

The United States' Strategies to Undermine Japan in Palembang During World War II via Operation Matterhorn, 1944

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Abstract

During World War II in the Pacific region, Palembang functioned as the main center of oil production in the Southeast Asian region. This area and its oil refinery facilities were controlled by Japanese forces on February 15, 1942 in a battle known as the Battle of Palembang. In response, the United States planned an attack on the Plaju Oil Refinery in Palembang with the aim of weakening Japanese power through an operation called Matterhorn. This research aims to dig deeper into the Operation Matterhorn which took place in the city of Palembang. The method used in this study is a historical method with a qualitative approach. In the implementation of Operation Matterhorn (August 10-11, 1944), the United States bombed the Plaju Oil Refinery in Palembang using Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft. In addition, the aircraft was also used to spread mines in the Musi River, with the aim of disrupting the shipping lanes of Japanese ships carrying oil. During the Matterhorn operation in Palembang, areas such as Padang City, especially the Indarung Cement Factory, and Jambi City also experienced the impact of air attacks, because these areas were used as alternative missions if the bombing in Palembang was unsuccessful.

Keywords: Boeing B-29 Superfortress Aircraft; Operation Matterhorn; Palembang Bombing (1944); World War II

Abstrak

Selama Perang Dunia II di kawasan Pasifik, Palembang berfungsi sebagai pusat utama produksi minyak di kawasan Asia Tenggara. Fasilitas Kilang Minyak Plaju di Palembang dikuasai oleh pasukan Jepang pada tanggal 15 Februari 1942 dalam pertempuran yang dikenal sebagai Pertempuran Palembang. Sebagai respons, Amerika Serikat merencanakan serangan terhadap kilang minyak tersebut dengan tujuan melemahkan kekuatan Jepang di Perang Dunia II melalui operasi yang disebut Matterhorn. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki lebih dalam mengenai Operasi Matterhorn yang dilaksanakan di Kota Palembang. Metode yang diterapkan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode sejarah dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Dalam pelaksanaan Operasi Matterhorn pada tanggal 10-11 Agustus 1944, Amerika Serikat melakukan pengeboman terhadap Kilang Minyak Plaju di Palembang menggunakan pesawat Boeing B-29 Superfortress. Pesawat tersebut juga digunakan untuk menebar ranjau di Sungai Musi, dengan maksud untuk mengganggu jalur pelayaran kapal Jepang yang mengangkut minyak. Selama Operasi Matterhorn di Palembang, wilayah seperti Kota Padang, khususnya Pabrik Semen Indarung, serta Kota Jambi juga merasakan dampak dari serangan udara dari Amerika Serikat, karena daerah-daerah tersebut dijadikan sebagai misi alternatif jika pemboman di Palembang tidak berhasil.

Kata kunci: Operasi Matterhorn; Pengeboman Palembang (1944); Perang Dunia II; Pesawat Boeing B-29 Superfortress



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Introduction

Military bombing strategy is an approach applied in situations of armed conflict to destroy enemy targets through the use of aircraft or aerial vehicles equipped with bombs. This approach emphasizes several important factors, including target selection, bombing methods, and the psychological effects it causes. In terms of target selection, militaries tend to target vital infrastructure, such as weapons factories, communications centres, and command sites, potentially reducing the enemy's combat capability (Firmansyah, 2024). Bombing methods can vary, from strategic bombing aimed at damaging the military's overall capacity, to tactical bombing that is more oriented towards direct support of troops on the ground. In addition, the psychological effects of bombing are also an important factor, where intense air strikes can create fear and panic among enemies as well as affect their morale. This military strategy also faces various challenges, such as risks to civilians, damage to civilian infrastructure, and long-term impacts on the stability of the affected regions. One example of a bombing military strategy is Operation Matterhorn.

Operation Matterhorn was a military mission carried out by the United States Air Force during World War II, aimed at carrying out strategic bombing using the Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers operating from India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) (Bell, 2014). The operation lasted from June 5, 1944 to June 6, 1945, with the main focus on industrial facilities located in Japanese colonies in Southeast Asia. Although the Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers operated from India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), the entire fuel supply for the aircraft must be transported from Australia (Boyne, 2009). To organize the operations of the Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers, the Joint Chiefs of Staff formed the Twentieth Air Force under the leadership of General Henry H. Arnold, who was the head of the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) in Washington, D.C. (Boyne, 2023). During the implementation of Operation Matterhorn, five air bases in India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), were upgraded to support the presence of the Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers (Cate, 1953). One of the main targets of this operation was the city of Palembang which was under Japanese occupation.

