ON GUARD IN THE AZORES, Allied mid-Atlantic air base, this corporal of the R.A.F. Regiment strikes a modern note against the ancient stone sentry-box of his observation post. "By means of aircraft operating from the Azores," said Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roose-velt in a joint statement, "we have been able to improve the protection to our convoys and to diminish the area in which enemy U-boats were free from attention by our forces." See also p. 541.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright.
Our Roving Camera Inspects Air Raid Fighters

SEARCHLIGHT projectors (left) is a member of the A.T.S. Girls snap into action to illuminate the targets for the A.A. guns. A.T.S. also serve at fire control instruments, command posts and plotting rooms.

WOMEN SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS at the London Region Fire Control Room, Headquarters of the R.A.F. The switchboard is the nerve centre through which the operations officer receives reports of fires and through which he issues his fire-fighting orders.

CIVIL DEFENCE PERSONNEL labour doggedly, with a mobile crane, to clear away debris after a direct hit. Falling may be trapped beneath the rubble, a life-saving service attend to these when contact has been made.

ROCKET GUNS of the multiple-barrelled type being unloaded (above) for swift assembly (in its mobile cases). The gun fires a volley of rockets into the night sky. Large numbers of batteries are now operating, mostly manned by Home Guards. In its original form the rocket weapon was designed for defence against the low-flying dhak dumbah. Later experiments were conducted, experimentally, at high-flying night raids; the first battery went into action in the spring of 1943, and new rocket guns are used with outstanding success as a means of propelling small bombs over 400 miles per hour at 22,000 ft. This propellant, developed by Britain, is also in production in the Middle East, and its secrets have been made known to U.S. Army Ordnance by the British authorities. It is in use in several theatres of operations.
RUSSIA A thousand days of the Russian war! Did Hitler realize the sinister significance of March 18, 1944, as he dropped the calendar-leaf into his waste-paper basket? If so, what thoughts of the "might have been" must have surged through his tormented brain, what a load of bitter disappointments and misled hopes must have weighed down his spirit! A thousand days of fighting, of vast conquests, of tremendous victories: his troops almost within sound of the Kremlin’s bells, within sight of the peaks of the Caucasus.

Then the dreadful debacle of Stalingrad, the beginning of the retreat to the Don. And now the guns of Moscow were booming for yet another Russian victory, the greatest of the campaign, perhaps the greatest of the war, a victory which must find a place in any future collection of decisive battles of the world.

Up to the beginning of March 1944 the Germans in Russia were retreating in good order. Every mile of ground was stubbornly contested, and though Nazi issues were terrific, it was unfortunately too all certain that the Red Army too was losing the cream of its young fighting strength. The German commentators breathed an almost audible sigh of relief. "The Front of von Manstein stands firm!"

Their satisfaction was short lived. On March 4 the 1st Ukrainian Front group of Russian armies under Marshal Zhukov delivered a terrific punch from the direction of Shpolsk. In 24 hours the Russians advanced 30 miles: by March 7 they had reached the suburbs of Tarnopol and had cut the supremely important Lvow-Odesa railway along a 12-mile stretch at Volochisk. Here for the time being the advance was slowed up, though not stayed. Somehow Von Manstein scraped up some reserves from Lvow and pushed them into the gap.

Practically simultaneously another great Russian group of 150,000 men or five hundred miles away to the south-east. Here the attackers were General Malinovsky’s 3rd Ukrainian Front and a week’s battle of furious swirling movement, brought them into the Black Sea port of Kherson.

Still the amazing Russians had not shot all their bolts. Another group, the 2nd Ukrainian Front under Marshal Koniev, on March 10 reached the Germans in the Uman sector, about half-way between the other two offensives, and in a series of forced marches swept through Uman, abandoned by the Germans in what was described by the Russians as the first time as a panic flight, to the banks of the Bug.

Here Manstein’s men might have been expected to halt and recover. The river was broad, and swollen with spring floods. On every side the black earth district was swathed in a sea of mud, and military commentators spoke knowledgeably of difficulties engendered by the thaw. But the Russians had taken the measure of "General Mud." Driving their tanks and transports through the quagmire mass, they covered a dozen or even twenty miles a day; driving the enemy before them. They reached the Bug on March 15; crossed it on March 17, pursued the Germans for some 60 miles beyond it to where the German Army had suggested another line on which some sort of stand might be made.

From the Bug to the Dniester is a matter of fifty miles. The Russians covered the distance in a couple of days. The fact speaks volumes as to the wholesale rout of Manstein’s divisions, their disorganization, perhaps even their disintegration. But not without them, their collapsing morale. The number of prisoners claimed by the Russians was significantly small. The Nazi, or most of them, were still resisting fiercely, though their distance was that of men who have no longer any hope of victory, but who fear defeat more than death. All the same, the Russians captured 300 tanks in two days, which suggests that for a time at least the enemy thought only of flight.

March 18 was the 1,000th day of the war, and the Russians were in jubilant mood as they announced from Moscow another series of tremendous victories. Koniev’s 2nd Ukrainian Front had captured Yampol on the northern bank of the Dniester, and looked across the 400 yards of river to the cottages of the Besarabian villages on the Russian bank. Malinovsky’s 3rd Ukrainian Front had completely smashed the German 6th Army—refounded since Paulus’ surrender at Stalingrad a year earlier, Marshal Zhukov’s 1st Ukrainian had taken Zmerinka, on the Odessa-Lwow railway, and in honour of their victory Moscow guns fired a dozen salutes. During the preceding fortnight the German casualties (said Moscow) totalled over 200,000. A quarter of a million, of whom 100,000 were dead.

It was indeed a great victory, and the Russians were swift to exploit it. The Germans attempting to cross the Dniester were mercilessly hurried, and their massed transport, awaiting their ferries, was bombed and blasted again by the Stenovikovs. Then, on March 19, the Red Army crossed the river in strength, some of the bridges having been captured intact before the German demolition squads could get to work. Koniev got his tanks across, and within a few hours they were deep in Bessarabia.

WHEREUPON all Hitler’s satellites in the Balkans shivered with apprehension. Romanian quislings started packing their bags. Pro-ally—to or so they would like it to be deemed—Rumanians and Bulgarians and Hungarians got ready to depart on peace missions to the Allies. Hitler found his south-eastern wall collapsing, the battle for the Danube about to begin. And on March 21 his troops converted Hungary and her neighbours into militarily occupied countries such as France had been since 1940. March 21—another fateful anniversary. It was on that day in 1918 that the Kaiser’s hosts plunged through the mists on the Somme to over-whelm General Gough’s Fifth Army and, so the Germans boasted, win the war. But November 11 was only eight months ahead.

BURMA While the world-shaking battle was raging across the plains of southern Russia a very different struggle was developing in the Burmese jungles. In March both the Japanese and the Allies were making offensives, although in widely separated zones.

From the north, Gen. Stilwell’s little army of Americans and Chinese was developing a bolder movement down the Hukawng valley against Myitkyina, the Japanese key base on the Irrawaddy. About a hundred miles to the south a sparse of British airborne troops was endeavouring to get astride the railway and river communications of Myitkyina (see p. 708 for Burmese front illustrations).

In the Chin hills, still more to the south, the Japanese were hitting at British and Indian forces guarding the approach to India. Judged on the scale of the Burma campaign this was a major offensive; but many more troops were fighting near Cassino in Italy than there were in the whole of Burma.
JUNGLE AIR BASE and Army stronghold for the Allies were established when an airborne force ousted Japanese-occupied territory in Upper Burma. It was announced on March 17, 1944. Air Marshal Sir John R.A. Baldwin, C.B., C.S.I., Tactical Air Commander, Burma (2, right). A Vengeance dive-bomber returns to its Arakan base (3). Gorkha riflemen (2) who escaped from a Japanese ambush and saved the battalion treasure chest. Men of the 1st Punjab Regt. in a forward position (1). A casualty in carrying out a mission.

