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Seal Off Cherbourg Peninsula

Claim Allies Will Quickly Nullify Robot

Experts Confident, Call Plane a Flop; Sirens, Guns Kept Busy

While alert followed alert and ack-ack guns of all calibers rumbled and banged away at the Germans' pilotless flying bombs over southern England over the weekend, Allied army and air experts agreed last night that Hitler's robot plane was a flop as an important military weapon.

Officials predicted that the robot bomber would soon be mastered. They disclosed that it called for no new anti-aircraft instruments or detectors, although fresh dispositions have been chosen for some guns, and that tremendous barrages have been put up in the Channel Straits area to destroy them before they strike on land. At the same time, Allied planes have been bombing the Pas de Calais area from which they are launched.

But the robots were great stuff for the Nazi propagandists. The German people and the hard-pressed troops in Normandy were regaled around the clock with ridiculous claims about the effects the new weapon was having in England. The highspot of these was a German News Agency report from Stockholm that "the British Government has ordered the immediate evacuation of London."

And conveniently overlooking the fact that the robots' maximum range is about 150 miles, the agency expressed a "hope" it said was held in Berlin "that New York will soon get a taste of the new reprisal weapon."

Some Damage, Casualties
A German "military spokesman" declared that "there is no possibility of shooting down the dynamite meteors," in the face of completely authenticated British announcements that they were being hit and destroyed by flak. For military reasons, no announcement was made of the number and proportion of them being brought down. Some of them, however, caused damage and casualties.

The Germans gave this explanation as to why they were not being used against the Allied troops in Normandy: "At present the beachhead is altogether too small. The effect of the dynamite meteors is so terrific that they cannot be used on a small front for fear of hitting our own troops."

The robots are believed to be incapable of hitting a specific target with any degree of accuracy, although they can be aimed for a particular area. They apparently are uncontrolled, once they have been launched, and their course is affected by the wind and other factors.

The course and height probably can be set before the machine leaves its launch.

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Where Nazis Are Bottled Up



American troops drove a cordon across the Cherbourg peninsula yesterday. A swift drive from St. Sauveur le Vicomte reached the west coast in vicinity of Barneville and St. Lo D'Ourville, fishing ports half dozen miles apart.

Piano in Battered Villa Dims War—a Moment

By Bud Hutton

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE, June 17 (delayed)—The communiques can tell only of battles, of men and material in mass, of places taken and lost. War is more than that—it is little things you remember, which will have no bearing on the red and blue lines shifting across the maps. War is quick glimpses, like scenes on an old stereopticon, that sometimes wake you in the night and bring their own music, like an old violin, or the wind in the Normandy trees.

'Robots' Coast Battered Anew

Pas de Calais Is Hit 6th Time in 3 Days; 1,300 Heavies Bomb Reich

By Joe Fleming

Launching the sixth Allied air attack in three days on France's robot plane coast, up to 250 Liberators yesterday afternoon pounded the Pas de Calais after a morning mission in which the Eighth Air Force, switching from operations in support of ground troops on the Continent, dispatched more than 1,300 B17s and B24s to bomb oil plants at Hamburg and other targets in northwest Germany. It was the largest force of U.S. heavies ever sent against strategic objectives.

The record American assault on the Reich combined with the RAF's shattering weekend blows to press home to Germany the Allied air forces' determination to smash enemy industry as well as beachhead communications and pilotless plane installations.

No enemy fighter opposition was encountered by the bombers, but 11 were lost, presumably to flak, as the Germans, in lieu of interceptors, threw up one of the greatest ack-ack barrages of the war.

Although the Forts and Liberators outnumbered their escorting fighters by more than two to one, not one German air- (Continued on page 2)

SHAEF Lauds Aid of French

A special weekend communique from SHAEF credited the French "army of the interior" with "delaying considerably" the movement of German reserves to the Normandy combat zone through widespread sabotage.

Both the size of the "forces of the interior" and the scope of their activities have been increased since June 6, D-Day, the bulletin explained.

The underground forces, SHAEF said, have undertaken "a large plant of sabotage, which includes in part the paralyzing of rail and road traffic and the interruption of telegraph and telephone communications. In the majority of these cases their objectives have been attained."

Yanks Slice Through To Sea in West; Hold Belt Six Miles Deep

Trap Closed on Germans in Vital Port; Enemy May Make Bitter Last Stand; Local Fighting on Other Fronts

By William R. Spear

American infantrymen, in a swift advance, slashed through the west coast of the Cherbourg peninsula yesterday along a corridor six to seven miles wide to seal off the great port at the tip and forge a steel collar for its German defenders.

Yanks of the Ninth and 82nd Airborne Divisions, fanning out west, north-west and southwest from captured St. Sauveur le Vicomte, accomplished the important breakthrough with the support of fighters and fighter-bombers and of the artillery's 75 and 105-mm. guns. The two divisions are veterans of Sicily; the Ninth also fought in Africa and the 82nd in Italy.

The Americans reached the coast at Barneville-sur-Mere and St. Lo d'Ourville, fishing ports a half dozen miles apart. The capture of Barneville, on Cape de Carteret, represented a 13-mile advance northwest from St. Sauveur.

The cross-peninsula belt thus ranged—in distance below Cherbourg—18 miles to Barneville and 11 miles to the Montebourg area on the east coast (beeline distances). And the perimeter of the whole Normandy front was enlarged to 116 miles.

May Make Fierce Stand

The German News Agency claimed that the cutting of the peninsula would not "fundamentally change the situation, since the German command has provided the fortress area of Cherbourg with sufficient troops, equipment and other weapons."

