

SENSATIONAL PICTURES: R.A.F. BOMB MASSAWA.

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Title: The Battle
Track: The Last Outpost..Battle.
Discs: 406.343.252.232.377.254.377.
Lines: Stagg.
Voice: do.

Some of the biggest troop convoys that have ever sailed converged on the Suez Canal Zone, both from the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Neither the British nor Indian, nor Australian contingents were attacked either by aircraft or submarine. As the great liners came to port, crowded with some of the finest troops who have ever fought for the Empire, Hitler and Mussolini were already recasting their plan. Unable to assault Britain the Axis powers hope to switch the offensive to the Middle East. Britain anticipates them, and for several days troops disembarked here, as ship succeeded ship at the quayside. It would seem that the Axis is committed to an attack against both ends of the Suez Canal. Now that invasion plans have miscarried, no other field offers Germany and Italy so spectacular a prize. If the attack comes it will be more than welcomed by the fine army the Empire has assembled in this part of the world.

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Over the Sudan country bordering Eritrea R.A.F. planes make daily reconnaissance of Italian military movements. The enemy accelerates his preparation, but from the eyes of well-armed aircraft nothing is concealed. Each plane brings back invaluable photographs.

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Intelligence officers piece the information together. An expert eye reads the significance of the pictures. Here, plainly, are submarines based at Massawa, the Eritrean harbour on the Red Sea. Appropriate orders are sent to bombing-planes, which are standing by 24 hours a day for such opportunities.

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Off comes the sand-cover from the carburettor air-intake, and a camera at the far end of the 'drome gets the picture, and three bombers roar over the sand.

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Local "Fussies" are getting used to airplanes. The hair fashions are developed for when they go courting. Goodness knows what

(continued)

R.A.F. Bomb Massawa continued /

they think about the war; eh, poker face ?

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A fairly short flight brings the bombers over Massawa. This seaport was in Italian hands long before the conquest of neighbouring Abyssinia. Hence it's well equipped to harbour light warships and submarines. Before joining Hitler, Mussolini established a strong force in these waters, a base from which to harry British shipping in the Red Sea. Over the quayside our bombers open fire, and now we know what a stick of bombs means.

Here are some more for luck. They must think this place is Hamm. Those craters below are evidence of previous social calls.

Next our planes turn their attention to submarines in the harbour. Behind the pilot, Paramount's cameraman Ted Genock now shoots the most amazing bombing pictures in newsreel history.

Boom defences are strung round the harbour against the possibility of attack by British submarines. A warship has similar protection but not against the R.A.F.

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Notice the outline of a ship on her side, victim of an earlier raid.

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Leaving the harbour the bombers turn inland and here again the ground is pitted with craters.

Tons lighter than when they set out the planes head homeward. They'll report not only the results of the raid but news of any troop movements they spotted. Undoubtedly in quality Britain now has the finest airforce in the world. In the Middle East, as at home, the R.A.F. is dealing staggering blows before the enemy even gets into his stride. Under these daily attacks Massawa will be of little use as a naval base, and it may get so hot that Italian ships there will create a precedent and put to sea.

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Back with photographic records the pilots report to headquarters. They bring the best of evidence that the Royal Air Force has prepared the way, and the army will find its task much smoother in consequence. In the Middle East Britain is well served by the incomparable personnel of the R.A.F.
