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THE TRUTH ABOUT THE "BAEDLER OFFENSIVE"

"The bombing of British towns is simply not worth while. The Luftwaffe will never again be wasted on this and no British air action against German towns can henceforth entice Germany into reprisals". So said the official Nazi spokesman in February, hoping to stimulate agitation here against the R.A.F. spring offensive which was so much feared in Germany. Similar arguments followed from German propaganda stations such as the "New British Broadcasting Station", which even pretended, quite incorrectly, to quote a high R.A.F. officer's view that bombing behind the front line was useless.

When the people of Britain replied, not with the agitation hoped for, but with enthusiastic approval of the raids on the Ruhr, Cologne, Lubeck and Rostock, the Nazi propaganda machine was thrown violently into reverse. As Hitler's recent speech in the Reichstag showed, orders had been given for immediate reprisals of the very kind which they had themselves described as futile.

This, however, put the Luftwaffe in a grave dilemma. It was already badly stretched and could not now undertake any large operations against Britain without drawing upon forces already actively engaged on some other front. The German people could not be allowed to know this, and the only alternative was to instruct Goebbels to write up the attacks which were practicable into a "Blitzkrieg" for home consumption in Germany.

It is this second alternative - this boosted offensive - which the Nazis have tried first, and although no one would minimise the suffering and hardship which such raids have caused and will cause, a comparison with our own offensive will show how the Nazis are exaggerating. In the six nights between Friday April 23rd and Thursday April 29th the details of German raids were approximately as follows:-

Date.	Town.	Number of German bombers attacking.
April 23/24	Exeter	5
April 24/25	Exeter	20
April 25/26	Bath	50
April 26/27	Bath	30
April 27/28	Norwich	25
April 28/29	York	20
	Total for six nights	150
	Estimated total tonnage of bombs	225

During the same six nights the R.A.F. dropped on Germany alone over 1,300 tons, that is to say, as great a tonnage per night as the whole tonnage dropped by the enemy on the four British cities mentioned above.

The Luftwaffe lost to our knowledge 17 bombers during this period, and probably many more, since they admitted three in the Norwich attack when we made no claim. These German losses amount to one bomber for about every 15 tons of bombs dropped. The R.A.F. lost 40 for the same period - one for about every 30 tons of bombs dropped: and this in spite of the far greater distances at which we have to operate from our bases.

Finally, what are the respective results of the attacks? The Luftwaffe do not claim even to have aimed at a single objective of industrial or military importance. On the other hand, at Rostock the R.A.F. have not merely dislocated a most important supply base for the Russian front, with its warehouses and submarine dockyard. They have also heavily damaged one of the most vital centres of German aircraft production - the birthplace of those very Heinkels which the Nazis purpose to use not only against Britain but also against the allied armies and fleets, in Russia, in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic.

It may prove difficult for the Nazis to keep up their exaggerations, particularly if we are careful in British accounts of the raids not to assist them.

But even if the British people have again to endure some part of the ordeal of 1940/1 they can at all events set against it the fact that every additional bomb dropped here is one less on war objectives in Russia, Libya or Malta.