The city of Palembang, which is one of the strategic cities on the island of Sumatra, plays a crucial role in the petroleum industry sector. Located near the Sumatran oil basin, the region is known for its wealth of oil and gas reserves (Susantoro et al., 2022). Oil exploration and production activities have become one of the main pillars in the industry. The existence of oil fields, especially in the Musi Banyuasin and Ogan Komering Ilir areas, has a significant impact on the supply of vehicle fuel and raw materials for industry.

On November 5, 1944, Operation Matterhorn was carried out targeting the cities of Palembang and Singapore. The main focus of this attack was the oil refinery, which was a vital resource for Japan during World War II in the Pacific region. The raid on the city of Palembang by the United States using Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers occurred at night between August 10 and 11, 1944 (Correll, 2009). The oil

refinery in Palembang City was one of the most important fuel suppliers for Japan during World War II in the Pacific region. By destroying these facilities, the United States hoped to reduce Japan's ability to continue fighting in World War II in the Pacific region.

Operation Matterhorn in Palembang City in 1944 was one of a series of air strikes carried out by the United States against strategic targets in Japanese-controlled areas. This attack reflects the United States' commitment to continue to put pressure on Japan in World War II in the Pacific region. In addition, this event also highlights the significance of Palembang City as a natural resource center for Japan as well as the United States' efforts to disrupt the flow of petroleum supply.

Previous research on Operation Matterhorn has been conducted by many previous researchers, including: (1) "Project Matterhorn: A Lesson in Strategy and Politics" researched by Michael P. Fennessy in 1993; (2) "An Army Air Corps Test of Strategic Air Power: Operation Matterhorn" researched by Paul D. Adams in 2000; (3) "Endgame in the Pacific Complexity, Strategy, and the B-29" by G. Scott Gorman in 2000; (4) "Operation Matterhorn in World War II" researched by John Kennedy Ohl in 2006; (5) "The Matterhorn Operation: The B-29 was Rushed Into Production and Sent to India to Strike at Japan Through Staging Bases in China" researched by John T. Correll in 2009, and; (6) "What Might Have Been – XX Bomber Command's B-29 Offensive against Japanese Oil Supplies in The Netherlands East Indies and Borneo" researched by John F. O'Connell (2017), who analyzed the broader B-29 attacks against Japanese oil supplies in the Dutch East Indies and Borneo, provides a comprehensive operational overview of the campaign. However, the focus of these studies lies largely on operational and strategic dimensions, with John F. O'Connell's work adopting a broad regional coverage that covers a wide range of targets across the Indonesia without offering an in-depth analysis focused on the attacks in Palembang specifically. None of these studies provided a detailed examination of specific events in Palembang, including the local context, the direct impact of the bombing, and their impact on the city population and infrastructure. Therefore, this study aims to further explore the events of Operation Matterhorn in Palembang in 1944 in detail, including its background, event process, and impact.

The urgency of this research lies in the fact that Palembang's role as Japan's main oil supplier in Southeast Asia is often overlooked in the common historical narrative, even though the city's oil refineries supplied nearly a quarter of Japan's total fuel needs during the Pacific War. While previous research on Operation Matterhorn has focused more on bombing campaigns in Singapore and China, none have provided an in-depth analysis of the Palembang attacks, creating a significant gap on how the Allied strategic bombing campaign unfolded in Indonesia, particularly on the island of Sumatra. This research aims to fill these gaps by presenting a comprehensive analysis of the background, implementation, and local impact of the 1944 bombing, thus contributing to academic discussions: (1) Enriching the historiography of Operation Matterhorn by shifting the focus from the Allied military perspective to the local dimension of the attack, and; (2) To open up new opportunities for comparative research on interconnected air campaigns across Sumatra, including secondary strikes in Padang and Jambi through Operation Matterhorn.

Method

This research applies historical methods with a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a research strategy that emphasizes a deep understanding of social phenomena (Creswell, 2012). Within this framework, researchers seek to explore meanings shaped by individuals or groups based on their experiences, paying attention to the underlying social and historical contexts (Lune & Berg, 2017). Data analysis in a qualitative approach is inductive, where researchers try to find patterns and themes in the data to formulate conclusions (Novikov & Novikov, 2013). This approach also acknowledges the existence of subjectivity, so researchers often include personal perspectives in their analysis (Antonsen, 2017). With its flexibility in methodology and attention to context, qualitative approaches are highly effective in uncovering deeper insights into complex phenomena (Sugiyono, 2013). One of the methods used in the qualitative approach is the historical method.

