

22.5.41 - No. 1.

Air Ministry Bulletin No.3961.

Air Ministry News Service.

DAYLIGHT RAID ON OCCUPIED FRANCE

A daylight raid was carried out on Enemy-Occupied France yesterday (Wednesday) by large formations of Spitfires and Hurricanes accompanying a strong force of bombers.

The fighters acted as escorts to the bombers which attacked an industrial target some 50 miles inside Occupied France.

German fighters were unable to shake off our Spitfires and Hurricanes. Our escorts stuck to the bombers until they were safely back over England.

A wing commander who led the squadrons escorting the bombers said: "I know that when we used to attack fighter escorts in the Battle of Britain it almost invariably ended in the enemy bombers being left to the mercy of our fighters, but today we managed to drive away the Me.109's and keep in company with the bombers.

"We saw one lot of enemy fighters climbing up to attack our bombers and another lot of about nine dived down on the rear section while more of them attacked us.

"At one time we had a fight with ten Messerschmitts and three of them were shot down. A Czech sergeant pilot got one of them.

"The Germans continued to make half-hearted attacks on us all the way back to the English coast."

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22.5.41 - No. 3.

Air Ministry No.3963.

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY  
COMMUNIQUE.

There were no enemy aircraft over this country last night.

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22/5/41 - No. 4

Air Ministry No. 3962

AIR MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE

Yesterday afternoon a small force of aircraft of Bomber Command made a successful surprise attack on the Naval Base of Heligoland.

One bomber is missing from this operation.

A further force of aircraft of Bomber Command escorted by a large formation of fighters of Fighter Command yesterday afternoon attacked a power station and oil refinery near Bethune in enemy-occupied France.

Shortly after crossing the French Coast enemy fighters engaged our aircraft and a number of combats ensued. In spite of these the enemy was unable to prevent the success of the attack direct hits being observed on both objectives.

Five enemy fighters were shot down four by our fighters and one by our bombers. One of our bombers and six of our fighters are missing.

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22.5.41. - No.8.

The appointment is announced of Mr. Gerald de Gaury,  
M.C. as Chargé d'Affaires with H.R.H. the Emir Abdulillah,  
Regent of Iraq, pending the re-establishment of communications  
with His Majesty's Ambassador at Baghdad.

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FOREIGN OFFICE NEWS DEPARTMENT

22.5.41 No. 12.

AIRCRAFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Somerford Hall Camp School, Nr. Congleton Cheshire (200 Manchester schoolboys)	£25
Buenos Aires British Legion - Women's Sect. (Total now £95.12.6)	£17.16.9
Additional gift for Salford Spitfire Fund (from residents of Salford, Ontario -73 persons)	£158. - -
" Tarrab Spit. Fund", Barratt & Co. Ltd. Manufacturing Confectioners, Wood Green, N. 22 (Total now £1,000)	£500. - -
Dundee Spitfire Fund	£1,941.5. 5.

Following item to be broadcast in the 6 p.m. News  
Sun. 25th May 1941:-

The Mendip Spitfire Fund	£5,052.9.6.
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MINISTRY OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION

PRESS NOTICE.

The Postmaster General regrets to announce that the undermentioned mails have been lost by enemy action.

From the United Kingdom.

Approximate dates of posting.

Letters and postcards for:-

North Brazil (States of Alagoas, Bahia, Parahyba, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Norte and Sergipe)

19 - 28 March, 1941

Other parts of North Brazil

27 February - 28 March, 1941

Printed papers for:-

North Brazil (States of Alagoas etc.)

19 - 28 March, 1941

Other parts of North Brazil

10 - 28 March, 1941

Letters, printed papers etc. for:-

Peru (Iquitos)

27 February - 28 March, 1941

Parcels for:-

North Brazil and Peru (Iquitos)

27 February - 28 March, 1941

For the United Kingdom

Approximate dates of posting

Letters, printed papers and parcels from:-

Kenya

11 December, 1940

Nigeria (excluding the Cameroons - British sphere)

4 - 5 March, 1941

Letters and printed papers from:-

Gambia

13 February - 3 March, 1941

Liberia

29 January - 2 March, 1941

Sierra Leone

25 February - 7 March, 1941

Gold Coast Colony

8 - 9 March

Parcels from:-

Sierra Leone

18 - 27 February

GENERAL POST OFFICE.

