

Air Ministry News ServiceAir Ministry Bulletin No.7626MORE FOUR-THOUSAND POUND BOMBS ON DUISBURG

Duisburg, whose docks make it the largest river port in the world, was again attacked last night by a great force of Lancasters, Stirlings, and Halifaxes, as well as by many two-engined bombers. Over fifty 4,000 pound bombs - the Germans call them "block bombs" because each of them brings down a whole block of buildings - were dropped, besides a great load of other heavy high explosives, and incendiaries.

Fires were still burning in Duisburg at 8.30 this morning when single aircraft were sent to bomb and reconnoitre the area. At the time of the reconnaissance, the wind was blowing from the west and one pilot reported that the smoke from the fires was spreading over the Ruhr. Far below, he observed minute gatherings of cumulous cloud which he believed, had been caused by the heat rising from Duisburg.

To protect Duisburg against this third attack within a week the Germans last night sent up more fighters than ever. They climbed through cloud into the clear moonlight, and on their way to the target, our crews saw many Jus. and Mes. searching for them. Time and again the alertness of our gunners and the skilful evasive action of the pilots, baffled the fighters.

The rear and mid-upper gunners of one Halifax drove off a Ju.88 which attacked them over Holland on the outward journey. A few minutes later, the same Ju., or another, came for the Halifax, but the pilot swung away out of reach. "Soon after that", he said, "my rear gunner called out on the inter-comm. that an Me.109 was about to attack us from the port side. I pulled the aircraft round, and then found that yet another fighter, a Ju.88, was right on our tail. My mid-upper gunner fired at it and I took violent evasive action, diving from 13,000 to 4,000 feet. We saw no more of these fighters."

Another crew saw and evaded four night fighters.

There were gaps in the cloud over Duisburg and, said the rear gunner of a Wellington, "I could see buildings below us with smoke and fires among them. There was one very big fire going - it looked several hundred yards long and thick black smoke was rising from it. We bombed the blaze." This was probably the same fire reported by other crews who said that smoke from it was coming up to 4,000 feet.

+++++