

# 7,000 Planes Hit at Reich In Day Attack

London, March 15 (AP).—The German Army's general staff headquarters near Berlin was smashed today in one phase of a 2,100-plane American raid, which was followed tonight by the 24th consecutive RAF night bombing of the enemy capital. The attacks concluded one of the biggest and most successful days of the war for the Allied Air Force.

The American bombers sowed 3,500 tons of high explosives and incendiaries in the vicinity of Berlin, including the German Army's nerve centre at Zossen, 20 miles south, where some 650 especially briefed bombardiers of the 8th Air Force had little trouble picking out the target in clear weather.

## Airmen Jubilant

At Zossen the highest ranking officers of the Wehrmacht were believed engrossed in attempting to run the war on both the Eastern and Western fronts. Returning airmen were jubilant over the success of the mission.

Anti-aircraft fire, though heavy at other points near Berlin, was meagre at Zossen. Sixteen bombers and three fighters were reported missing from the 8th's operations yesterday.

"While part of the German Army general staff headquarters at Zossen is deep underground," a staff officer of the 8th Air Force said, "today's attack by about 650 Flying Fortresses and Liberators was aimed at paralyzing the army nerve centre through destruction of administration buildings, vital records, barracks, utilities and communications and transport systems."

Meanwhile the RAF was hurling 11-ton "town busters" at Western Germany, and the British planes came back after dark for blows at Berlin; Hagen, an industrial town on the edge of the Ruhr, and Misbourg, three miles east of Hannover, where an oil refinery was hit.

## Weather Gives Break

Some 6,000 to 7,000 planes were hurled against the Germans from the west, south and east, as a long-awaited break in the weather released Allied air power in near-record strength.

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Tonight the sustained air assault apparently was being carried into its 32nd consecutive day. The German radio flashed warnings throughout the evening that bomber formations were heading over Western and Northwestern Germany and that "spearheads" of the aerial formations were racing toward Brandenburg, the German capital's own Province.

From Italy American heavy bombers struck to within 65 miles southeast of Berlin in their deepest penetration of Germany, while on the Western front hundreds of medium and light bombers battled in support of ground forces. On the Eastern front, too, Russian planes were in the air.

## Rail Viaduct Smashed

The RAF's great new 22,000-pound bombs, which made their debut Wednesday, were dropped on the vital Arnsburg rail viaduct 27 miles southeast of Dortmund. Wednesday the strategic viaduct was plastered with the RAF's six-ton "block busters," while warfare's greatest package of explosive was loosed on the great double-track Bielefeld Viaduct, north of the Ruhr.

Six to eight of the viaduct's spans were buckled, an Air Ministry announcement said, describing both the Bielefeld and Arnsburg spans, carrying lines to the Ruhr, as the "most vulnerable points on what now are the most important railroad routes, both military and economically, in the whole of Germany."

Other Bomber Command activity today included an attack by RAF and RCAF planes on benzol plants near Essen and Castropraxel, in the Ruhr.

The United States 8th Air Force baffled the defenders of Berlin today as more than 1,350 heavy bombers, guarded by 750 fighters, roared

straight for Berlin in a 300-mile-long sky-train, and then split in half to loop around the capital for strikes on Zossen, on the south, and the jammed Oranienburg rail yards, seven miles north of Greater Berlin.

The bold operation had been held in readiness for ideal bombing weather.

Oranienburg, aerial photos has showed, was packed with supplies for the Eastern front.

As the bombers thrashed over Berlin, smoke could be seen rising from within the city, which was hit Wednesday night by two-ton blockbusters for the 23rd straight night by RAF Mosquitos. During the night RAF and RCAF heavy bombers also struck at German troops at Homburg and other points and hammered a synthetic oil plant at Lutzkendorf in Saxony.

Before noon on the Western front the United States 9th Air Force had made nearly 500 trips, and as ground fog evaporated later in the day on some sections of the front hundreds of other planes took off.

## Joint Operations

Rome, March 15 (Reuters).—For the first time in this war United States and Russian bombers have simultaneously attacked targets in the same area. Yesterday American pilots, pounding rail yards at Nove Zamky in Slovakia, north of Komarom, had their first view of the Russian Air Force in a joint operation.

In some places Mediterranean Allied force planes bombed targets within 20 miles of the Russian front line.

Aground in Italy, a flame-thrower-supported German attack on a British 8th Army strongpoint was the highlight of fighting in which forward positions underwent no change.

The 8th Army troops drove off the attackers north of Cotignola, about 15 miles inland from the Adriatic coast.

Sporadic German artillery fire fell on the 5th Army front, where scattered patrol clashes occurred and only light contact was made with Germans.

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