no glossing over of errors and commissions, and the Report was of real value to the Nation.

Meanwhile President Truman, having regard to advance reports on the Survey's findings, asked Mr. D'Olier to continue the work in Japan. The European Directive had to do with strategic bombing only; the Asiatic one asked the Survey to cover all aerial attack. The European Survey personnel had been largely of the Army and the report went directly to the Secretary of War; the Asiatic Survey had at least fifty percent Navy personnel and the Report is to go to both the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy.

In September the first elements of the Survey reached Japan, and the peak strength in the Pacific Theater finally exceeded 1,000 civilians, officers and enlisted men. Headquarters were established first at Guan, later on board the USS Ancon, and then in the Meiji Building in Tokyo. Regional HQ were established at Nagasaki, Hiroshima, Osaka and Nagoya, and the APD's "Sims", "Barr", "Reeves" and "Haines" were used as floating billets and for missions. Studies were also made on Wake, Wotje, Maleolap, Mille and Jaluit Islands, and at Truk, Rabaul, the Dutch Indies and Singapore. Over 500 top level Japanese statesmen, military and naval officers and industrialists were interrogated, and field teams worked all over Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku and Hokkaido, investigating plants, industries and people. Particular studies of an exhaustive nature have been made on the atomic bombs and on Jap "Kamikaze" tactics, and it is expected that the Survey's Report on Japan will be received with great interest by the public and will have considerable effect on long range planning.

General MacArthur has been so interested in the work of the Survey that he has appointed a Major General of his Staff in liaison with it. Much of the material produced by the Survey is already in his hands in the form of interim reports, which will be used freely by his Scientific and Economic Section in the government of the occupied territory, and by the War Crimes and Reparations Commissions.

Organization of the Survey in Japan has been very similar to that used in Europe but experience has made it run more smoothly and results have been attained more quickly. Over half the personnel are now enroute home and many of the Divisions are already writing their final reports which will eventually be collated into the Over-all Report.

There are aboard the General Freeman representatives of the Divisions which studied Transportation, Military Supplies, Civilian Defense, Aircraft, Physical Damage, Medical, Electric Power, Basic Materials, Food and Civilian Supplies, Capital Equipment and Construction, Air Forces and Oil and Chemicals, as well as representatives of the Services Division. Included in the group aboard are Doctor Monroe E. Spaght, one of the Directors of the Survey; Dr. Claude A. Buss, noted authority on the Far East; and Captain James Beveridge, historian of the Survey. Lt. Col. John H. Matkin, ORD, is the officer in charge of Survey personnel aboard the General Freeman. Among the civilians in the group are a number of well-known scientists in the fields of petroleum and chemistry.

Remember this-"It is not a mistake until you commit the same blunder twice."

THE LOG

Edited by

"I owe my success in life to having been always a quarter of an hour beforehand."

Dale Carnegie

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Pfc. H. Gurko, Hq/542  
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