The historical method is a systematic and critical method in the research and interpretation of events that occurred in the past (Kuntowijoyo, 2018). The main purpose of this method is to reconstruct and understand past events, the reasons behind the occurrence of these events, and their impact on these conditions (Padiatra, 2020). According to Sartono Kartodirdjo (1992), the process in the historical method consists of several steps, namely (1) Heuristic; (2) Source Criticism; (3) Interpretation, and; (4) Historiography. Heuristic is an initial stage that involves the collection of relevant historical sources. In this phase, the researcher seeks to find military archives from the United States and Japan related to the events of Operation Matterhorn in Palembang in 1944, as well as trace the local historical records of Palembang during the Japanese occupation. In addition to military archives from the United States and Japan, the study also seeks to combine Indonesian primary sources to achieve a more balanced historical perspective. The collection of these sources allows for a more comprehensive reconstruction of these events and their impact at the local level (Yuwono et al., 2025).

Once these sources have been gathered, the next step is to criticize the existing sources. In this stage, researchers compared military reports from the three countries (Indonesia, Japan, and United States) to identify differences in information about the events of Operation Matterhorn in Palembang in 1944. In the source criticism stage, researchers critically compared military reports from the United States and Japan with Indonesian sources, such as Palembang city government records and oral testimony, to identify discrepancies and potential biases. This comparative approach is crucial to ensure that the narrative is not only dominated by foreign military perspectives, so that it is in line with Indonesian historiographical principles that demand balanced and critical treatment of all sources (Iggers, 2005; Yuwono et al., 2025). After the sources were tested and compared, the researcher then proceeded to interpret the information contained in the sources. The last step is Historiography, which is the final result of research in the form of historical writing.

Results and Discussion

Planning for the bombing of Palembang in Operation Matterhorn 1944

During World War II in the Pacific region, Palembang City became the main center of petroleum production in Southeast Asia. On February 15, 1942, the city of Palembang and its oil refineries fell to Japanese forces in a battle known as the Battle of Palembang. Before the defeat of the Dutch in the Battle of Palembang (1942), Dutch engineers tried to destroy the refineries so that they could not be used by the Japanese, but by the end of 1942, oil production in Palembang was successfully restored (Hobbs, 2011). In early 1944, United States Intelligence estimated that the Plaju refinery (now Pertamina Refinery Unit III Plaju) in Palembang City supplied nearly 22% of Japan's total petroleum fuel needs for ships and industrial facilities, as well as 78% was used for aviation fuel needs (Crave & Cate, 1953).

The idea to attack the city of Palembang arose before the approval of Operation Matterhorn, rooted in a discussion of the most effective strategy for using U.S. Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft against attacks on Japanese territory. By the end of 1943, there was a serious consideration of attacking merchant ships and oil infrastructure in Southeast Asia using Boeing B-29 Superfortresses launched from bases in northern Australia (Crave & Cate, 1953). The final plan for Operation Matterhorn was approved by The Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States in April 1944, which stipulated that the XX Bomber Command would focus its attacks on Japan, but would also involve an attack on the city of Palembang. These attacks were planned to be carried out from an airfield in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) which was under British rule (Cline, 1951). The addition of Palembang City to Operation Matterhorn reflects a compromise between two groups of U.S. military strategists, those who want to concentrate their attacks on the Japanese archipelago and those who prefer to destroy petroleum facilities in Southeast Asia in order to weaken Japan's power in World War II in the Pacific region, including Palembang City (Coffey, 1982).

