

The Collapse of the German War Economy, 1944-1945

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Alfred C Mierzejewski

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In this book, Alfred Mierzejewski describes how the German economy collapsed under Allied bombing in the last year of World War II. He presents a broad-based, original study of German wartime industry and transportation, and of Allied air force planning and intelligence, including the first complete analysis in English of the German National Railway. The German industrial economy was extraordinarily dependent on the timely, adequate distribution of coal by railroad and inland waterway. The German National Railway in particular was the pivot of the finely balanced armaments production and distribution system created by Albert Speer. But Allied strategists did not immediately recognize this. Only in late 1944, when Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Sir Arthur Tedder built a new strategic consensus, was this vital coal/transport nexus severed. The result was the rapid paralysis of the Nazi war economy. Mierzejewski measures the economic consequences of the bombing by considering broad indices such as armaments and coal production, railway performance, and weapons deliveries to the armed forces. In

addition, he shows how individual companies in each of Germany's major economic regions fared. By drawing on previously unexamined files of private German manufacturing companies, the Reich Transportation Ministry, and Allied air intelligence agencies, Mierzejewski creates a rare combination of economic analysis and military history that provides new perspectives on the German war economy and Allied air intelligence.



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