Air Ministry News Service.

DAYLIGHT RAIDS ON HELIGOLAND AND OCCUPIED FRANCE.

Yesterday afternoon aircraft of Bomber Command attacked the naval base of Heligoland.

The island was evidently taken by surprise and a football match was in progress. Ground defences soon went into action. However, our aircraft swept over the island at a height of between 40 and 50 feet through a continuous hail of anti-aircraft fire. The crews could see the gunners working feverishly on the ground, and bombs from one aircraft made a direct hit on a battery of four guns.

The docks to the south of the island, and the centre of the town were bombed. After the attack the target was a swirl of dust and smoke lit here and there by flames. Damage done in a raid carried out eight days ago was observed.

! Later in the afternoon another force of bombers, escorted by fighters was over Occupied France, attacking the power station and oil refinery at Gosnay, three miles from Bethune. While fighter combats were in progress on the perimeter of a circle around the bombers. The bombers themselves flew straight to their target.

"Above us," said a navigator, "we could see vapour trails making fantastic patterns against the sky, and once I saw below us a yellow blob in the centre of a shining circle. It was a yellow-nosed Messerschmitt climbing vertically towards us, but it broke away before coming into range.

"I saw another Messerschmitt diving in flames.

"We flew to our target and I saw the power station at Gosnay coming into my bomb sight at the very moment that bombs were leaving another aircraft.

"As soon as I had released our bombs I crouched down, pressing my face to the window in the escape hatch, and watched the target closely. Dozens of small white mushrooms of smoke were followed by many yellow and green explosions all over the target area."

The oil refinery was also successfully bombed.

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Air Ministry Bulletin No. 3965

Air Ministry News Service

DOG FIGHTS OVER THE CHANNEL

Many German fighters were put into the air yesterday to intercept British machines on their way back home after a daylight raid on an oil plant in Occupied France.

Individual combats took place all across the English Channel. In some cases Me. 109's dived out of cloud and haze cover to try to pick off single British machines from the close flying formations protecting the bombers. Other squadrons of German fighters came up to the attack, saw the strength of the force they had to meet and sheered off again without giving battle, taking up positions where they could fly in parallel course and await their opportunity.

One British pilot picked out one Me. 109 and saw black smoke pouring from it after he had fired the first burst from his guns. He was going in to finish off his victim when several other German fighters dived down at him. He made his escape by going down almost to sea level and skimming the tops of the waves all the way back to England.

Another pilot, a Pole, who had become separated from his squadron was attacked from behind. By clever manoeuvre he avoided a stream of bullets and placed himself behind his attacker. When he opened fire pieces flew off the German machine.

One squadron which had been carrying out a protective patrol for the operations "had no fun." A pilot explained, "until they thought the outing was over."

The squadron was half-way back home to England when more than 20 Me. 109's appeared and began tailing them. The squadron turned and attacked, damaging two of them, a Flight Lieutenant chasing one back as far as the French coast, while his companions turned on another enemy formation to give battle, only to find it seek cover in cloud, where it was lost.

A Wing Commander with many victories to his credit as a Squadron Leader in the Battle of Britain last autumn had a scrap all on his own. Four Me.'s crossed his path. He dived on two of them and saw wreckage and smoke come from one after he fired.

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22.5.41. - No. 18.

RATIONING OF PRESERVES.

Members of the public are reminded that the Group Rationing Scheme for preserves does not enable the retailer to supply any particular type of preserve for which consumers may express a preference.

While the Ministry and the trade are endeavouring to ensure an even distribution of the four foodstuffs included in the Group (jam, marmalade, syrup and treacle), the operation of the Scheme would be materially assisted if consumers would accept whatever type of preserve their retailer is able to offer.

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MINISTRY OF FOOD.

22/5/41. No. 19.

MARKING OF IMPORTED EGGS

The Minister of Food has issued a Direction, which will take effect immediately, suspending the operation of the Merchandise Marks (Imported Goods)(No.5) Order, 1928, so far as it relates to the stamping with a mark of origin of eggs imported into this country from the United States of America and from the Dominions.

