

THE KING'S MESSAGE

TIME FOR A NEW RESOLVE

CALL TO PRAYER AND DEDICATION

The following message was broadcast by the King last night:—

Four years ago, our Nation and Empire stood alone against an overwhelming enemy, with our backs to the wall. Tested as never before in our history, in God's providence we survived that test; the spirit of the people, resolute, dedicated, burned like a bright flame, lit surely from those Unseen Fires which nothing can quench.

Now once more a supreme test has to be faced. This time the challenge is not to fight to survive but to fight to win the final victory for the good cause. Once again what is demanded from us all is something more than courage and endurance; we need a revival of spirit, a new unconquerable resolve. After nearly five years of trial and suffering, we must renew that crusading impulse on which we entered the war and met its darkest hour. We and our Allies are sure that our fight is against evil and for a world in which goodness and honour may be the foundation of the life of men in every land.

That we may be worthily matched with this new summons of destiny, I desire solemnly to call my people to prayer and dedication. We are not unmindful of our own shortcomings, past and present. We shall ask God that God may do our will, but that we may be enabled to do the will of God; and we dare to believe that God has used our Nation and Empire as an instrument for fulfilling his high purpose.

I hope that throughout the present crisis of the liberation of Europe there may be offered up earnest, continuous, and widespread prayer. We who remain in this land can most effectively enter into the sufferings of subjugated Europe by prayer, whereby we can fortify the determination of our sailors, soldiers, and airmen who go forth to set the captives free.

The Queen joins with me in sending you this message. She well understands the anxieties and cares of our womenfolk at this time and she knows that many of them will find, as she does herself, fresh strength and comfort in such waiting upon God. She feels that many women will be glad in this way to keep vigil with their menfolk as they man the ships, storm the beaches, and fill the skies.

At this historic moment surely not one of us is too busy, too young, or too old to play a part in a nation-wide

IN A LANCASTER OVER FRANCE

DAWN BOMBING OF GUN BATTERY

"SOFTENING UP" BLOWS

From Our Aeronautical Correspondent

A BRITISH AIRFIELD, JUNE 6

In the grey half-light of dawn, as the first Allied troops were about to land on the northern coast of France yesterday morning, "E for Easy" was one of a hundred or so Lancasters of Bomber Command which went in to round off the long series of pre-invasion "softening up" blows at the enemy's coastal defences by bombing a heavy gun battery emplacement. Sitting in the co-pilot's seat of this great bomber I got glimpses of the earliest stages of the opening of the second front.

For most of the way across the Channel the sea had been hidden under mountains of white cloud, several thousand feet thick and stretching as far as the eye could see, but some 30 miles from the French coast there were a succession of clear patches which revealed an apparently dead calm sea. The water was streaked by the zig-zag wakes of invisible ships taking evasive action as they reached the danger area. That was the first definite sign of the invasion, and I noted that the time was precisely 4.53 a.m. Simultaneously, through the now wispy cloud, one could catch distant glimpses of Flak bursting and the more indistinct flashes of guns from several points along the coast. From just off-shore came the winking of ships' signals recurring at intervals.

Above the cloud bank a full moon made the sky so light that one could read the identification letters on the nearest aircraft. Not a German fighter was to be seen, but in every direction—in front, to either side, above, below, and for miles back towards the English coast—were four-engined Lancasters, all converging on their aiming point on the shoulder of land at the mouth of the canal.

QUEUE OF BOMBERS

"E for Easy" weaved its way gently through the not very frightening Flak, and took its place in the queue of Lancasters moving steadily over the target. After the usual directions of "Right, light, steady, steady" from the bomb-aimer lying prone in the nose of the fuselage, the bomber gave a slight lurch as it was relieved of its burden of 1,000-pounders. After what seemed a long interval the bombs exploded among earlier ones which had already ignited ammunition dumps near the guns.

By this time it was light, but although the khaki and green fields, roads, and even houses were clearly visible thousands of feet below, there was no sign of movement. The whole of the inland area seemed to be deserted. Yet along the coast every moment brought increasing evidence of activity. There were several small explosions, one lasting several

OVER 15,000 TONS OF BOMBS

NON-STOP SUPPORT FROM AIR

From Our Aeronautical Correspondent

Preceded by a record night of bombing, when over 5,000 tons of bombs were dropped by an R.A.F. force of more than 1,300 aircraft on ten German coastal batteries, yesterday's operations by the Allied Air Forces easily surpassed all previous figures for daylight bombing.

At a conservative estimate between 15,000 and 20,000 tons of bombs fell on targets in northern France during the 24 hours, more than 10,000 tons were dropped between midnight and 8 a.m. yesterday in coastal areas near the scene of the allied landings. During this period at least 30,000 allied airmen were in the air, making a total of 7,500 sorties.

Another great force of R.A.F. bombers began to fly out from east coast aerodromes as darkness fell last night.

Up to a late hour yesterday well under 100 enemy aircraft had been sighted in spite of diligent searching by allied fighters which maintained a continuous screen over the convoys and patrolled a wide area of the French Channel coast. The small effort put out by the enemy in the air should not, however, lead to premature assumptions that he cannot do much bigger things. The Germans are believed to have between 1,500 and 2,000 single-engined and twin-engined fighters in the west, and these will doubtless be used as and when Hitler—and the circumstances of the land battle—dictate.

TEN NIGHT ATTACKS

Between 11.30 p.m. on Monday and dawn yesterday R.A.F. Bomber Command made 10 night attacks, each by 100 or more four-engined bombers, while Dutch Mitchells and R.A.F. Polish and Australian Mosquitoes of the 2nd Tactical Air Force pounded roads, railways, bridges, embankments, cuttings, and railway junctions. In addition Air Defence of Great Britain sent out a big force of Mosquito intruders to bomb airfields, Flak positions, bridges, searchlights, trains, and railway installations. Only two enemy aircraft were encountered and both were sent crashing to the ground.

From dawn till late yesterday afternoon heavy bombers and fighters of the United States 8th Air Force gave support to the allied landing operations. Three missions were flown by the heavy bombers without encountering any fighter opposition. The first, in which more than 1,300 Flying Fortresses and Liberators took part, began about 5 a.m. and lasted until about 8.30 a.m. The bombers were escorted by Mustangs, Lightnings, and Thunderbolts, and more than 100 targets in the German coastal defences were heavily bombed. In the second mission before noon medium forces of heavy bombers attacked a defended position behind the coast. Most of the bombers returned with their bomb loads because of heavy overcast and the presence of allied troops made bombing through clouds inadvisable. The third mission, in mid-afternoon, was carried out by Liberators against another defended position inland.

The only enemy fighters which were engaged by the United States aircraft during the day were 10 Me109s, which were found by a squadron of Mustangs near Paris. From all the operations until late in the afternoon, four

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