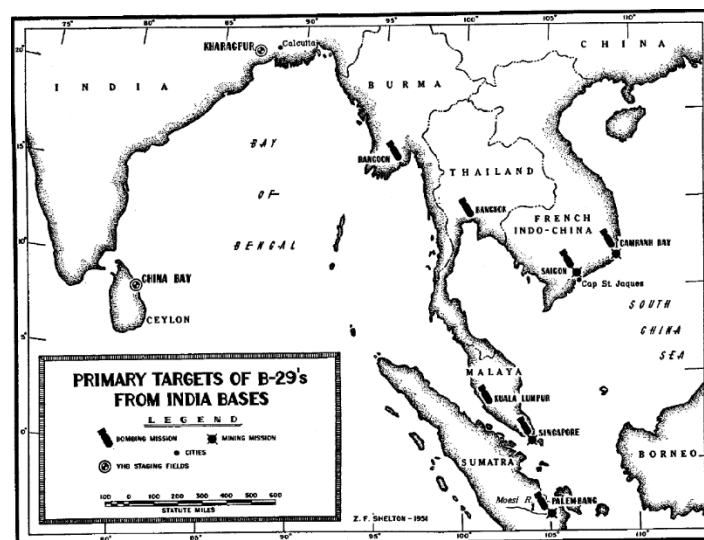


Figure 1. Map Showing the Targets of U.S. Attacks in Southeast Asia, Including Palembang City
Source: The Army Air Forces in World War II (1953)

After the air raids on the Yawata Islands, Japan, on June 15-16, 1944 which marked the first attack of the XX Bomber Command on Japanese territory, Henry H. Arnold encouraged Kenneth M. Wolfe to launch an attack on the city of Palembang as part of a follow-up step in Operation Matterhorn. Kenneth M. Wolfe replied that the attack could not be carried out before July 15, 1944, because it was necessary to take control of the China Bay area first (Dod, 1966). On June 27, 1944, Henry H. Arnold issued a military order that included instructions to deploy 50 Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft belonging to the United States to immediately attack the city of Palembang. However, on July 4, 1944, Kenneth M. Wolfe was transferred to another position. As a result, LaVern G. Saunders took command for the bombing of Palembang in Operation Matterhorn (Haulman, 1999). LaVern G. Saunders decided to postpone the attack on Palembang until mid-August 1944, so that the XX Bomber Command could first carry out a maximum attack on Anshan, China, which was one of the important steel production centers for Japan during World War II in the Pacific region and had been designated as a top priority by Henry H. Arnold (Hayes, 1982).

Preparation Stage for the Bombing of Palembang in Operation Matterhorn 1944

Preparations for an attack on the city of Palembang began in May 1944 (Anderson & Hewlett, 1962). This preparation process requires more careful planning and preparation compared to previous attacks carried out by XX Bomber Command. This is due to the very long distance from the Ceylon region (now Sri Lanka) to the city of Palembang (Knaack, 1988). Therefore, personnel from the United States Army Air Forces and the Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom collaborated on this stage of preparation. The United Kingdom was responsible for providing fuel and covering the cost of airstrip modifications at Ceylon, while the United States carried out Operation Matterhorn in Palembang using Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft (Kohn & Harahan, 1988).

Operation Matterhorn plan in Palembang City has changed over time. Initially, LaVern G. Saunders instructed to engage all 112 Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft of the XX Bomber Command and carry out the attack during the day. However, the XX Bomber Command filed a plea to change the order, as the deployment of a large number of Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft from a single runway would force the division of the force into several waves. The division of the wave is expected to complicate the implementation of the Operation Matterhorn and increase the risk of casualties on the United States side. Henry H. Arnold accepted the argument and an order issued on June 27, 1944 stipulated that the attack should be carried out at dawn or dusk (Madsen, 1944). Meteorologists involved in Operation Matterhorn recommended that the strike be carried out at night to take advantage of the winds blowing from behind the Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft (Mann, 2004). This request for a change in plan was submitted by the XX Bomber Command and approved by LaVern G. Saunders (Marshall, 1993).

In this preparatory phase, there was a change in perspective in several United States intelligence agencies related to the significance of the city of Palembang. The Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Intelligence, and Operations Analyst Committee of the United States Army Air Forces pointed out that the tactical conditions in World War

II in the Pacific region have changed. They also argued that the heavy losses suffered by the Japanese fleet made the Plaju refinery in Palembang no longer function as a crucial factor in Japan's military power during World War II in the Pacific region. The staff of the XX Bomber Command proposed to cancel this mission, arguing that it diverted attention from a more important priority, namely the attack on the Japanese steel industry in China. However, the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States still wanted an attack on the city of Palembang and Henry H. Arnold listed it in a letter of instruction issued in July 1944. After receiving confirmation that the Japanese facilities in China Bay had been completely destroyed, Henry H. Arnold issued instructions that the attack on the city of Palembang be carried out no later than August 15, 1944. Furthermore, August 10, 1944 was designated as the day of the bombing in the city of Palembang (Crave & Cate, 1953).

