

PLOESTI AFLAME, CAPTURED GERMAN PICTURES%

This was the scene after the last American raid on the Rumanian oilfields. Ploesti provided Germany with more than a quarter of the oil needed to keep the war machine going full speed. ~~about~~. This raid was one of the heaviest individual blows delivered against the ~~enemy~~ contracting ring of steel round Hitler's Empire. It symbolized the fate overtaking the enemy, the Third Reich itself going up in smoke. ~~Well-equipped~~ Brigades of German firemen, permanently stationed at Ploesti, were helpless against this devouring conflagration.

(after night) The immediate effect of <sup>the</sup> ~~this highly successful~~ ~~raid~~ was to make the Wehrmacht short of oil at the southern end of the Russian front, a factor which contributed to the German defeat in that vital theatre.

~~Now~~ Ploesti ~~itself~~ is now in Russian hands, but <sup>for some time</sup> ~~it~~ ~~had~~ ~~ceased~~ ~~to~~ ~~benefit~~ ~~the~~ Germans, thanks to this valient exploit of the U.S. Air Force.