

NEW AIR CHIEF WILL KEEP BOMBERS BUSY.

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Back from their routine raids over enemy country the hard-worked bombing planes of the R.A.F. sometimes bear scars of conflict. As soon as the big machines come to rest, ground crews set to work. Little heard of by the public, highly skilled craftsmen repair and maintain the bombers. This behind-the-scenes activity ensures that no avoidable defect shall ever put pilot or plane in jeopardy. Machine-guns are kept up to raiding-pitch. When wings or fuselage have been damaged, either by anti-aircraft or fighter-planes, on-the-spot repairs soon have things right again.

Every day the rubber dinghy is tested. When released it inflates itself from a cylinder of compressed air. Only a week ago the crew of a bomber were afloat in a dinghy for four days in the stormy sea, and were then picked up safe and sound.

Reported O.K. the great aircraft go back to duty - wings over Germany.

Newly appointed Chief of Air Staff in place of Sir Cyril Newall is Sir Charles Portal, shown here with two officers of his staff. Hitherto Sir Charles, who is 47, has been head of the Bomber Command. At the Palace a sergeant in the bombing service received the highest award for bravery, Sergeant Hannah, here with his father and brother. His pilot, Pilot-Officer Connor, whose wife and sister are with him, received the D.F.C.

Over enemy territory these two heroes had their plane hit. Sergeant Hannah tackled a raging fire in the bomber compartment, while the pilot flew on, flames almost touching him.

Hannah himself was severely burned but he put the fire out. His C.O. said it was the bravest action he had ever known. The distinction of being the youngest V.C. goes to 18-year-old John Hannah.