The Direction provides, however, that cooking eggs imported from the Union of South Africa must still be marked in accordance with the provisions of the Merchandise Marks (Imported Goods) Order.

MINISTRY OF FOOD.

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# WAR OFFICE ORDERS

No. 21 issued on 22nd May, 1941

## PART III

### HOME GUARD

The undermentioned members of the Home Guard to be appointed as follows, 1st Feb. 1941 :—

To be Lt.-Col. and Asst. Zone Comdr. :—

Sir George Ayscough ARMYTAGE, Bt., C.M.G., D.S.O., (Hon. Brig.-Gen., ret. pay).

To be Lt.-Cols. and Second in Comd. to Zone Comdr. :—

Neville John Gordon CAMERON, C.B., C.M.G., (Maj.-Gen., ret. pay), (Col., Camerons).

Ballantyne MONTGOMERY, (Capt., late T.A.).

Weir Loudon GREENLEES, (Maj., late S. G'ds.).

To be Cols. and Group Comdrs. :—

Richard Babington TURBUTT, (Maj., ret. pay).

Keith SYKES, O.B.E., M.C., T.D., (Col., T.A.).

To be Lt.-Cols. and Second in Comd. to Group Comdrs. :—

Harold ROYCE, (2nd Lt., late M.G.C.).

Frederic William WHITE, M.C., (Maj., T.A. Res.).

William HAIGH, (Flt. Lt., late R.F.C.).

Thomas SHEARMAN, D.S.O., T.D., (Maj., ret. T.A.).

Norris JUBB, (Capt., late T.A.).

Harold Frederic ATTER, O.B.E., (Capt., late T.A.).

To be Lt.-Cols. and Bn. Comdrs. :—

Edward James WILLIAMS, M.S.M.

Sir Geoffrey EVANS, C.I.E., (Lt.-Col., late Ind. Aux. Force).

Frank Rheuben GOODWIN, D.S.O., (Eng. Rear Admiral ret., R.N.).

Charles Ernest Rothery MOSS, (Capt., ret. pay).

Tom Ormston WRIGHTSON, (Lt., late R.A.F.).

Douglas CARRUTHERS, (Lt., late Tank C.).

Arthur DRIVER, D.S.O., M.C., (Maj., late T.A.).

Harold BARBER, (Capt., late T.A.).

Cecil William LOCKWOOD, M.C., (Capt., late T.A.).

Hervey RHODES, D.F.C., (Lt., late R.A.F.).

Harry Napier PENLINGTON, (Capt., late R.A.F.).

Kenneth Struan ROBERTSON, O.B.E., (Maj., late R. Scots).

Alfred George COLLEY.

Mansel ROBINSON.

John McDONNELL.

Arthur Frederick LOVELL.

Eric Littleford BENSON.

A. N. FLOYER-ACLAND,

*Lieutenant-General,*

*Military Secretary.*

MIDDLE EAST COMMUNIQUE

The following official communique was issued from British G.H.Q., Cairo, to-day.

LIBYA Tobruk: Nothing of importance to report.  
Sollum area: During night 20/21 May advanced elements of our mechanised troops destroyed an enemy post on Sollum hill knocking out three German tanks. Our patrols in this area are continuing their vigorous, aggressive activities.

ABYSSINIA: Amba Alagi Area: All quiet.

Gondar area: Units of the Sudan defence force are closely engaged with the enemy in the vicinity of Chelga. So far over 300 Italian prisoners have been captured. In the battle of the Lakes operations are proceeding satisfactorily against two enemy Divisions which have now been trapped between our forces advancing from the North and from the South. West of Sciasciamanna our troops successfully attacked the main enemy positions. An Italian counter-attack with tanks was repulsed and considerable damage was inflicted by our artillery on the retreating enemy. In this action the enemy left over 100 dead on the field of battle and our captures include 600 prisoners, 10 guns and 5 medium tanks. Our casualties were slight. Further to the south our advance guards overwhelmed a complete rear-guard consisting of a Brigade Headquarters and three Colonial battalions. Captures in this area so far amount to over 4,400 prisoners, of whom a large proportion are Italians, together with 32 guns and 14 tanks.

IRAK Operations in the neighbourhood of Fallujah are progressing. In the Basra area, the situation remains calm.

