

Record of 60 U.S. Bombers Lost in Schweinfurt Raid

**Six Hundred Men in Fortresses Costing
\$18,000,000—104 of Enemy Downed
During Furious Air Battle**

London, Oct. 15.—(BUP)—The United States suffered its biggest single aerial loss of the war—60 Flying Fortresses costing \$18,000,000 and carrying 600 men—yesterday in a raid that crippled and perhaps destroyed plants producing half of all the bearings required by the German war machine, it was revealed to-day.

Greatest Opposition Yet

The giant four-engined bombers encountered the greatest fighter opposition yet seen in the European theatre, an official statement said, and, with the aid of fighters which escorted them part of the 900-mile flight, shot down at least 104 and perhaps 149 enemy aircraft. Only two of the escorting Thunderbolt fighters were lost.

Returning crewmen reported that the targets, three roller-bearing plants at Schweinfurt in central Germany, were left wreathed in smoke and flames, but only later reconnaissance photographs can prove whether the results justified the cost to the Allies in men and machines.

A statement from American army headquarters here said that the bomber crews were "jubilantly confident that they had done a good bombing job again" and described the damage to the bearings plants as a "severe blow to German production."

Air experts agreed that if the three plants were smashed to such a degree that they will be out of production for many months, the effort was worth the cost. No engine, whether in plane, ship, tank or locomotive, can operate without bearings and Brig.-Gen. Frederick L. Anderson, bomber chief com-

mand, recently described Schweinfurt the "most important target in Europe."

On one previous occasion—August 17—the Eighth U. S. Air Force lost 59 heavy bombers in a single day, but in two raids, 36 failing to return from an attack on the same targets at Schweinfurt, 65 miles east of Frankfurt, and 23 from a shuttle raid on Regensburg, 55 miles southeast of Nuremberg.

The Royal Air Force's biggest single loss in a night raid was 58 in an attack on Berlin last August 23.

An average of 400 bombers have been participating in recent American raids on Europe and if that average were maintained yesterday, the 60 bombers lost would constitute 15 per cent. of the raiding force, five per cent. more than the usual maximum that can be afforded.

A Zurich dispatch said one Fortress made a forced landing in Switzerland with three of the 10 crewmen wounded. Two of the crewmen were believed to have parachuted over Germany.

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