Photos, India Office and Keystone
Bloody is the Fighting for the Ruins of Cassino

In the streets and in the hills around Cassino, on March 19, 1944, the 5th Army were fighting with utmost gallantry against an enemy fanatically defending a position which, after weeks of battle, had on March 15, 1944, been pounded to a mass of rubble by our bombers and artillery in attacks of a scale unprecedented for a target of comparable size. Cassino, strategically placed and well adapted for defense, has long held up the Allied forces. Beyond it lies the road to Rome.

Chief among the German troops whose lives are daily being thrown away in its defense, are the men of the 1st Parachute Regiment, whom our Forces first encountered at Ortona, in Italy. These they put up a house-to-house defense when they were assailed by the 8th Army in December 1944. Now their numbers are dwindling—and they are soldiers of a quality which cannot be replaced from the Nazi reserves.

In the words of one of our war correspondents in a recent cable home: "Dug-out resistance and skill of concealment are part of the German parachutist's make-up. They are street-fighting specialists. Here are two examples of the kind of fight they put up: " One German unit was buried in a cellar on the day of the great Allied bombardment. It took them four days to extricate themselves. Instead of retiring exhausted, they set about building a strong-point in the rubble in which they had been buried. . . . A New Zealand unit took 50 German prisoners from a house in Cassino. When they returned to the house after handing over their prisoners, they found another 50 Germans in possession."

Prolongation of the bitter fighting is due in large measure to length of tunnels deep beneath the town, some of these forming connections between series of strongpoints among the rubble and all of them providing the Nazi troops with protection against even our heaviest bombardments.

Every unit of Allied Air Power in the Mediterranean area was concentrated in the greatest air attack ever delivered against so small a target when they shelled the city of Cassino (below). Immediately after the bombing, British and U.S. artillery added a terrific barrage to complete the destruction of strongpoints in which still concealed and protected enemy gun emplacements. Into the maelstrom went these Allied armored vehicles (above), among which were Red Cross units bearing their flag of mercy.
warship construction that has been in progress in this country and the United States for three years past. All the time these vessels are increasing in numbers, whereas the destruction of U-boats during 1943 was so considerable that the total available remained more or less stationary.

Furthermore, personnel of the escort craft have continued to gain valuable experience during this time. They have thus reached a very high standard of efficiency in submarine hunting. In the largest exploits of the Second Submarine Group, as briefly related, Captain Walker, whose fine record of service has gained him the C.B. and the D.S.O., is in his forty-eighth year.

A HANDSHAKE FROM THE COMMANDER of the slop. H.M.S. Aberdeen obviously pleases the dog, which was found floating on timber. Its seat in the Atlantic after the French merchant vessel which had owned it had been torpedoed. Adopted by the Aberdeen as ship's mascot, it was named Aberdeen when rescued. It was sitting in the same position as the well-known gramophone record advertisement dog. "Flown, British official"

SHEP built in Britain and U.S. for Transfer to Red Fleet

A good deal of interest was aroused by the report that the Soviet Government was about to take over one-third of the Italian fleet now operating with the Allies. This appears to have arisen through a misunderstanding of some remarks by President Roosevelt, who actually intended to imply that the Red Fleet was to be reinforced by a quantity of fresh tonnage. When these strongholds are eliminated, it will be the turn of the British. So that the Japanese airfield at Leergaard, in the Admiralty group, has been taken, and the remaining atolls in the Marshalls are falling one by one, should soon be possible to bring Truk under attack by shore-based aircraft as well as carrier-borne planes.

These are three old battleships, the Marat, Oktaritsiya Revolutsiya and Patriarka Komunara, dating from 1911, which are long overdue for replacement. The first-named is believed to have been badly damaged by German air attacks on Kronstadt during 1942. In these circumstances, it may well have been suggested that these three Italian battleships, of approximately the same age, may be replaced, and the cost of construction and modernized throughout, be earmarked for replacement of the three old Russian ships. These three Italian vessels are the Andrea Doria, Cao Dulf, and Umbria, all transferred to Allied control at Malta last September.

At the moment there does not appear to be any particular use for battleships in the Soviet Navy, except for bombardment of German-held coasts in the Gulf of Finland or in the Black Sea; and for such purposes the Italian ships could hardly be more available. The white Danes and the Aegean islands remain in enemy hands. Actually, the principal Russian need for ships seems to be for vessels capable of aiding in the escort of convoys such as cruisers, destroyers, sloops, frigates and minesweepers.
5 British Sloops Sink 6 U-Boats in 20 Days

Most Triumphant U-boat Hunt of the War recently ended with a tremendous welcome home for the sloop H.M.S. Sterling (1), whose Captain, Walter, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., is seen on the bridge taking a hearty snack whilst in action (2, right). Four other sloops of the Second Escort Group, commanded by Capt. Walter, assisted in the sinking of six U-boats within 20 days; an exploding depth charge from H.M.S. Kite throws up a great column of water (4), and the crew of H.M.S. Wild Goose display their battle-rug (5). See p. 778.
The Fleet Oiler Waits On Our Fighting Ships

There is one type of ship which seldom gets the credit she deserves, although without her the Navy would be to all intents and purposes immobilized. The role played by the Fleet Oiler is unique, for she differs considerably from the coal-burning Navy's colliers. Seldom was the necessity for fuel transferred from ship to ship in open seas. There used to be a labious, messy and difficult task at anchor; at sea, with a wind blowing, it was practically impossible.

The oiler has changed all that. By her steady work she enables the fighting ships to perform exceptional voyages, lengthen their efficiency, of action, and generally keeps them tended. Her 12,000 tons of invaluable oil is always at the Navy's service; and if the battleships, cruisers and destroyers cannot break off their duties to come to her, she simply lifts her anchor and goes— at full speed—to them.

Normally she lies, well-hidden, in some lonely loch or fjord with a perpetual brood of hungry vessels nursing at her, for all the world is afraid of her oil. She is officially listed as a Fleet Auxiliary, being both Royal Navy and Merchant Navy, and her crew is hand-picked, because specialists are needed to perform the oiler's onerous tasks. It is man's work to bring a laden oiler alongside a towering battleship in a seaway, when both vessels are steering awkwardly under helm, and high seas are doing their utmost to frustrate the necessary union.

Yet the warships must have oil—not only heavy oil to feed their furnaces, but heavy octane spirit to fill all the tanks of the planes carried. Or an aircraft carrier may demand attention. Also the oiler acts to some extent as general supply ship to the mobile fleet; she serves as mail-boat, beef-boat, canteen filler. Also, possessing as she usually does, a crew of doctors, she can, on occasion, serve as a useful clearing hospital for casualties which need more specialized care, or as a base to obtain supplies at a fighting ship liable to meet hot action every time smoke is spotted on the skyline.

An oiler's existence when at anchor can be prosaic and monotonous. For lonely harbours are usually selected, so that refuelling warships can continue in a quiet way with normal traffic; but there is always the variety of producing on the wing of nowhere with a peremptory demand for the precious fluid that is the Navy's life-blood. And the sailors of such client-ships usually have interesting stories to tell of breathless less attacks from the air, of boardings by enemy coasters, of sorties on stealthy convoys, of pitched battles between giant-ship and giant-ship off the North Sea.

The close-packed crews of destroyers and corvettes like to clamber aboard.

Through Feed-Pipes connecting the tanks of... the World War, they are not all above decks, as is the case with some of our fighting ships in this war.

