

From May 1944 onwards, the Allies launched severe and incessant bombing raids against mineral oil production facilities as their next strategic measure. These operations were soon crowned with success. Within the month of May, yet another Einsatzstab [Operations Detachment], named “Task Force Geilenberg“ after its head, was assigned to clear up the mess.^F

In a presentation to the Rüstungsstab [Armaments Staff] on 21.8.1944, Reichsminister Albert Speer^G made the following statement:²

» We cannot allow the fact that we are presently somewhat short of fuel to have a demoralising effect on the production of fighters and combat aircraft; because we are able at any time ... thanks to the efforts of Geilenberg, to again reach around 75 % of the former maximum output of aviation fuel ... If the bombing raids continue at their current level, even I am not in a position to undertake production-relevant measures because a petro-chemical plant is an extremely complex affair.«



Consolidated B-24 Liberator during a raid on the Ploesti oil refineries

Production of propulsion fuels never did, in fact, reach the levels achieved earlier. This is shown in the tables in the Appendices, page 383 et seq. Ultimately, both offensives, the attacks against the aircraft factories and the fuel production facilities, were mutually supportive and weakened German air defences.

² Speer’s speech at the Meeting of the Rüstungsstab (Armaments Staff) 21.8.1944, p. 9 et seq.