CRETE Yesterday further waves of German parachutists and air-borne troops continued to land at various points on the island throughout the day. British and New Zealand troops assisted by Greeks and Cretans, all rendered a magnificent account of themselves. Fighting with splendid courage and dash our Empire forces, with their gallant allies, delivered three successful counter-attacks. Enemy losses yesterday were even heavier than before and by nightfall the situation was satisfactory in every area except Maleme where the enemy had secured a temporary foothold. Operations to deal with this situation are now in progress. Enemy landings by air are continuing, but as a result of determined action by the Royal Navy, attempts by the Germans to support their air-borne troops by landings from the sea have so far been unsuccessful as their convoys have been dispersed or sunk. The spirit of the defenders of Crete is higher than ever.

EXTRACT FROM A BROADCAST TO AUSTRALIA BY MR. RONALD CROSS,  
TODAY. FULL TEXT IS AVAILABLE IN ROOM 22 AT  
THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION:-

Picture the map of the world, and turn your eyes to the Middle East. There is where your men have fought and are fighting by land and sea and air. There is where you must get your supplies to them. The Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal..... they are your routes, your lifeline, as well as ours. And the Mediterranean is yours, too, since a large part of the armies of the Middle East are drawn from Australia and our command of the Mediterranean is what makes the whole campaign possible, rendering its victories the greater; its reverses the less.

But the Empire's sea-roads are your lifeline in another sense, too. Though you would fight for your vast island as desperately as we should for our little one, against such enemies and possible enemies as we are facing today, no one of us can hope to avail alone. It must be a united effort, and it is. And what a gigantic effort. What a majestic array of power - semi-developed power - we present to our enemies - the five great nations of the Commonwealth - India - and the fifty loyal and eager Empire countries that support us. It is like a line of great ships of battle, supported by a host of smaller craft - small, but full of fight.

And these are but our own forces. With us we have a mighty force of free men of other nations - French, Polish, Czech, Belgian, Norwegian, Greek, Dutch... and I don't need to tell you, who are next door neighbours to the Netherlands East Indies, of the vital importance of the Netherlands Empire. These are our allies, and the United States of America is our strong and active friend.

We need not be optimists to see in the welded force of free peoples the certain promise of victory, even though we know full well it will be victory after the stiffest fight in history.

But I mentioned the strength of our great alliance not to glory in it - let us win our battles first - but to insist that its strength lies in its unity. The problems of this war must be faced by us all together, and worked out and dealt with by us all together. That is where I hope to work with you in Australia, knowing Britain's problems, and studying yours.

The problems are serious ones .... production and supply, shipping, the protection of the shipping, and the grand strategy of attack and defence in a world-wide war against ruthless well-armed aggressors. These Nazi bosses who plan to overpower the world have long studied the methods of domination in all its bearings; military, air, propagandist, fifth columnist, terrorist, and the rest of it. They have hoarded their people's earnings in the form of military equipment, and they have trained their youth for conquest. At the chosen moment they are spendthrift alike of war material and the blood of their citizens .....if citizens you can call them.

We have to meet this mixture of cunning, of power, and of recklessness, with all the strength and skill and courage at our command ....., and we have great resources in all these qualities. And we have something more than that - a resolute will to victory; a spirit of come and come again till you win; a spirit that I know abounds in Australia just as it stands out everywhere in Britain.

22.5.41 - No. 25.

Air Ministry No. 3966.

MIDDLE EAST COMMUNIQUE.

H.Q., R.A.F.,  
Middle East,  
Thursday, May 22 1941.

LIBYA:

Fighter aircraft of the R.A.F. and the South African Air Force successfully attacked motor transport convoys in the Capuzzo area yesterday. Many lorries were destroyed and others damaged. Other aircraft bombed a camp and gun positions in the same area. During the previous night targets near Barce were bombed.

GREECE:

During the night of May 20/21 our bombers made a heavy and successful attack on German occupied aerodromes in Greece.

At Eleusis bombs were seen to burst among aircraft on the ground and a fire was started. At Menidi results were not observed. At Malaoi several large explosions were observed, whilst at Topolia two fires were started.

MALTA:

Malta was bombed yesterday and slight damage caused to service property.

ABYSSINIA:

Yesterday aircraft of the Free French flight bombed and machine-gunned enemy troops on the road near Chelga.

