

1024220

## U.S. BOMBER CRASHES INTO THE ATLANTIC.

Pathé News reconstructs the dramatic story of the giant B36 bomber which crashed into the Atlantic with a crew of 23 men. Flying from Travis Airfield in California to Lakenheath, the American base in Suffolk, all must have seemed well as it left the coast.

At 3.36 in the morning came a report from the pilot - "Engines on Fire". Almost at once another report - "All starboard engines failed" American Colonel Rigley took command. The word was given - "Alert all ships and aircraft in the vicinity. Position approximately 500 miles East North East of Prestwick. Hurriedly rescue aircraft were prepared and the crews briefed. There was much to be done, and little time to do it in if any were to be saved.

American Washingtons equipped with airbornes lifeboats, were joined by R.A.F. Hastings.

At 5.25 came another report. The B36 was ditching. Aircraft from Southorpe, Mildenhall, Aldergrove - even from Iceland - were detailed to join the search. Then a Washington aircraft spotted the wreckage below. Its high 230 ft wing was still afloat.

The pilot gave the order - "Prepare to drop lifeboat"

"Lifeboat dropped safely - radio base to fix exact position" Back came the news. Captain Feeley and Captain Aldem marked up the reports from finer stations. Somewhere within 300 mile area the crew of the B36 waited for rescue. More planes were ordered into the air.

25 aircraft were soon airborne. A Pathé News cameraman went aboard a Dakota at Prestwick. Soon the coast of Scotland was far behind. The grey cold Atlantic lay ahead. Another message - "Four survivors picked up. Five bodies found".

Suddenly oil streamed from a Washington and it turned back. Another aircraft soon took its place. Meanwhile British steamers had joined in. The Great Sweep was on. Up and down the entire 300 mile area - searching, searching, fifteen hours flying without a break - a tough assignment.

102P220

The long, wearying search goes on; for fourteen men are still missing as we go to press. Such is the price paid by those who fly for the defence of the free world. Britain extends her sympathy to her American guests in this country who have lost some gallant comrades. But the big bombers will keep on the Atlantic crossing - their work must go on.