The Plaju refinery was designated as the main target and the Pangkalan plant not far from there was designated as a reserve target. The Indarung Cement Factory (now PT Semen Padang) in Padang was set as the last backup target if several Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft were unable to reach the city of Palembang. In addition, some of the Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft were assigned to drop mines into the Musi River to block traffic on the river which became a means of transporting all petroleum production in Palembang (Maurer, 2023). Due to the long travel distance, which is about 6,200 km round trip between Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Palembang and 6,500 km round trip for the mission of dropping mines in the Musi River, each Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft can only carry about one ton of bombs, when fully fueled (Mays, 2016).

The responsibility for protecting the oil fields in Sumatra from U.S. air strikes rested with the Imperial Japanese Army. In response to this, Japan established the Palembang Air Defense Headquarters in March 1943. The unit initially consisted of the 101st, 102nd, and 103rd Air Defense Regiments, as well as the 101st Automatic Artillery Battalion. Each air defense regiment in Palembang is equipped with 20 75mm Type 88 anti-aircraft guns. In addition, each regiment also has an automatic cannon and a searchlight (Ness, 2014). In January 1944, Japan formed the 9th Air Division as part of an effort to strengthen air defenses in Sumatra. At that time, the Palembang Air Defense Headquarters had been renamed the Palembang Defense Unit and became part of the 9th Air Division (Ohmae & Shudo, 1959). This unit has also been equipped with fighter aircraft. The 21st and 22nd Fighter Regiments of the Imperial Japanese Air Force were tasked with intercepting Allied and U.S. aircraft. The 101st, 102nd, and 103rd Anti-Aircraft Regiments and the 101st Automatic Artillery Regiment remain operational, supported by the 101st Anti-Aircraft Balloon Regiment which manages balloons to counter air raids in the city of Palembang (Toh, 2020).

Stages of the Bombing of Palembang in Operation Matterhorn 1944

At noon on August 9, 1944, 56 Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft from Bomber Groups 444 and 468 landed on the runway of Ceylon airfield (now Sri Lanka) (Mann, 2004). The Bomber Group is planned to carry out an attack on Palembang on August 10, 1944 at 16:45 with a total of 54 Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft involved. One of the planes was forced to return to the runway of Ceylon airfield after 40 minutes of flight due to engine problems, but the aircraft was repaired within two hours and

continued to Sumatra (Tunner, 1964). Each plane then flew separately to Siberut Island, which is located west of the coast of Sumatra. After arriving at Siberut Island, Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft turned towards Palembang City (Crave & Cate, 1953).

Several British Eastern Fleet warships were stationed along the route to rescue U.S. aircrews in case anyone made an emergency landing. Among the British ships deployed were the light cruiser HMS (His Majesty's Ship) Ceylon, the destroyer Redoubt, as well as the submarines Terrapin and Trenchant. These two submarines also serve as directional guides (Fuller, 2015). Fifteen Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft failed to reach the Palembang City area and three of them had attacked other targets. Two Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft bombed the Pangkalanbrandan area (North Sumatra) and another aircraft attacked an airstrip near Jambi City (Crave & Cate, 1953). Some Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft were forced to return to Ceylon airfield (now Sri Lanka) because they did not have enough fuel (Mann, 2009).

A total of 31 Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft carried out bombing attempts against the Plaju refinery located in Palembang City. The crew faced challenges in achieving the target, due to the dark conditions of Palembang City which did not have adequate lighting, as well as the presence of cloudy clouds covering the area. In addition, one of the Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft assigned to illuminate the area with flares did not make it to the target. As a result, the crew was forced to direct the bomb using radar or by observing through gaps in the clouds. Although the crew reported explosions and fires, photographs taken from the plane did not show clear results (Fuller, 2015). Eight Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft then descended under the clouds to drop mines in the Musi River. An official report from the United States assessed the accuracy of the mine placement as perfect, considering that this is the first time that a Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft has been used for a minelaying mission (D'Olier, 1959). Internal records from the Plaju Refinery Unit III (1945) show that the refinery's production capacity was significantly disrupted for several months after the attack, which supports the United States' assessment of the success of the operation.