On May 20, attacks were made on Debarech, where bombs fell among a convoy and buildings and at Mendi a camp was bombed.

On the previous day direct hits were scored on buildings at Debarech and on a fort at Bakki.

IRAQ:

In Iraq the cantonment at Habbaniya was machine-gunned by German aircraft, slight damage being caused.

From all these operations six of our aircraft are missing.

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CRETE NOT AN INVASION ANALOGY.

Analogies have been drawn by many people between the attack on Crete and the situation which would exist if there were an attempt at an invasion of Britain.

An Air Ministry official in the course of an interview to-day pointed out, however, that there is one important difference. This is that while Britain has very strong air defences, Crete is ill-provided with aerodromes, and is situated close to the Greek and Italian islands and mainland, on which large German air forces have been concentrated.

On the other hand, the distance of Crete from our aerodromes in Egypt is such as to preclude any possibility of strong air support by the Royal Air Force from our bases there. Experience in this way has already proved that it is impossible to develop a satisfactory fighter defence from a few comparatively ill-equipped aerodromes, if these are subjected to a high scale of enemy air attack.

In view of the pronounced disadvantage under which our fighters were operating when the attack was launched it was decided by the Commanders on the spot to withdraw those that remained. To do otherwise would have been a waste of the air forces involved.

This operation in its defence aspect must be regarded as one in which, on our side, the Naval and Land forces are primarily employed. Offensive air operations are, however, being carried out by our bomber units in Egypt against the aerodromes from which the enemy are operating in their attacks on Crete.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION.

CANADA'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO WAR WEAPONS

Britain is not alone in raising money for the weapons of war. Mr. Vincent Massey, the High Commissioner for Canada, speaking at Fulham Palace today in connection with Fulham's War Weapons Week, announced that Canada is just about to launch a great campaign to collect £134,000,000 as a loan for war purposes.

"There is," he said, "hardly a home in Canada that does not have some share in the financial responsibility in the present war. Five times as many Canadians are now paying income tax as in the year 1939/40. I have heard some moving things of late of the eagerness of Canadians to do what they can to help. A Canadian farmer and his wife, too old for actual war service, were anxious to do their part in the national war effort and they offered to turn their farm into a miniature munitions factory. In the letter to the Canadian Department of Munitions the farmer made the suggestion that he and his wife should use a small motor driven lathe at their home to make small shell parts. He wrote: 'I cannot leave my farm altogether but my wife and I could put in 12 hours a day between us on the lathe.'

Then just one other example. Two Canadian brothers who owned a sawmill contributed sawn spruce timber to the value of \$10,000 to aid the war effort. In sending this contribution they desired to remain anonymous and added 'We are too old to serve at the front, but the bombing of London makes us feel we must do more than merely pay our taxes.'

Referring to the Battle of Britain, he said that the world had learned that Britain could strike back:

"The other day in a London street where a heavy bomb had fallen you may have seen the following words chalked up on a blackboard: 'You should see our branch at Mannheim.' It was very good advice. In the first months of this war our importations from Germany were excessive, but we are correcting the adverse balance of trade in bombs, and from all we hear of what is happening over Kiel, and Hamburg and Berlin, our export department is doing extremely well. That remorseless, tireless hammering of the German war machine will hasten the day of our victory.

"The way is no easy one; it is hard and perilous and may perhaps be long as well. But we can shorten the road to our goal if we will - if we work hard and see straight. The surest way is to give our men the weapons they need."

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DOMINIONS OFFICE PRESS SECTION

22/5/41 - No. 30.

Air Ministry News Service.

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 3967.

R.A.F. FIGHTERS OVER FRANCE.

An R.A.F. pilot officer flying over Occupied France today shot down one Me.109 and with the help of a Polish pilot severely damaged a Ju. 52. It was losing height rapidly, when last seen.

"We flew across the Channel and were about 20 miles inside France when we came out of cloud at about 300 feet", said the pilot. "I saw the three-engined machine flying low above a main road and immediately attacked. I saw his middle engine stop before I broke away and turned for another attack.

"This time I shot his right aileron off. The Polish officer attacked. The German was at about 150 feet when last seen and had little chance of landing safely.

