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NIGHT-BOMBING SUCCESSES IN WESTERN DESERT

Night attacks by R.A.F. medium bombers upon the enemy's ground forces in the battle area have been successful. Sometimes sixty or seventy fires have been noted after the bombers have completed their missions. R.A.F. bomber crews taking part in these operations have seen vivid proof of the effect of their raids.

A flight lieutenant, captain of one of the bombers, gave the following description of a recent attack: "As we passed over our own troops and headed for enemy territory it was very dark. There was not even a pin-point of light to guide us to our target, though we knew that enemy tanks and motor transport lay below. Normally, in moonlight the black masses of enemy concentrations can be quickly picked out, but without the moon we go blindfold."

"That night, as on many others, naval aircraft showed us our way. A bit to the north-west a flare fell. Beginning as a tiny star in the blackness, it suddenly burst into a revealing glare. A second flare lit up the desert, throwing into sharp relief lagged enemy motor transport. Stick after stick of our bombs criss-crossed the enemy concentration. As we turned for home, the ground below was starred with fires and the flashes of burning ammunition."

A flight lieutenant from Leeds who has been on many similar operations, describing an attack on the night of September 2, said: "It was the most impressive show I have been on. Visibility was marvellous. In one small area I saw more than twenty good fires. Most of them were petrol -- always easily recognisable by its red glow and thick black smoke. We hit tanks and all sorts of stuff."

The rear-gunner of another bomber, a pilot officer from Bristol, said: "The flare-dropping of the naval aircraft out with us was, as usual, first-class. I saw one of the ammunition dumps go up, with shells shooting all over the place. The enemy tanks were easy to spot, and my navigator was actually able to let his bombs go one at a time instead of in sticks -- so sure was he of scoring hits."

Further heavy attacks by R.A.F. medium bombers were made on the night of September 3. Hits started fires among motor transport and tanks. A sergeant-observer from North London reported, on returning to his base more than four hours after the first bombs were dropped, that he had seen a large number of fierce fires and burnt-out vehicles still glowing in the darkness.