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Beaufighters Blast Enemy Merchant Shipping

CENTRE OF CONCENTRATED CANNON FIRE from Beaufighters of R.A.F. Coastal Command scored by Spotters of the Air Defence of Great Britain, this enemy merchantman (1) is one of several attacked to off the Dutch coast on March 1, 1944, near mines are registered (2) as torpedocarrying Beaufighters take up the attack; later, two torpedoes struck her. In the Angus also our Beaufighters are busy: a well-aimed bomb has wiped this vessel (1) off the active list.
PACIFIC paradise in peacetime, large areas of the Fiji Islands are now training grounds in tropical warfare for U.S. troops. The map below shows Fiji's strategic importance; its productivity is symbolized in the Colony's arms (left). Of immense value to the Allies are the 70,000 tons of sugar and 15,000 tons of copra exported annually to U.S.A., Canada and New Zealand. Native soldiers of the Fiji Defence Force are being inspected. Among islanders decorated is Corporal Drama (2), Fiji Labour Corps; he won the R.E.M. for bravery, Outrigger canoes (4) keep isolated American units supplied. Islanders give to the Red Cross, for which a carnival in Suva (1) raised $5,000.
Australians Ejected the Japanese From These Hills

NEW GUINEA NATIVES, with sure-footed care for the casualties they carry, act as stretcher-bearers down the slopes of Shaggy Ridge in the Foja Mountains. Far below is the Pare River, with Ramu Valley beyond. Australians forced driving on from Sio on the Muave Peninsula, which they captured on Jan. 14, 1944, threw out the Japanese from their Foja strongholds and by Feb. 18 had joined up with U.S. troops near the American beachhead at Salisur, 30 miles southeast of Madang.

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PA, Australia 1944
Mighty Sky-Freighters Sway the Fortunes of War

The entire picture of military operations has been transformed by transports of the air. They take to the Allied front lines the requirements of battle—men, ammunition, food and water—and race back with the wounded. They can turn a last desperate stand into a resounding triumph, as MARIE PRIESTLE triumphantly did in this article.

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orn of the fighting officers of R.A.F. Transport Command calls the giant Avro York "North's Ark." They watch with bated breath as one of the 30-ton freighter planes and pack two by two into the plane's long interior. Smoothly the flying machinists take to the air, cruise at 275 m.p.h., and presently land their cargoes at airfields that only a short time before were held by the enemy.

Wing Cmdr. LANCE WADE
Before his death in Italy, on Jan. 1, 1944, in a Communications aircraft, he had destroyed 64 enemy aircraft. His records show that in England, Italy, and France, his victories included the D.S.O., D.F.C., and two bars.

Capt. RICHARD ALLEN
Piloting a Liberator run by British Overseas Airways Corporation and using a maximum load, he flew from Montreal to Britain in 11 hours, 50 minutes. Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright; Fleet News

Air superiority is now a phrase implying far more than fighting supremacy. It stands for war strength in sealed packages, for guns and ammunition, crated Spitfires, and even aeroplane engines flown direct to the battle line. In every theatre of war today Allied transport planes are delivering armies and keeping them supplied, carrying everything from water to love-letters, whacking up reinforcements and racing wounded back from the forward areas.

The American landings on the Marshall Islands were backed by a flood of such mighty freighters as the wooden Curtis Catavan, four-engined Lock- heed Constellations and 70-ton Mars cargo flying boats. The landings on Italy were preceded directly and indirectly by transport aircraft. When Air Force Signals were putting Tripoli and Tunisia on the telephone to link all arms for immediate co-operation, key equipment was flown from England in 24 hours. Communications were established and forward squadrons and ground forces gained an advantage that had the road to Rome.

In these and many other ways the new era of troop and supply transport has raced the entire military picture of war. In a recent engagement, a transport pilot tipped the scales by delivering sorely needed anti-tank ammunition on time and in time. Only air transport could have done it.

In New Guinea the scene was changed overnight when every plane that could fly was ordered to the rescue of Kokoda. Outnumbered five to one, the battered and valiant 39th Battalion of Australians was making its last stand when air transport turned the tide. Tanks and mortars, tons of beef and crates of blood plasma, boxes of ammunition and bundles of brown mosquito netting were dropped to the fighters on the ground. The tide of battle turned; within a month the Japanese advance had ended.

On the day the Australians took Gona village at Bayoewart point, hundreds of Americans were flown in to back them. One tiny strip of jungle averaged 59 transport landings a day. And the planes never returned empty. But for aircraft, wounded men would have taken two months to reach Port Moresby from the Buna front and many would have died on the way. The transport switched the wounded from the dawn attacks in modern operating theatres before midday.

The casualties removed from Italy by air constitute a high proportion of the total (see illus. p. 687). It is now secret that R.A.F. Transport Command conveyed 14,899 patients from Sicily in a month. Many of the planes were air ambulances proper, others were twin-engined transport fitted with removable racks for stretchers. Outward bound the planes fly food, equipment and even oil to the front lines; homeward bound they evacuate sick and wounded men with organized and in all ways admirable efficiency.

On one occasion, 21 R.A.F. nursing sisters were moved 500 miles by "sirrall" to render them available for a new hospital. Mobile field hospitals, complete with staff and equipment, are commonly flown across the Mediterranean. Air transport has cut the route back to Britain from Egypt or Africa by 6,000 miles, and the York aircraft which recently flew from the United Kingdom to Cairo in 18 hours was no more than making a routine flight.

Armchair alone to the Army Post Office in North Africa totalled 36 miles to a day—enough to stuff six Fortresses besides 500,000 airgraphs to the U.K. and over 1,000,000 from home. It may look easy when you see the transport pilot make a perfect landing dead on time after a 2,000-mile run, yet the task obviously has its dangers. "Wild Cat" Wade, the Spitfire ace with a record of 25 enemy aircraft downed by his guns, was killed in communications aircraft miles behind the line in Italy; and the transport planes often deliberately face higher hazards.

It is not generally known—although the fact has been disclosed by the U.S. Office of War Information—that compact aluminium printing presses and other goods, and messages of encouragement, have been dropped by parachute over enemy-occupied territory and even over Germany itself. Nor did a B-24 Liberator—in the hands of Captain Richard Allen and carrying a maximum load—make any fuss about clipping 21 minutes of the fastest Atlantic record.

The transport flyer may face an airfield that has an unobstructed covering of ten feet of snow, and have to keep to the road as far as he can. It is up to him to be serviced at thirty degrees below zero. He may merely be shifting mails or he may help in the movement of squadrons and of troops. It is nothing, as Squadron-Leader Ernest Murray told me, to have to land in the dark with only ear headlights providing an uncertain flare path.

Transport reliability may turn threatened defeat into victory. There is the example of the Indo-China wing of the R.A.F. Transport Command: more supplies have been ferried to China over the 10,000-foot hump of the Himalayas than were ever hauled along the Burma Road at the peak of its traffic. As a result, air attacks on the Japanese in China have been doubled and redeployed. In a practically non-stop stream of planes the Allied air forces—December 1943 carried ten times more tonnage of vital supplies than in December 1942.

The Indo-China wing even has its own efficient rescue squadrons. It seldom happens, but when plane crews are forced to bale out in wild country rescue planes are always ready. This minor detail alone is significant of the transport transformation. Coming over the horizon are such giants as our 32-ton Tunders and the 70-ton flying boats, larger than any aircraft yet made in this country, being built by the British firm of Saunders-Roe. The war is pulling into being the air empire of the world of air transport. And our sky-freighters are making peace dawn all the sooner.

JEFFS PACK INTO IT TWO BY TWO, so they call R.A.F. Transport Command's Avro Yorks. "These planes, loaded to the gunwale, have a 3,500-mile range and a speed of over 300 miles per hour. Altitude—rarefied air up to 85 passengers. See also illus. p. 412. PAGE 716
These Flying Pantechnicons Deliver War Goods

SKYMASTER is the name of this Douglas C-54 transport plane (1), which carries its own crane for loading and unloading supplies. Another of the 16 types used by America in this high-speed Lockheed Constellation (2) is the C-124 Globemaster (2) before it takes off; while in kindlier climate, another wings its way over Egypt's pyramids (4). A U.S. freighter on the India-China route (3); native cattle lie down in its welcome shade.
Workshop for Germany: Switzerland’s Dilemma

As the waves of war advance, the neutral Swiss look over their ramparts. Compelled by force of circumstances to realize that their country is far more valuable to the States of the Second World than it would be as a battlefront, what prospect do they see? JOHN ENGLAND explains why the Swiss hold fast for this peaceful living and suggests what the Swiss may do.