"I saw a man at the rear gun but he seemed to be doing nothing. I must have got him with my first burst. The whole action took less than 15 seconds.

"Then I saw two Me. 109s about a mile away and nipped into the cloud for a second or two, came out again and had a perfect shot at one. A short burst of fire was enough to send him straight into the ground. The other Me. turned tail and made off."

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22.5.41. No.31.

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE

The Board of Admiralty regrets to announce that H.L.S.  
QUEENWORTH, an auxiliary vessel of the Royal Navy  
(Lieutenant-Commander R.W. Wainewright, R.N.), has been sunk.

The next of kin of casualties have been informed.

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ADMIRALTY S.W.1.

22/5/41 - No. 32.

Air Ministry No. 3968.

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE.

A few single enemy aircraft have flown over this country today. One of these dropped bombs in a village in Sussex which damaged several cottages and caused a small number of casualties.

Bombs dropped elsewhere did little damage and no casualties have been reported.

One enemy fighter was shot down by our fighters this morning.

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Text of Broadcast in the Home Service at 9.20 p.m. May 22, 1941.

WAR COMMENTARY

by

AIR-COMMODORE R.V. GODDARD, C.B.E.

You'll have heard a good deal about Crete on the news, and I'm going to say a little more about it. But first of all I want to build up a background, and I'm going to start in France.

A year ago the Battle of France was raging. I had the honour to be serving with the Army out there. I learnt things then about the German Air Force in Blitzkrieg which didn't surprise me, for it was part of my business - before the war - to pierce the secrets of the Luftwaffe and study its growth, its organisation and its methods.

A year ago today the Armies of our Allies had been broken, our aerodromes in the North had been overrun, and the last of the air squadrons - the squadrons in the North, I mean, attached to our surrounded army - had been withdrawn to continue the struggle from more remote aerodromes. I found myself that day, still at G.H.Q. with a good deal to do - but not able to do much about it. From then till the end of Dunkirk I saw and felt the air war, as an airman, but from the ground, and among soldiers and refugees. I knew that the Allied Air Forces were done for. I knew the great strength of the enemy Air Force, I knew our squadrons were bombing and fighting mostly well beyond where we were. So I hardly expected to see much of our own men in the sky. Yet I did see them, many a time - and often when others mistook them for the enemy.

Study and experience of Blitzkrieg, coupled with recent events in the Balkans and Crete, have decided me to talk this evening about German Air Co-operation in Blitzkrieg.

You know what Blitzkrieg is - Blitzkrieg, when it succeeds, is one continuing assault regardless of losses, almost regardless of flanks and the security of communications. It depends on overwhelming power on the ground and in the air.

The German Air Force was modelled on ours. Goering once said that the greatest help he had in building up his Air Forces was the British official history of the War in the Air, 1914-18. There he found all the lessons of our experience. The main lesson was: establish air superiority over the zone of operations, and then, operating from secure bases, exploit the flexibility of bombing power in support of the main object at any time, exploit the moral effect of air dominance, exploit surprise and the whole principle of offensive action.

Germany, as you know too well, is a militarist nation in which the Germany Army has, until recently, called the tune. So it took a man with the independent power of a Goering to build up an independent Air Force. Goering learned the lessons and applied them. He built the Luftwaffe, which embraces all aspects of air power.

I want to consider one part of that Air Force. Let's take the case of the dive-bomber. Blitzkrieg has endowed the screaming dive-bomber with a magical reputation. Looked at the right way, that magic is bogus. I believe some people were more afraid of the scream than the bombs! D'you know how many we've shot down? Well over 600 for certain. And - mark you - those dive-bombers didn't come to see us many times on this side of the Channel.

/Although

Although dive-bombing formed only a part of the enemy's bombing effort in France, it has become the most notorious feature of air support in battle. That is because it was visible, more or less unopposed, and hence demoralizing. But the dive-bomber was not reserved for the battlefield. Those same Ju.87 dive-bomber squadrons were switched from the battlefield to the destruction of Rotterdam, back to the battle, and then on to the ships at Dunkirk. That's flexibility. That's concentration. That's moral assault. Meanwhile larger bombers, though little spoken of because not so evident, were at the same business doing the real heavy work.