This indicated that the Germans might be prepared to make a Sebastopol stand for the deep-water port. High ground forming the perimeter around Cherbourg contains many rocky outcroppings which have been turned into strong defensive positions and which give the Nazis good observation over the American lines.

Reports from 21st Army Group headquarters, however, were that the Germans made desperate efforts to withdraw their forces from the fast-closing trap at the 11th hour but were severely handicapped by incessant strafing from the air. There was no official indication of the strength of the enemy forces caught in the peninsula tip, but a New York radio broadcast put them at 25,000 to 30,000.

The Nazis claimed they had destroyed the 1,830-foot-long quays and other harbor installations at Cherbourg, but the Allied experience at Naples indicated that ports cannot be destroyed so thoroughly that they cannot be restored. As the Allied armies approached Naples, the Mediterranean command received almost hourly pictures of the Germans' demolitions, and even while the enemy still held the Italian port, a special Navy board studied each picture and planned means of repairing the destruction within a few hours after it took place. When the port finally was taken, the Allies knew exactly what work was necessary and it became usable again in very short time. The same may be done at Cherbourg.

Report St. Lo Entered

The same enemy report which attempted to minimize the Cherbourg breakthrough declared that "decisions affecting the further development on the invasion fronts will not fall there but in the sector between Caen and St. Lo," and other German sources told of a new Allied (Continued on page 2)

Both lie close together a little south of the naval base of Ancona on the main coastal road to the north. Civitanova, most northerly of the two, is 60 miles north of Pescara.

Supported by units of the Anglo-American navy and air forces, French troops under the command of Gen. de Lettre de Tassigny yesterday were striking inland on southern Elba, after three bridgeheads secured Saturday had been joined to form a solid front. Algiers radio said they attacked from Corsica.

The capture of the historic island where Napoleon was exiled midway between Corsica and the east coast of Italy, virtually would close the sea route between Corsica and Italy.

The Elba attack and the unconfirmed report of new mainland landings came as the Eighth Army swept on 20 miles from captured Foligno, on highway three, to the outskirts of Perugia, important road and rail center 80 miles north of Rome on the highway to Florence.

To the west, the Fifth Army, meeting increasing opposition, pushed steadily up the Tyrrhenian coast from Grosseto.

Meanwhile, German radio reported that on the Italian Adriatic coast, Allied airborne and commando units landed between the ports of San Giorgio and Civitanova.

Two seconds later a Jerry shell landed about 50 yards from us. The shell obviously was meant for the bridge on which we were standing.

Werner, Hottel and I had seen enough. We tore out fast in our G1 truck, much to the scorn of our two passengers, who preferred to stay on.

After we returned to camp that night we found out how long Hutton and Scherschel had "stayed on."

About 15 minutes after we left, Hutton claimed traffic that looked like a Barnum and Bailey road show started coming out of the town. That made them a little uneasy, but when they saw jeep loads of Rangers going hell-bent for election past them to the rear they figured it was time to depart.

That's when the Hutton-Scherschel retreat began . . . on foot. Witnesses saw they did a mile in nothing flat.

Guns Make S&S Scribe Scurry As the Inspections Never Did

By Haynes Thompson

Stars and Stripes Unit Correspondent

NINTH AF ADVANCE HQ, France, June 15 (delayed)—Correspondents in this sector of Normandy claimed today that Stars and Stripes Reporter Bud Hutton and Frank Scherschel, of Life magazine, had established a long-distance track record for newspapermen in the beachhead.

The mark was set by Hutton and Scherschel when they dashed out of Carentan in the wake of German mortar fire and a Nazi threat to retake the town shortly after it had fallen to American forces.

Doug Werner, of the United Press, Dick Hottel, of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and I were starting out in a truck for St. Mere Eglise when Hutton and Scherschel hitched a ride with us as far as Carentan.

Tank Losses Called Heavy

WASHINGTON, June 18 (Reuter)—Well-informed government sources said today the military high command had ordered "an extremely heavy" increase in tank production because of reports from the Normandy beachhead that expenditure of tanks was running three times the anticipated rate.

The same sources said the decision meant that U.S. plants which halted tank production some months ago must reopen.

Production officials said that experience in France had also shown that heavy truck production—now running about 25 per cent behind schedule—must be pushed up to schedule immediately, as trucks would be the only means of military transport in place of the shattered French railways.

The War Today

France—Americans push through to west coast of Cherbourg peninsula, isolating port and German troops on northern sector . . . front grows to 116 miles . . . local fighting continues in central and eastern areas.

Air War—Liberators pound Pas de Calais in sixth raid in three days on France's robot plane coast . . . More than 1,300 B17s and B24s hit oil plants in Hamburg and other targets in northwest Germany . . . Ninth AF gives direct support to ground troops.

Italy—Elba "substantially in Allied hands" after landings from Corsica Saturday . . . Germans report new leapfrog landing on Adriatic coast 60 miles north of Pescara . . . Eighth Army reaches outskirts of Perugia, road and rail center on highway to Florence.

Pacific—American land forces extend beachhead on Saipan Island, 1,300 miles from Yokohama, to 5 1/2 miles long and 2 miles deep . . . Tokyo reports U.S. Task force bombs Bonin Islands, 550 miles from Tokyo, for second time in three days . . . Truk attacked again.

Russia—Finns order non-essential civilians evacuated from Vipuri as Red Army closes within 20 miles of seaport, makes first dent in last line of fortifications . . . Red bombers attack Norwegian port of supply for seven Nazi divisions in Finland.