The three hundred years no foreign soldier has stepped on Swiss soil to wage war. For three hundred years no Swiss army has left its mountain home to wage war abroad. Yet despite this apparent immunity, the Swiss government, as it decided in 1936 that the condition of Europe warranted a vast scheme of rearmament and general preparation for defensive war.

When I visited Switzerland in 1939 I was told that in the three preceding years this little country of two million people had sunk the enormous capital sum of $1,000,000 in arms. Not only that. The age limits for military service had been changed to rope in all men between 18 and 60. No less than 1,000,000 men had been increased from three to four months, and the systematic exercise in marksmanship had been brought to a high degree of efficiency. In addition, nation-wide organization of all the auxiliary services, A.R.P., Fire Service, Red Cross, and so on, had been carried on to the point that date perfected, so that no citizen was aware that he or his assigned post against the possibility of invasion.

On the side of material, the modernization of this peace-loving State under the stress of the increasing threat of war has been most impressive. All types of arms and armaments had been modernized with a complete disregard of cost, from small arms and the ordinary soldier’s equipment to the guns which are mobile and yet rock-protected, give the vast wall of concrete and steel. The roads from Geneva to the Jura Mountains its offensive strength.

This defence system of concrete walls, pillboxes, machine-gun posts, and blockhouses, is Switzerland’s first line of defence. Her second line of defence is the mountain ramparts of the Alps. And between these two every bridge and every high way is mined. In the Zurich district I saw one of the fine protective systems and learned something, too, of how Switzerland stands prepared for the coming of war. Thus it was told, for example, that complete mobilization could be carried out throughout the Confederation in forty-eight hours. I was told that when one every hour of the older defence system could be manned. And every man knows precisely what is his military task, and how to perform it without detailed orders.

SWITZERLAND is the only country that has kept its citizen armed and equipped for war through periods of peace. Then, as today, every Swiss of military age had in his own home rifle, ammunition, and uniform. No national guard, no draft into a military machine, such as Germany’s, could, caring nothing for the men, in arms, and materials, force a way through. But there are limits to what the invader can do. For example, the bridges of the mountain roads, and most of the highways themselves, are incapable of supporting the weight of heavy tanks, a circumstance which would restrict, too, the transport of artillery units—in the event of the system of defence by mines having broken down.

On the air side, the Confederation has prepared itself thoroughly. Anti-aircraft defence naturally plays a more important role than fighting aircraft and bombers. It is, indeed, the central characteristic of the Swiss rearmament that it could never be taken for anything but a defensive machine. It could not be used for offense, for it lacks all those adjuncts which an army designed for movement in remote terrains finds to be absolutely essential.

I was told that the contingency that has nowbefallen has been provided against by the accumulation of vast stores of raw materials of all kinds, and of all essential foods. It is these materials which have kept the wheels of Switzerland’s industry turning— for Nazi Germany. Here she had no choice since there was for her, as she has been, no alternative customer. From Zurich and the other great industrial centres, Switzerland has been pouring into Germany the pork and meat, the textiles, the coal, the foodstuffs. The stocks of accumulated staple foods that the country has been feeding. Even so, there is no meat in Lausanne, in Geneva, and precious little anywhere else.

That food shortage affects also the thousands of British and Empire soldiers who escaped from captivity after Italy’s capitulation and are now interned in Switzerland; they are, however, being looked after, so far as is possible, by the International Red Cross. They are allowed by the Swiss Government to come to liberty in towns and villages in about 20 centres, where their daily routine is a fairly rigorous one. Just now boredom is one of their chief handicaps, but this the Red Cross is trying hard to dispel by providing the officers and men with occupations and educational interests.

A one considers Switzerland today from the Nazi standpoint it is plain she is far more valuable to the Germans as a workshop than as a battlefield. Facing by the terrible dilemma of risking war by closing her transport systems to all transit traffic, Switzerland has taken no action in the face of the plain Nazi threat and the other hostile action of closing the Swiss-Italian frontier. The collapse of Italy and the occupation of the northern part of the country by the Nazis and their puppet Italian government, has created a situation crucial for Switzerland. And the German customs officers control all outside traffic. An opening of the border again what is, virtually, a state of blockade.

What do the Swiss think of the Nazis and of the Democratic Nations in arms? In the 1914-19 war the line-up was one that followed the logic of language: German-speaking Swiss were pro-German, the French-speaking were pro-Ally. When I was in Zurich and Berne I found everywhere a complete detestation of all that Hitler’s Germany stands for. I never met, or heard of, a single Swiss Nazi sympathiser. But since then Dr. Goebbels has been very active. His high-powered propaganda has been worked skill and thoroughness. So far, in face of it, we have done nothing by way of counter-propaganda. The fact, therefore, has to be faced. Invalides has been reprieved; there has been some lapse here and there towards the Nazi view, evidenced from the pages of the Gazette de Lausanne, and La Suisse.

And by large, I think it may be taken as fairly certain that that Swiss has an overwhelming majority in favour of those things for which the United Nations stand and for which there is a widespread international campaign. As Arthur von Salis put it: "Part of the reason which makes the Swiss people the most zealous, the most active and the least less than 446 cent is employed in industry. At the time I was in Switzerland,
War Depicted by the Artist's Brush

Celebrating its fifth year of activity, Britain's War Artists' Advisory Committee has placed on view at The National Gallery, London, new oil paintings, watercolours and drawings covering every aspect of the war in France, from N. Africa, Malta, Sicily and Italy to as far north as Iceland, and ranging from the picturesquely vigorous to the grimly dramatic. In this and the following pages is a selection of striking examples of the work of artists who have contributed to this display. There are eight official artists, appointed by the Committee, now attached to the Armed Forces.

**Revelations of an 8th Army Soldier**

Never feeling sure of themselves, never comfortable. They grinned and bore it. They made a lot of noise about being tough and sinewy. And it was nothing to it. They found old beach-heads. A derelict rubber horse once used by a British regiment was converted into a "B-100." A camel skin served for a bedspread. On an ancient kitchen range they cooked. From a dump of clematis car batteries they rigged up their electric light.

Food abundant in certain "caches" stacked by the garrison as reserves. "We dug up cases of beer, Italian cheeses, tins of fruit, bottles of whisky, and hundreds of other luxury items." They built a dance hall. They gave dinner parties. "Invitations were carried out with style and dignity, the host visiting his guests in their dug-outs and ceremoniously requesting their presence at, say, 7.30 p.m. It was this kind of play-acting and humour that saved us from going mad." The enemy were the pests of the Desert rather than the attentions of the Hun.

At last the human enemy did have to respect occasionally. The flea was the torturer supreme and never rested. No matter what we did, it was always with us.

Such relief was obtained by keeping tame mice. The fleas seemed to prefer them. The mice, "became great companions and, apart from their flea-collecting propensities, they trained them into doing all kinds of tricks." Lizards they liked because they made war on flies, "easily the most dangerous of all our enemies.

Beetles were amusing. Scorpions and centipedes were not. They produced more casualties than the Germans. Most of us slept curled up in handkerchiefs, chief or piece of paper in one hand and our food in the other. While we tried to get the food into our mouths free from flies, we waved the other hand about wildly; even so we ate hundreds of flies. They settled on food like a cloud and no amount of waving disturbed them. They could clean jam and butter from a slice of bread much quicker than we could eat it, one hundred and fifty actually lost their reason because of flies. Their insatiable presence was nervewracking to the strongest of us.

Kites had a maddening trick of swooping down and snatching up a piece of food which made us laugh at them sometimes. At first mysterious disappearances of food were attributed to mice and rats and alarm. Theft was suspected, practical joking, ill-will. They were then tipped off the Desert." We caught flying swiftly and picking up food which they ate, as they flew away, in the air.