Now, when Goering developed dive-bombing, he developed also the ground defence antidote - light anti-aircraft guns. If the German Air Force outnumbered the British in France by twenty to one, German anti-aircraft power was not in less preponderance. For that reason, low bombing or dive-bombing against German columns and positions was made very costly to us. The Germans know the answer to it - and so do we. Our fighter pilots call the Ju.87 a "piece of cake", and to the man on the ground the dive of the Ju.87 is a dive down a gun barrel - if he stands his ground and keeps his head. But on the continent of Europe it's been a great moral factor - no getting away from that.

Now a word about air support generally. When the Germans plan a Blitzkrieg, all kinds of squadrons take their place in the Air Force plans of action; plans concerted with the highest Army Commander, in the zone of battle. Don't run away with the idea that each fighting formation of the German Army has its own bomber and fighter squadrons, like it has artillery. Nothing of the kind. The main large formations of the German Army - the Army Corps and the Armoured Divisions - each have a small reconnaissance squadron, like our Lysanders, for their own use when going into battle. But the bombers and fighters remain under the Air Force Commander in the field. His plans must suit the general strategy, and he plans also to support the moving battle hour by hour. There's no black magic about it. You want good co-operation good communications - and plenty of machines to put into the air, so that full weight of attack can be sent to the right place at the right time.

Plenty of machines and aerodromes under central control - that's where the enemy has had the bulge on us. In Europe we've had allies, also with weak air forces and weak air defences. All sorts of complications arise when you have allies and divided air control in the same main battle zone. Things would be very different over here.

Of course, we've learned some lessons from the enemy - as also he has from us. The great lesson which our nation and the French couldn't soak-in, and act upon in time, was the lesson our Prime Minister saw staring us in the face eight years ago. While England was talking disarmament, Germany was doing the other thing.

Now the Germans are storming Crete and you'll have heard the news that, once again, our Air Forces have been withdrawn. I think you'll have thought: "Isn't it curious that we can't keep our Air Forces in action, because of insufficient aerodromes, whereas the Germans have no such difficulty". Well, that's merely a reflection of air superiority. The Germans can operate from relatively secure aerodromes and so can fill them up with hundreds of aeroplanes - we can't, because we haven't big enough resources for fighter defence and anti-aircraft defence, and we can't disperse to numerous aerodromes, because they don't exist.

Now air-borne forces are on their greatest trial, but unopposed by fighters - alas! In spite of that, they've had some costly failures. But they have apparently had, also, some substantial success - and well they might in the circumstances. Grim it is and grim it must be - but never fear, air-borne forces, by themselves, won't capture that Island; there's more to it than that.

/Crete

Crete, as far as we're concerned, must be mostly the business of soldiers and sailors - and how splendidly they're doing it too! The Air Force meanwhile is building up again in the Middle East, and will give all the help it can from there.

Whatever the outcome, the invasion of Crete, instead of Britain, is, in truth, a measure of Nazi frustration. I won't deny that airborne forces are a menace to us here - but so is Fighter Command to them. And Fighter Command constitutes - as you have reason to know - the most powerful defensive system in the world.

Please don't suppose that some new and unexpected danger to us has just emerged. The fact is that a great part of a known danger to us here is now lying wrecked in Crete. We're prepared for airborne forces. So don't let's make too much of a bogey of them. They're extremely vulnerable to good defences, and even tho' they come silently, they must land by the light either of a brilliant moon or by daylight, otherwise they'll go astray, or crash.

I expect you know why the Germans use gliders. Troop-carrying airplanes must have an aerodrome, or country like an aerodrome, to land on. If they don't, they'll be crashed or stranded, and unable to get away again.

Gliders, being slow flyers, can get down in smaller space and - if they escape attack - can land compact forces with their equipment, ready for action. Paratroops are almost sure to get scattered if used in large numbers, and are greatly hampered by their kit. It's their job, to secure, temporarily at any rate, the place where the gliders are to come in; and this they do either by surprise, or else immediately following a heavy blitz on the place.

Now, what's the object of the move to Crete - I'd say the ultimate object is Oil. In this connection I think you may wonder why we didn't crack the Rumanian oil refineries while we had the chance. Well, did we ever have the chance to do so with bombers? Have you worked out the distances? The Rumanian refineries are 1,100 miles from Norfolk and 1,000 miles from Alexandria.

