

Germany in Line For Hard Blows In Near Future

British Air Minister Has Served Solemn Notice Offensive Coming

London, March 4.—(CP)—Sir Archibald Sinclair, air secretary, declared to-day that the R.A.F. will synchronize hard blows at German industry and transport with the expected Nazi spring offensive in Russia and, aided by United States-built fighters and dive bombers, will demonstrate the superiority over the German air force "in the not distant future."

At the same time, he served notice that Britain would not allow "German production of tanks and tank engines, aero engines and lorries to go on unhindered merely because it is situated in occupied territory of France."

Last night's attack on industrial targets in the suburbs of Paris, in which he said some buildings were blown hundreds of feet into the air, represented no change of R.A.F. policy, he said.

Bombing Has Great Effect

For five months R.A.F. bombings has curtailed industrial work "in a wide area" about Lille in northern France by as much as 50 per cent., the air minister told the house of commons.

Britain's spring bombing offensive will be aided, he said, by new British Lancaster bombers, "the most powerful in the world," which are coming into service in "increased numbers" and will be loaded soon with bombs of a greatly enlarged size and devastating power.

The R.A.F. and Royal Navy have virtually closed Dover strait to enemy ships which formerly went through at a rate of 25 a month.

Significantly, Sir Archibald said the Germans in recent months had greatly reduced the percentage of live bombers in their air force be-

cause this type is only useful where air superiority already has been established.

Britain now is able to re-equip her tactical reconnaissance squadrons with the best of American fighter planes.

He said also that the United States also is going to send dive bombers to the R.A.F.; that a type "markedly superior" to the German Junkers 87 dive bombers will soon be available.

He added that the R.A.F. intends to resume the bomber offensive against Germany "on the largest possible scale at the earliest possible moment."

Develop New Planes

He disclosed that further new types of British aircraft, "some of revolutionary design, are ripening."

He said the armament of the British fighters already is superior to the best of the Germans yet encountered and that further improvements will be made in Hurricanes and Spitfires.

Despite the exceptional inactivity of the last two months, he added, the tonnage of bombs dropped by R.A.F. bombers was 50 per cent. greater than in January and February, 1941.

Alluding to criticism that R.A.F. co-operation with the army has been faulty, he said the "R.A.F. has beaten the Germans in every other form of air fighting and means to beat them in army co-operation."

A "substantial number" of bomber and fighter squadrons are constantly practising army co-operation he said.

He said the R.A.F.'s biggest task since last June had been to "give the utmost possible help to our Russian allies in their gigantic battle against the main German armies."

Speaking of the work of one of the R.A.F.'s branches, he said 40 per cent. of the bomber command's total effort in the last year "has been expended upon targets which the navy asked them to bomb."

In offensive operations from British bases, he added, the R.A.F. destroyed 813 enemy fighter planes, against British losses of 537 planes.

With the aid of the Royal Navy, he added, the "coastal command had driven the U-boats right out of the western approaches" to Britain.

East coast convoys were so well protected between Harwich and New Haven, he said, that "they came through with clock-like regularity."

During six months preceding the British advance in Libya, the R.A.F. and naval aircraft sank 175,000 tons of merchant shipping in the Mediterranean, he said, remarking that to send a ship to the bottom with 50 tanks is a "big contribution" to the land battle.

Promising further aerial co-operation with the Russians, he said: "Hitler is preparing his spring offensive. . . . Its impact will fall upon Russia. We shall not stand helplessly aloof. The bomber command will strike hard at the vital centres of the German war industry and transport."

He predicted that the R.A.F., "in the not distant future," would remove all doubt about its superiority over the Germans.

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