One day I saw one of our drivers attack another under the law for stealing his dinner, as he thought. Some of us had seen the kites pick up the dinner and the affair was amicably settled after our evening meal.

As for sandstorms, well, no one who has been in one will think Crawford exaggerates when he says, "words can hardly describe the experience." It is bad enough when you can keep inside a house or when you are on a train (on the line from Athbara to Khartoum I was once in a very thick one) when you have to keep on draught. Lurched through it, the misery is trebled. Puce was reduced to a crawl. Visibility was down to just two or three yards. Not only were eyes filled with sand, but it got through clothes and, as the heat caused violent perspiration, it entered the pores of the skin. If it was not scrubbed off soon, it built up on cheeks or arms. For making tea for the mid-day meal in a sandstorm, it generally ended as half hot and half sand.

"Every mess-tin had at least a quarter of its contents in the bottom of it when the remnants were poured away.

Yet, even when they had to retreat before Rommel's advance, there was no feeling that they were beaten. That they had better chuck it. They were good old men and a man want to give in."

Sometimes they were stunned and listless after heavy defeat, but "there was never a whimper. Never a sign of his fate." Those are mere heartwarming phrases. Crawford is always genuine. That is the value of the book. Revealing how the 8th Army was moulded in the sandstorm, it brings into the finest fighting machine in the world. The stories of this one soldier is mirrored the soul of that great army.
Manstein is Sacked from South Russian Front

LOSS OF TEN DIVISIONS in the Korosum "pocket" and several more north-west of Nikolayev led to Field Marshal von Manstein being replaced as Supreme Commander of the German armies on the southern Russian front by Field Marshal Halder. Manstein, whose name is linked with Russia, was beaten at Stalingrad and on the Don—inspects his troops (1) before handing over.

German tanks hastily abandoned will doubtless be employed by the Russians against their former owners, for these tanks (2) are in thoroughly sound condition. Twin-barrelled rocket guns (3) are being used by the Nazi army. Swift-moving motor-trucks (4) carry tanks across marsh-land to attack enemy positions at Petropavlovsk, on the northern front. See map in p. 411.

Photos, Press News, Associated Press

WASHINGTON POST
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This Monster Will Roar No More for Germany

ONE OF THE WEHRMACHT'S HEAVIES was this huge siege mortar captured by the Russians; it is believed to be either a 340-mm. or 365-mm. piece. In Moscow it was examined by members of the Soviet Supreme Command; left to right are: Adm. Kuznetzov, People's Commissar for the Navy; Marshal Voronov, in charge of Red Army artillery; Marshal Shulayev, Deputy Supreme Commander; and Marshal Voroshilov. Comparable British weapon is the 21-in. gun which fires a 360-ton shell a distance of 20,000 yds.
This Soviet Plane Turned Nazi Jeers to Fears

One of the earliest aircraft ever produced by the Soviets, the plywood-and-fabric YU-2 was almost a museum piece. Normally this two-seater would be obsolete by now; but the impulsive rush to build more planes made the YU-2 intriguing to the Nazis. And so it was that this astonishing old-timer was being narrated by the Soviet writer, Konstantin Simonov.

The German called the YU-2 "Russ- plywood." These aircraft are made of wood and linen. Their speed is only 60-70 miles an hour, and they make a noise like a motor-cycle on a bad road. What a queer notion to send people in such rickety affairs to drop bombs by hand out of the cockpit on to the German positions!

But Russians are obstinate people, and if they once get a good idea into their heads they will carry it out, sooner or later, on a grand Russian scale. Before long, bomber detachments of "Russ- plywood" were pounding the Germans with hundreds of tons of bombs. The Germans stopped making jokes about our YU-2s.

At Stalingrad, as soon as it was dark, the first white glows-worms of signal rockets marked the forward positions, the sky began to grow softly over the German positions. German searchlights peeled, German AA guns fired at random, and vari-coloured threads of machine-gun bursts converged from all sides on the queer sound. The glaring and rumbling went on. The YU-2s were abroad.

Here and there they would suspend flares like lamps over the ground and itself, drop bombs into gullies crowded with German troops, on roads along which columns were marching, into houses where the Germans had their Headquarters.

After a lot of hard work, the German AA gunners did finally measure the "Russ- plywood." So our pilots adopted a new method. They climbed to the limit, took aim at their targets, glided over soundlessly and dropped their cargoes in dead silence. About this time fantastic hints concerning some strange new Russian aircraft with noiseless engines, or with none at all, appeared in German soldiers' letters from the East.

On a summer night, the steppe is pervaded with the scent of wormwood, and a chilly ground-wind blows from the Diriguer. The cloudy, starless sky is black, remote, intemperable. But away to the left a broad crimson glow blazes and tells us where Stalingrad burns. We are crossing a flying-field, and somewhere close at hand invisible aircraft hum in the air. Fifteen or twenty kilometres away a searchlight swings its blade in our direction, and goes out.

"Our men are coming back. They're preparing to land. The searchlight's showing them the right direction," my companion explains.

After half an hour's tramp we reach the command-post. From above this is only a huge haystack, just like thousands dotting the steppe. We stoop and squeeze through a little door curtained with two pini-cloaks. Within, we find quite a big room. Two tables are placed to form the letter "T." The commander and detachment commissar are seated close to a lantern on the table.

We have arrived at a busy moment; crew come in and report and then go out to take off. The freshness of the night air and the fragrance of hay fill the room.

Tonight the crews are going to bomb a settlement around an airfield not far from Stalingrad. The Germans broke into it and stationed large units there, so for the past few days it has been subjected to a severe pounding. Many of the YU-2 pilots used to live in that settlement. That was where they flew to. So today's tasks are particularly exact and reports very detailed.

"What were you pounding just now?" Captain Ovodov asks a tall airman just back from a sortie.

"Number Three."

"Number Three."

"Number Three."

"No, I was in Number Four. There are four here and here, and right in this spot."

"Just here?" the commander asks, growing thoughtful. "Yes. In short, my cottage is either occupied or burned down. Well, that's that."

Every night means seven or eight hours in the air, every night means fifteen sorties, every night these little "Russ- plywood" aircraft drop tons of bombs on the enemy. Sometimes they beat the heavy bombers at their own game.

"We rarely have a day off," Captain Ovodov says, "particularly in summer. Unless, of course, there's a terrific fog. Then we're free."

Just as the Tommy-gun cannot really replace the rifle in an experienced sniper's hands, the old leisurely YU-2 proved irreplaceable. Its deficiencies, such as its slow speed, became advantages. At Stalingrad, where the front line passed from house to house, from village to village, in zigzags and trenches, not one contemporary night-bomber could have tackled the job the YU-2 could do. It could bomb the German half of a block while the other half-block was still in Soviet hands. Its low speed and ideal bombing-aim enabled it to hang over the target and strike unerringly. It bombed places where the German pilots would not risk operating for fear of dropping their loads on their own troops.

The YU-2 pilots loved their planes for their serviceability, the simple way you could take off and land in them, and for the fact that though they looked so flimsy they were really one of the grinned at. They could stand six night flights in any weather, go wherever they were sent. The pilots knew that the infantry down below were fonder of these planes than of any other. They called them affectionately the "foreskirts," or the "conflowers," according to the landscape.

All the pilots were experienced night-fliers, who rarely suffered losses. During six months only two failed to return from their mission. They took off and landed in pitch darkness. Never once had the Germans been able to bomb their aerodrome; all the lighting allowed was a couple of lanterns. YU-2 pilots boasted that they themselves could land by the light of a cigarette.

This is a great day for the detachment; pilots and navigators are back in camp to take care of their work. The best receive the Order of Lenin. Now, just before daybreak, they are making their second sortie.