'Yes,' you may say. 'But why not from Greece or Crete? - why didn't we do it from there?'

To that I would say - when and how? If you'd been the Prime Minister of Greece, would you have agreed to a foreign power putting squadrons into your country to bomb Rumania across Bulgaria - with the German Army and Air Force standing-by to stop that very thing? You wouldn't, you know.

Oh yes, we know the German method; we're fighting to end that sort of thing.

In any event, our bombers in Egypt at that time, too, had their hands a good deal fuller than most people suppose - mighty hard-pressed they've been for months. To crack Rumanian oil would want a great effort, long sustained, against the German defences there. And that has never been possible from Greece or Crete, or indeed anywhere.

The effort against Germany, you'll be glad to know, has been doubled in recent weeks - and will go on increasing.

Well, that's all, except just a parting comment in case you like to reflect upon anniversaries and their significance - It's Ascension Day today. Ascension - after trial and tribulation. That will bear thinking about. Reminds me of our motto - "Through hard times - to the heavens", or, as the Latin goes: PER ARDUA AD ASTRA.

Thursday, May 22, 1941.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

NEWS BULLETIN No. 388.

ASSISTANCE FOR FOOD TRADERS IN TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES

Some food traders do not sufficiently appreciate that when they get into difficulties with their transport they can always consult the nearest Divisional Food Office. In every Division there is an Assistant Divisional Food Officer for Transport with a number of assistants whose business it is, in conjunction with the Port Food Movement Officers and the Food Movement Control Section at Headquarters, to make arrangements for the rapid and efficient movement and storage of foodstuffs of all kinds, whether owned privately or by the Ministry. These officers are in constant touch with one another, with the Ports and with Headquarters and are kept fully informed of the transport situation by road, rail and inland waterway, within their Division and in other Divisions with which they are likely to be concerned.

They are also responsible for seeing that food traders get adequate supplies of petrol and for taking up with the Ministry of War Transport questions of spare parts for motor vehicles and the replacement of worn out vehicles.

Recently, cases have occurred where complaints from food traders of difficulty in meeting their transport needs have been sent to Headquarters and on investigation it has been found that these traders never approached the Transport Officer at their Divisional Food Office and therefore did not have the benefit of the help which is readily available -- Ministry of Food. M.o.I. 1.

"NO CONCERN OF OURS"

The "Ostfriesische Tageszeitung" is alarmed about the "mental deficiency" now spreading in the country which finds its expression in utterances concerning the end of the war. Pessimists believe that the war will last another few years; other people know the exact hour and date in July when the war will be over. "The right answer to this silly question is to trust the word of the Führer - the victory will be won this year. The rest is no concern of ours." -- From "Die Zeitung", the anti-Nazi daily published in London. M.o.I. 2.

TRINIDAD BUYS A BOMBER

With a further contribution of £9,500, the total raised by the people of Trinidad for the purpose of aircraft has reached £120,000. The £9,500, together with £500 sent direct by a local resident and £10,000 previously remitted, will be used to buy a bomber -- Colonial Office Press Section M.o.I. 3.

BRITISH STATIONERS BUY SPITFIRES

The latest overseas gift to the British Stationery Trade War Planes Fund - a fund launched by the Stationers' Association of Great Britain to buy Spitfires - is a sum of £630 from stationers in the Transvaal, South Africa. Other gifts to the Fund from Stationers in the Dominions have included £3,000 from Australia, and £1,200 from Canada. -- Dominions Office Press Section M.o.I. 4.

MORE MOBILE CANTEENS FROM JAMAICA

More mobile canteens for use in Britain's bombed areas are to be bought with a further gift of £2,450 sent by the Jamaica Central War Assistance Committee.

Individual contributions to this new instalment were: "Jamaica Shilling a Week" Fund, £250; Jamaica Constabulary, £250; St. James's War Assistance Committee (people of Montego Bay), £250; £500 in two instalments of £250 each from the Senior and Junior Women's Clubs of Jamaica; £400 from the Frome Mobile Canteen Fund and £800 in two units of £400 each from the people of Jamaica.

The canteens will be inscribed with the names of their donors. -- Colonial Office Press Section. M.o.I. 5.