

The Strategic Bombing Campaign and Wartime Economy System of the U.S. during World War II

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This article focuses on the strategic bombing campaign carried out against Japan by the United States during World War II, and claims that it was vital to produce many aircraft in order to plan and execute the strategic bombing. The bombing against the Japanese homeland brought about tremendous devastation. Whether in military or strategic history, previous studies mainly focus on the theory and practice of the bombing campaign, but largely neglect the fact that the U.S. wartime economy and massive production capabilities during World War II formed the basis of that destruction. This article summarizes the character of U.S. wartime economy, and various mechanisms and policies that made it possible to produce many aircraft, especially the B-29s used for the bombing. By late 1944, a steady supply of B-29 planes was established, and in 1945 that production showed a gradual increase. With this enhanced production, the bombing force available on the Mariana Islands bases was strengthened. This enhanced force could conduct massively destructive bombing attacks, including the Tokyo air raid in March 1945. This article finally suggests that it is very important to examine the political and economic basis for the strategic bombing campaigns, not only during World War II but also in the Cold War era and afterwards. It leads to help explain why and how the strategic bombing continues to be conducted to date.