An hour later they return, rubbing their eyes, red from sleeplessness and wind, and shivering in the sharp morning air. Some of the pilots, who for years have been waiting for this war to be written, the names of these obscure heroes will be remembered; they are the hardworking, true, modest pilots who were responsible for altering the significance of the nickname "Russ- plywood" from the absurd to the grim.

AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE is the immediate job of this low-flying YU-2. Tomorrow it may be doing particularly useful work in connection with communications and supplies for guerrilla forces in the rear of the German lines; the next day it may be dropping bombs. Several Guards bomber regiments of the Red Air Force which have been trained on low-flying, but by no means inefficient, planes have been the wholesome respect of enemy A.A. gunners after having been regarded by them as a harmless joke. See also facing page.
Old-Timer of the Red Air Force Fights On

YU 3 BIPLANE BOMBERS of Russia's sky army now stand motionless (top), but ready for action in the dusk on a snow-covered Soviet airfield, their undercarriages replaced by skis to enable them more easily to negotiate treacherously slippery ground. Below, they drop their flares at German front-line positions to light the way; in spite of the fact that they first took the air 15 years ago they are still remarkable for accuracy in night precision bombing. See descriptive account in facing page.
'Golden Arrow' Will Flash Home Victory News

FROM BATTLEFIELD to Britain, when our western offensive begins, will come news of the Forces' progress flashed over a special portable wireless transmitting and receiving unit named "Golden Arrow," after the famous peacetime boat train.

A unit consists of seven vehicles, including two diesel power-generators (one a spare) mounted as trailers towed by eight-horsepower army truck; a special commander's small utility truck; each section has an officer and 22 operators, instrument mechanics, electricians, and drivers.

The Royal Corps of Signals, and a cook of the Army Catering Corps with pot-boiling stove.

A complete Golden Arrow unit contains the following equipment:

1. Portable transmitter set.
2. Portable receiver.
3. Portable generator.
4. Portable battery.
5. Portable generator.
7. Portable power supply.

A corporal adjusts the tuning coils (1), a signalman replaces a transmitter valve (2). Inside the wireless station vehicle (3); a dispatch rider, in the background, is delivering messages for transmission.

Photo, Associated Press, O.P.U.

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I WAS THERE!

Eye Witness

How We Cracked the Pill-Boxes at Kwajalein

Capture of Kwajalein, in the Marshall Islands, involved plenty of Japanese pill-box technique of demolition and described Express correspondent in that area.

We hunkering on the side of a concrete pill-box in which Private First Class John Harrison had just bayoneted a Jap, I had a close-up view of the tech- nique of pill-box busting. The Americans were cleaning-up on this Jap-held island in the Pacific. The concrete pill-boxes were close together. Old-fashioned they were, with gun-slots facing the Pacific Ocean, and foot-thick reinforced steel doors, which do not crack at all easily.

Pill-box cracking is a job for all kinds of specialists—riflemen, grenade-throwers, flame-throwers, tanks and engineers with "satchel charges" filled with T.N.T. Our men moved slowly from pill-box to pill-box, swelling in the sun as they juggled heavy equipment. A sergeant with camouflage and waist-coat walking out of his face, reported: "Two pill-boxes cleared, three full of Japs, two tanks still holding up." He sent a runner for the tanks, and it was comfort- ing to see them come.

Then No. 13, with a pretty girl and the words "Miss Friday" painted on the side, rumbled through the jungle with a 37-mm., gun moving from the turret. The tank blasted two heavy explosive shells into a pill-box at less than 15 yards, crumbling the concrete. A flame-thrower began letting two sheets of solid flame into the box. A great cloud of black smoke poured out.

A squad moved to the next box, hopping forward with their rifles, to the sound of the echoes of being shot, I ducked forward with them. The next few minutes gave a blue-print of anti-pill-box technique. Staff-Sergeant Jack Martin and another rifleman ran close to the pill-box and poured a steady stream of bullets at it to keep the Japs under cover, while Private Edgar Johnson moved up with a flame-thrower.

The riflemen ran back to the flame-thrower moved into position all alone before the pill-box. Johnson squirited the sheet of flame directly at the door, another obliquely at the door, and a third at the concrete wall. The fuel consumed, he dropped back a few paces to refill. Asked if he got his Japs, he said, coolly enough, "I think so, sir, but I wouldn't want to say." Then the soldiers moved forward to the next pill-box, which was the tough- est of all. Twenty-five feet away threw a few 37s at the box. The flame-throwers were making, so they were not used. The riflemen shot lots of rounds. A machine-gun, newly

FLAME-THROWERS were used by American Marines to destroy this Japanese stronghold on the southern tip of the islands of the Kwaja- lein atoll, 350 miles southwest of Okinawa, the westernmost point of the battle of the Marshall Islands is told above. Photo; Fleet News

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I Walked Out of the War into Liechtenstein

The only country in Europe which has not a single soldier in a single gun is the tiny principality of the borders of Nazi-land.

I was there to call on its ruler, 38-year-old Prince Franz Joseph II, who, with his fair-haired 23-year-old consort, lives in his small domain, simply and inexpensive. A smart grey-blue bus drove me past snow-covered farms into the capital, Vaduz.

At the main gate of Liechtenstein Castle four old cannon pointed their muzzles across the wide Rhine valley towards Switzerland. "You will notice the birds' nests in the muzzles of these old relics," said my guide. Inside, the castle breathed an air of solid, Victorian comfort. The walls of the main hall, with its open fireplace, were decorated with priceless Van Dyck and Brueghel canvases. Packages of English and American cigarettes were on a table.

The door opened, and Prince Franz Joseph came in. He is a tall, youthful-looking man, dressed in tweed jacket and golfing trousers. His eyes are dark, he has a well-

Finally an engineer, with spectacles, trudged up with T.N.T. wrapped in gun- sacking, and bound with wire. This is the "satchel charge." Under fire and machine- gun cover, Corporal Chester Gibson croched low, and moved as close as he possibly could to the box.

The sergeant shouted: "Everybody down!" and everyone huged the earth as Gibson threw the charge at the box, and grabbed the earth himself. The charge which blew up the pill-box stunned everyone in a wide radius as the ground shook, and ears tingled. It sounds easy. It is not.
This is the Fire-Raked Cockpit of Anzio

"The whole compact and menacing bag of tricks is contained in a cockpit less than the area bounded by Battersea, Marble Arch, Holborn, and Southwark," declared an observer who recently returned from the beach-head in Italy and gave the following impressions to a Reuters correspondent.

Stories of the beach-headings on the morning of Jan. 22, 1944, and the magnifi-
cent work of the Reconnaissance Corps in that area, are in pp. 601 and 607.

None of Liechtenstein's £100,000 budget has to be spent on war needs. Very little is
required for the maintenance of law and order. The police force's last big job was in autumn
1939, when a score or more of Nazi thugs staged a "march on Vaduz," with the
declared intention of liberating the population from the princely yoke. Sergeant Joseph
Brunhart, chief of police, quickly handled the situation by clapping four ringleaders
into gaol, sending the rest home to mother.

Four Times Our Submarine Bumped the Sea-bed

H.M. submarine Sturhorn has returned safely after one of the most remark-
able patrols of this war. She is commanded by 24-year-old Lieut. A. A.
Duff, D.S.C., R.N., and this is his story, told on his arrival back at the home-
port, where he and his crew were given a tremendous welcome.

We had torpedoed two of a convoy hugging the enemy coast. This convoy, which was escorted by four cruisers, a minesweeper and another
patrol vessel, was the second large one we had

SUCCESSFULLY ATTACKED ON THE ANZIO BEACH-HEAD, day and night, showers of anti-personnel bombs sent down by the Luftwaffe failed to shift these British gunners, who had dug for themselves holes 12 ft. deep, with the unceasing havoc of our troops, they gave such names as "Sea View" (left). One of the many guns (right) which, with a concentration of fire seldom equaled in this war, smashed the German attacks; it is a 9.5 in. manned by the Royal Artillery.
to check when we were very deep indeed—and more depth charges cut the water.

