

Biennial Report of
**THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF
THE UNITED STATES ARMY**

July 1, 1943, to June 30, 1945

TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR

OUR WEAPONS

The Nation's state of unpreparedness along with that of the British Empire gave the Axis nations an overwhelming initial advantage in materiel. The Japanese campaigns in China, the Italian campaign in Ethiopia, and the participation of German and Italian troops in the Spanish Civil War afforded these enemies an opportunity to test their new weapons on the battlefields. This is a matter of very great importance, preliminary to decisions for quantity production of any weapon. Since we had some time in which to mobilize our resources, the vastly superior industrial establishment of the United States eventually overcame the initial advantage of the enemy.

During the past two years the United States Army was well armed and well equipped. The fact is we dared to mount operations all over the world with a strategic inferiority in numbers of troops. Were it not for superiority in the air and on the sea, in mobility and in firepower we could not have achieved tactical superiority at the points chosen for attack nor have prevented the enemy from bringing greater forces to bear against us.

* * * * *

Overshadowing all other technological advances of the war was the Allied development of the atomic explosive. The tremendous military advantage of this terrifying weapon fell to us through a combination of good luck, good management and prodigious effort. The harnessing of atomic power should give Americans confidence in their destiny but at the same time we must be extremely careful not to fall victim to overconfidence. This tremendous discovery will not be ours exclusively indefinitely. In the years of peace between the two world wars we permitted Germany to far outpace us in the development of instruments which might have military use. As a consequence German development of long-range rockets and pilotless aircraft, stemming from years of peacetime research, was far more advanced than our own, which began in earnest only after the war had already started. The fact that we overtook Germany's head start on the atomic explosive is comforting, but certainly should not lull us into a state of complacent inertia.