German Tragedy of Destiny

TERROR BOMBING

"Anyone who has lost the ability to weep learns it again at the destruction of Dresden."
Gerhard Hauptmann

In the bombing, there was little escape. It could happen to anyone, anytime, almost anywhere and with extreme brutality.

Particularly women, children and elderly in the cities were exposed to this horror. People were blown apart by bombs, burned by phosphor, buried in cellars, suffocated by fires, poisoned by fumes, drowned in floods of dams.

Their bodies were sometimes so charred, shrunken or fragmented, that the remains were collected in zinc tubs or large vats. Some mountains of corpses were so great that it had to be burnt on large bonfires because of the danger of disease.

Many of the survivors were scarred for life by mutilation, blindness, deafness or mental illness.

During the second world war, all in all 1,400,000 tons of bombs were dropped on German cities. Of air-mines 68,000 pieces, of blast bombs 800,000, of delayed action bombs of various types 83,433,000!

AERIAL MINES (1.8 T)

The aerial mines of the Allies called "blockbusters" developed an enormous air pressure tearing lungs and eardrums of humans in their vicinity. These mines laid everything to rubble and unroofed every buildings far and wide. Then into the open, dry attics fire bombs were dropped that set whole neighborhoods on fire. About 68,000 pieces were dropped on Germany.
EXPLOSIVE BOMBS (BETWEEN 225-9900 KG)

While the aerial bombs contained much explosives in a thin steel shell, the explosive bombs had a relatively small amount of explosive in a thick steel shell. By the explosion, this thick steel hull shattered into a thousand pieces crashing at high speed through walls and human bodies. Of the explosive bombs that destroyed buildings and even firmer floor ceilings about 800,000 pieces were dropped on Germany during the air war.

DELAYED-ACTION BOMBS

These explosive bombs were not, as usual, provided with an percussion fuze. They exploded only minutes or hours later after the bombing. Their purpose was the annihilation of the firemen and ambulance personnel who tried to rescue victims and extinguish fires.

Fire bombs

![Image of fire bombs]

CANISTER BOMBS

These tanks filled with a rubber-phosphorus mix shattered upon impact and on contact with oxygen ignited immediately. In the first big test 30,000 canisters were dropped in Wuppertal, inducing a vast fire inferno.

LIQUID BOMBS

These were approximately 13 kg incendiary bombs consisting of a viscous fire mass of benzene and rubber, filled with an explosive charge for hurling this mix into the environment. The bombs could not be quenched by water. Who was hit by this
adhesive compound suffered severe burns and often died. During the bomb war roughly 3,000,000 of these liquid bombs were dropped on Germany.

**FLAME JET BOMBS**

A variant of the liquid bombs was the flame jet bomb. The fuel mixture of magnesium, gasoline and rubber displayed special features. The contents burned off like fireworks with a meter-long cascade of fire. From this fire-bomb type 413,000 pieces were used during the Second World War.

**STICK-TYPE INCENDIARY BOMBS**

These long and narrow incendiary devices with a hexagonal profile were dropped in the gigantic amount of 80,000,000 units. With the thermite filling (650,000 units in Dresden alone!) entire city areas were set on fire and ignited firestorm. From 1942 on, these bombs were built with additional fragmentation charges to kill the firefighters and rescuers.

It means that three quarters of the German victims were civilians. That is, discounting the POWs, in the first line elderly, women and children.

Most victims lost their life not during the war but following the ending of the hostilities in the course of expulsion, in forced marches and transports, in captivity or perished by malnutrition, cold or died violently under allied occupation.

**On the whole 15,8 millions dead,**

**of which 4,3 millions soldiers, 11,5 millions civilians**
Germany suffered great losses also regarding its territories. Such ancient German provinces came under alien occupation as for example East Prussia, West Prussia, Posen, Danzig, East Brandenburg, Pomerania, Silesia. From those areas nearly 11 millions Germans were forcefully expelled! (Add to this number a further 2,5 millions ethnic Germans who were deported from the eastern countries of Europe.)

The map below depicts the partition of Germany after the war. You can see the zones occupied by the three Western powers as well as the Soviets and the Poles respectively the lost eastern territories.