We corrected the trim, with most of the crew placed forward this time, and the Skipper directed his gunner on her port motor, with her bow up at an angle of 25 degrees, was headed to make a rush through the minefield. We got along like that for a time, until the rate of rise got out of control, and we broke surface again. This time we were seen by the mine-seeker which we had left behind.

We dipped the utmost speed and went down and down, out of control. The ultimate figure on the depth gauge was passed; the needle stuck, and we were still going down.

And just when you thought you were down as far as you could go—a little bubble shot up. It was our depth charge, which had been left behind, but not detonated. It exploded under the underwater mine. The explosion caused a loud noise and a great commotion.

We shot up at an angle of 70 degrees. I was lying flat on the connning tower ladder. Everyone was swung in a heap. But we surfaced right and steamed as fast as we could, unloading all of enemy contact. We dived with red oil by no means over.

The situation was quite critical. We were now in the midst of a heavy minefield. There was no way out. We had to continue steering a zigzag course to avoid the mines.

The following afternoon her rudder suddenly failed to answer the wheel. She lay helpless in enemy-controlled waters, and there was no way to get her off. The ship was doomed. It was impossible for the crew to get off in boats, as the enemy was too heavily armed.

The Skipper ordered everyone to abandon ship, and the crew began to make their way to the life boats. The ship began to take on water, and it was obvious that she would sink soon.

Only at this stage did the Skipper issue a signal for help. The destroyers that were present immediately, but the weather was so bad that it was 2 days before they were able to sight the stricken submarine. Then, for the first time, they could not take her in tow because the weather was too bad. They had to wait until it moderated sufficiently to get the ship under way. Eventually, they did succeed in getting her under way. The ship was then towed into a harbor, and the crew was rescued.

**OUR DIARY OF THE WAR**

**MARCH 15, Wednesday**

Italy—Caustic stationed alongside the Italian aircraft carrier "Albatross". The French, British, and Italian aircraft carriers were engaged in a duel with the German submarine "U-25".

**MARCH 16, Thursday**

Italy—Three-quarters of Cassino invaded by German troops, Castle Hill, N. of the town, captured. German forces taken by troops of the Italian Fleet, Vittorio Veneto, were landed at Cassino. Also, about 1,000 casualties were sustained by the Allies. The German troops were able to capture the city at night with 12,000 bombs.

**MARCH 17, Friday**

Italy—Caustic stationed alongside the Italian aircraft carrier "Albatross". The French, British, and Italian aircraft carriers were engaged in a duel with the German submarine "U-25".

**MARCH 18, Saturday**

Russian Front—2,000-ton German submarine "U-25" was sunk by the Italian aircraft carrier "Albatross". After being hit by five torpedoes, the submarine sank in the sea. The Italian sailors had already sent out emergency signals before the submarine sank. The Italian sailors were able to evacuate all the crew members before the submarine sank.

**MARCH 19, Sunday**

Russian Front—2,000-ton German submarine "U-25" was sunk by the Italian aircraft carrier "Albatross". After being hit by five torpedoes, the submarine sank in the sea. The Italian sailors had already sent out emergency signals before the submarine sank. The Italian sailors were able to evacuate all the crew members before the submarine sank.
THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

No operation in this war has been more novel and spectacular than the dispatch of a strong force by air into the heart of Northern Burma, where it alighted behind the Japanese "lines" within the area under "control" of the Far Eastern Command. The operation was carried out by towed gliders and troop transport aircraft. This form of attack was strategically first employed by the German Army during the offensive against Holland and France. The scene of this show of German air power was landed within the heart of Northern Burma by gliders, complete with all sorts of equipment for turning fields marked out for the initial landings into airfields suitable for the use of troop transport aircraft. And that meant no small parcels of equipment. Troop transport aircraft require considerable fore-and-aft and lateral room to alight. The approaches to the actual alighting area must be reasonably good, especially for night landings, for no air efficient airfield, it would be so severely handicapped as to make its duty to hit the enemy, or even to survive. For, surrounded by enemy forces, it depends upon air transport for its supplies of food and ammunition, weapons, medical requirements, evacuation of wounded and sick, and all the hundred-and-one details of a modern military command. Such supplies cannot continue to come in by glider; for there is a limit to the number of gliders that may be used in one operation, because the gliders can only return whence they came if air-tugs can get down to tow them off again, or unless the runways are of sufficient length and width to enable tugs to hook up the gliders from the ground while on the wing. But even the fast-named method does not solve the problem, for it is certain that in air operations of this kind a large number of gliders will be damaged in landing and so cannot be returned to their starting points by air.

GLIDER-BORNE TROOPS

Landed on Fort-Tap

The Belgian fort was put out of action within thirty minutes of the beginning of the German assault upon the Low Countries and France by glider-borne troops who descended in the night behind and even on top of the fort and who were reinforced by parachute troops. The bridge guards were attacked not from the front but from the rear. The German armies poured over the bridges and the great, or rather supposably great, bastion of the Albert Canal proved almost valueless, due to the employment of new tactical and military methods of war.

But nothing of any importance in modes of war has been introduced by the Germans which has not swiftly been seized upon by the Allies and bettered. The Germans have been wise -- they do not believe sufficiently in their new methods. One can perceive in case after case that the torpid mind of military orthodoxy interfered with the more advanced thinkers in the German military hierarchy. It is well for the world that it was so, or we should not now have turned the tables on our foe; there would have been no time to do so.

As to the Germans who first used the glider as a means of taking troops into battle made provision for this form of military transport on so small a scale that their victories won by novel methods left them dry of feet. Efficient to sweep them on to complete victory. What would have been the fate of Britain in 1940 had Germany possessed the 1000 gliders of today that could have alighted in the darkness in numbers in many parts of Britain? Is there any speculation to guess at the fact, but undoubtedly the war has gone as it has gone for us. We should have known the meaning of fighting in our own homeland.

Now nearly four years later, a great air force was landed within the heart of Northern Burma by gliders, complete with all sorts of equipment for turning fields marked out for the initial landings into airfields suitable for the use of troop transport aircraft. And that meant no small parcels of equipment. Troop transport aircraft require considerable fore-and-aft and lateral room to alight. The approaches to the actual alighting area must be reasonably good, especially for night landings, for no air

CRASH-LANDING Safely in Confined Spaces

It is imperative to get an airfield into operation with the minimum delay and to provide for the adequate protection of that airfield. This means that a fighter force must fly in as soon as possible after an airfield is opened. For instance, in the case of the Burma air expedition, the scene of operations was too distant from airfields in India for adequate air cover to be provided from there. In this case, one airfield is not enough. Satellite airfields are required to allow for dispersal in the event of enemy air attack succeeding in breaking through the fighter screen, so that the temporary damage of one airfield will not hold up the stream of supplies and reinforcements. In this way, by the use of air transports, a really big army can be built up in an area where the enemy may have hoped that he was in occupation.

Why, it may be asked, are gliders used for the initial operation? Why not use air transports straight away? The answer is that gliders can be crash-landed in comparatively small spaces with relative safety to their occupants. They have no hot engines and lubricating oils or petrol to catch fires, and so on. They can be more lightly built, so that if they begin to disintegrate their parts may disperse to cause injury to the occupants.

And they are far easier and quicker to build than air transports, requiring a relative handful of man-hours for their production compared with a power-driven air transport. Moreover, two or more gliders can be towed by one air-tug, so that a large force can be flown in quickly. And the gliders can get down in rapid succession one after another.

Our admiration should go to the pilots who steered their gliders through the night skies over the jungle hills of Burma, for flying a towed glider is no easy ride. The glider strains and yaws on the end of its silk nylon rope as it follows the wake of the tug, leaves in the air, and makes great lumps about the sky. It is no way a "willow" tow. It is so much dead-weight, a troop-packed empty airframe, that the air-tug's extra freight is absolutely dependent on skilful handling. Pilots have to work hard to keep the tow on the correct line, and the glider pilots who landed in Burma have made their mark in military history.

