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### OPERATION FIDO

Continuous lines of petrol burners are the vital feature of Fog Investigation Dispersal Operations - or, in R.A.F. parlance, Operation Fido. Moisture in the atmosphere is the cause of most fogs in Britain. Fido consists of several types of burners, installed close to the sides of aerodrome runways. Their job is to generate the intense heat required to disperse the moisture from fog over air strips. The heat zone is 1,000 yards long by 50 yards wide and reaches a height of 100 feet. The petrol flame barrage generates heavy smoke clouds in the first stage of its grapple with fog - the pilot's worst enemy. The smoke clears quickly as the petrol evaporates. Fog clearance on the landing-strip is achieved in six minutes. Planes, touching down on a clear runway, present an eerie mirage effect to the camera stationed outside the burner lines. The fierce up-draught of heated air plays an accompanying symphony.

Air view of a Fido airfield on a clear day. First operational use of Fido was in November 1943. Now there are fifteen Fido fields in Britain, two on American soil and one in Europe. What they meant to British and American airmen, you can hear from Air Vice Marshal Bennett, chief of Pathfinder force of bomber leaders and the R.A.F.'s youngest Air Marshal -

"I think that the public should know that Fido in this war has saved over ten thousand air crew lives. Moreover, Fido has made it possible to carry out operations in base weather, which would have stopped all flying in the past. An example of that was in the Ardennes offensive, Rundstedt tried to break through, bomber support was necessary, heavy support, and the Pathfinders were required to mark, the first band of base weather was fog, thick fog, the Pathfinders were there however, because Fido made it possible for the Pathfinders to take off and land in spite of this thick fog. Moreover, it has been of tremendous value to crews returning from operations to know that they could get down at their bases regardless of the weather."

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd, Minister of Information in Mr. Churchill's caretaker government, was mainly responsible for "Fido" when he was chief of the Petroleum Warfare Department.

"Mr. Churchill has started it all, and we could never have done the job without his powerful backing right through, and Gentlemen, if any of you are flying similar planes after the war it will mean a good deal to you and your passengers then."