Figure 2. The Plaju Oil Refinery Caught Fire During the Matterhorn Operation in Palembang on August 10, 1944
Source: Imperial War Museums (1944)

The Japanese launched an attack on Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft in the Palembang area using cannons and anti-aircraft rockets, as well as flying their fighter jets. The United States Air Force recorded the presence of at least 37 Japanese aircraft. However, the attempt was unsuccessful, and only two Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft suffered minor damage from Japanese fire (Crave & Cate, 1953). After successfully carrying out a bomb attack at the Plaju refinery, Palembang City, one of the Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft was forced to make an emergency landing in the Indian Ocean, about 140 km from Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), because it ran out of fuel on the way home. Before the plane crashed in the Indian Ocean, the crew sent an SOS (Save Our Souls) signal, which triggered an intensive search by Allied forces in the area. One of the plane's gunners lost his life, while the rest of the crew was rescued on the morning of August 12, 1944 (Hobbs, 2011). This incident was the only loss experienced in the operation. The mission lasted about 19 hours, and the minelaying mission on the Musi River was considered the farthest combat mission in the context of World War II in the Pacific region (Rohwer, 2005).

The Impact of the 1944 Palembang City Bombing in Operation Matterhorn

The attacks carried out in the city of Palembang during Operation Matterhorn resulted in many casualties, both among the military and civil society. Although the exact number of victims cannot be ascertained, estimates suggest that the figure is in the hundreds (Toh, 2020). Documents from the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (1952) note that dozens of civilian homes were destroyed or damaged in the area around the Plaju refinery, forcing many families to flee to safer parts of the city. Mines spread in the Musi River during this operation managed to sink three Japanese ships and damage four other Japanese ships on August 12, 1944. As a result, the transportation of vital petroleum in the Musi River was halted for a month until Japanese forces completed the clearance of mines in the river (Ness, 2014). Documents from the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (1952) also note that Japanese military authorities in Palembang imposed stricter controls on Musi River traffic and increased mine-sweeping operations in the weeks following the attack. After the attack on Palembang, the United States routinely sent Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft to lay mines in the Natuna Utara Sea, with the aim of blocking Japanese ships transporting logistics for World War II in the Pacific region (Rohwer, 2005).

Operation Matterhorn in Palembang City has caused severe damage to the city's infrastructure. Important buildings such as oil refineries, military facilities, and transportation infrastructure were destroyed or severely damaged (Crave, 1953). Thanks to this operation, the United States is increasingly confident of attacking other Japanese-occupied cities in Southeast Asia using Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft. Therefore, the XX Bomber Command attacked Singapore on November 5, 1944 – May 24, 1945 and attacked Kuala Lumpur on February 18, – March 10, 1945 led by Henry H. Arnold (Bayly & Harper, 2004).

Conclusion

The city of Palembang, known as one of the centers of petroleum production, played a significant role for Japan during World War II in the Pacific region. In response, the United States launched an air raid on the night of August 10-11, 1944

using Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft. In Operation Matterhorn, the 444th and 468th Bomb Groups of the United States Air Force were assigned to attack the Plaju Oil Refinery and lay mines in the Musi River. If this mission is not successful, a backup plan is taken by targeting the Indarung Cement Factory (now PT Semen Padang) in Padang.

During the Matterhorn operation, a number of Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft successfully damaged the Plaju Petroleum Refinery and laid mines in the Musi River. Some of these planes were forced to bomb the Indarung Cement Factory (now PT Semen Padang) located in Padang and Jambi City due to the night sky being covered by dark clouds. This operation is considered the farthest combat mission in the context of World War II in the Pacific region, particularly in terms of minelaying on the Musi River, with a distance of up to 6,500 km for a round trip from Ceylon to the Musi River. The success of this operation further strengthens the United States' confidence to launch attacks on other Japanese-controlled cities in Southeast Asia, such as Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, using Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft.

This research is expected to provide new insights into the bombing that occurred in the city of Palembang in 1944, which was carried out by the United States using Boeing B-29 Superfortress aircraft when the city was occupied by Japan. In the implementation of this research, there are several limitations that may affect the results of this research, namely the number of sources taken from books published by the United States. The focus of this research is on the bombing of the city of Palembang, although there are many other cities in Sumatra that are also targeted by Operation Matterhorn, such as Padang City and Jambi City. Therefore, the researcher hopes that further research can be carried out on Operation Matterhorn in Padang City and Jambi City. In addition, it is recommended that the results of this study be used as comparative material to enrich the complexity of future research.

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