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Corsair is the Fleet Air Arm’s Latest Fighter

A new addition to our air striking power at sea is the American-built Vought-Sikorsky Corsair aircraft, a single-seat ship-board fighter powered with a 1,850 h.p. Pratt-and-Whitney Double Wasp engine; wing-span 40 feet, length 30 feet.

A notable event was the day recently on which a complete squadron of these planes joined a British aircraft carrier off the north-west coast of Scotland: the first operational Fleet Air Arm squadron, equipped with the new Corsairs, were to make their first landings on a British flight-deck. The superstructure and gun wells of the carrier were crowded with officers and ratings as the leading Corsair came in to sight. Apart from one which crashed on the flight-deck as the result of a miscalculation on its pilot’s part, all made perfect landings.

THE CORSAIR PILOTS had put in months of hard training for the great day when their squadron should join the carrier. Some had carried out deck-landing training at an airfield in America, then perfecting landings on the flight-deck of a carrier before returning to England to start their operational careers in real earnest.

The plane that crashed (l). The pilot was unhurt and his aircraft was removed by the self-propelling crane seen in the background. A Corsair on the deck-landing area (3) starts to taxi away; folding its wings (4), it will then enter the lift which will bear it down into the hangar.

*Photo, British Official*
Rumania and Hungary Now in Parlous Plight

GERMAN MILITARY OCCUPATION of Hungary, reported to have begun on March 19, 1944, was complete by March 22. In Rumania, German forces were considerably strengthened from Austria. To the east, the Red Army was over the Dniester and had reached points less than 25 miles from the Rumanian frontier.

Gains secured by Hungary at the expense of Rumania, Slovakia and Yugoslavia as reward for her participation in Germany’s war are now of no account; her fate is comparable with that of Rumania, whose men were sacrificed before Odessa, Sebastopol and in the Caucasus.

Concrete fortifications along the Hungarian frontier (3) are today of as little value to Hungary as was the Maginot Line to France. On the lower Dniester, 32 miles east of Kushnirew, the Tighina Bridge (1) links Bessarabia with Russia; at Tiraspol, 8 miles from Tighina, this Rumanian sentry (2) keeps anxious watch. See map on p. 677.

Photos: Moor
BASIC ENGLISH is receiving a very surprising amount of attention at present, thanks to Mr. Churchill's interest in it, and I think that from the point of view of international relationships it is the most desirable that this should be so. I would point out, however, that Basic English can be of no conceivable use to an Englishman who has learned his native tongue in the natural way that all native tongues are learned, and it would be a truly terrifying quagmire for English literature if our schools were to teach British boys and girls only the language vocabulary which the inventor of Basic English has contrived for the expression of all ordinary thoughts on the common affairs of life. It is also a complete and fairly serious attack on the study of foreign languages—and here again more from the commercial point of view than the literary. Presented on the principles of Basic English is going to be of immense importance in the future and might well result in making the English who are not notably gifted in foreign languages, quite a polyglot people. I cannot imagine, however, that Basic English will ever be popular with the coloured citizens of the United States, who have a passion for using long and sententious words. A Friend of mine tells a story of travelling in the Southern States and having some doubt about arriving at a station in time for one of the first coaches. He discussed it with the Negro conductor, who set his mind at rest with these consoling words: "You can always phone, you can always telephone, you can always telephone, you can always telephone."

I hope everyone who reads this is doing all he or she can do to make the "Salute the Soldier" week a success in their financial support efforts. It seems so successful in providing money for ships and aircraft. A good start has been made and the collection will go on until July ends. We must make sure that the total is at least as high as the earlier drive for the war fund yielded, satisfactory though they were, all things considered. Now we have an incentive to invest in War Savings, and the total of all kinds which did not exist before. We can feel it is the last effort we shall have to make before money's strength is broken in Europe. After that there will be a great victory on this side of the world which will restore the conditions of men and women and armaments, and the cost of the war will be somewhat less burdensome. Apart from the sums that will be raised to meet this burden, it is a very good thing that the Army should be publicized a bit more than it has been during this war. We used the post in the past to hear only of Tommy Atkins. The Navy was the "Special Service" and the Air Force didn't exist. Now both the sailors and the airmen have to outdo the soldier. It is time the balance was restored.

I have known British generals with all sorts of queer habits—or I should say habits which are quite unknown in British generals. I never knew one who learned poems and enjoyed repeating them to himself. That is Field Marshal Wavell's hobby, and he has let us know what are the poems he has learned in the rear of him. It is not surprising that he rates Kipling very highly among his favourites, but it is surprising that he does not want to be a journalist for Tennessee. I should have thought anybody who liked the one would like the other. They should have much the same qualities, metrical perfection among others, and a sort of super-Man-in-the-street mentality. You may wonder at my calling Kipling a Victorian. But if you look back over his work you will see that he made his name during the reign of the old Queen, and it was just about the time she died that he had his very dangerous illness in America and only just scraped through, with the result that never afterwards did his work appear to have quite the same vigour and distinction. His "Soldiers Three" were soldiers of the Queen, and his finest poem, "Recessional," was inspired by his reflections on her Diamond Jubilee. I hope the Viceroy of India (Lord Wavell assumed this appointment on Oct. 20, 1943) does not recite Kipling to Indians, by the way!

If you have a long distance to go, you must either take a Pullman or else arrive utterly worn and weary at your destination.

Whether hospitals "supported by voluntary contributions" will keep going when the new Health scheme promised by the Government comes into force seems to be doubtful. Those who have been the most liberal subscribers to them in the past are not likely to be able to afford that luxury seems to be the future. The New Rich do not support charities as the Old Rich did. For the inheritors of wealth it was a tradition that they should set aside a certain sum every year for "charities." Those who have made fortunes seldom feel any urge or obligation to do that. A few like Lord Nuffield give enormous amounts, but generally speaking the charities find it more and more difficult to collect money. Those whom they succeed in tapping are for the most part the stage army. Their names figure in a great many lists and they are continually approached by the compilers of other lists who wish to extend their benefactions. It is a "vicious" circle, if I may so describe it, without the deyce on the objects on which the money is spent. The appearance of one annual report of two annual reports leads to your being urged to figure in a lot more. I have experienced this myself. Evidently the supporters of charities are very limited in number and becoming more so.

One of the military terms that have come into general use of late, as "terrain" did during the last war, is "logistics." This ominous monosyllable verbiage comes, I believe, from the French originally. The derivation is from loge and it means anything to do with the logistics of soldiers. The smaller Oxford Dictionary says: "The art of moving and quartering troops.

I don't know how it is now, but in the old "terrain" Russia there used to be black markets for all kinds of things, long before we heard of them here. If you wanted tickets for the Imperial Ballet, for instance, you were often told at the box-office that none were to be had; but they could always be bought just round the corner from a speculator. Same with railway reservations. At the station ticket-offices you would be told no places were vacant, but there were people ready to sell you what you wanted at a slightly increased price. Now I am told by a friend just back from America that this bad practice which once flourished in a despotic State has invaded the most democratic of countries. Pullman sleepers are cornered and sold by outside speculators because there is such a run on them. Trains are crammed, a large proportion of the travelers being men in uniform, though that was not true of the crowd marooned in Florida, rich holiday-makers who had to queue up day after day for weeks and return in conditions they described as "horrible."
They Will Help Naples to Rise Again

SCHOOL ONCE MORE has become part of the everyday lives of these children, shepherded by their teacher through a ruthlessly caved-in street of Naples, which the 9th Army cleared of the enemy on Oct. 1, 1943. With textbooks supplied by the Allied Military Government, schools in all liberated areas of Italy are resuming the education of the rising generation. This time with instruction founded on sane lines, substituted by those insidious doctrines formerly taught.

Photo, U.S. OFW


K.S.