

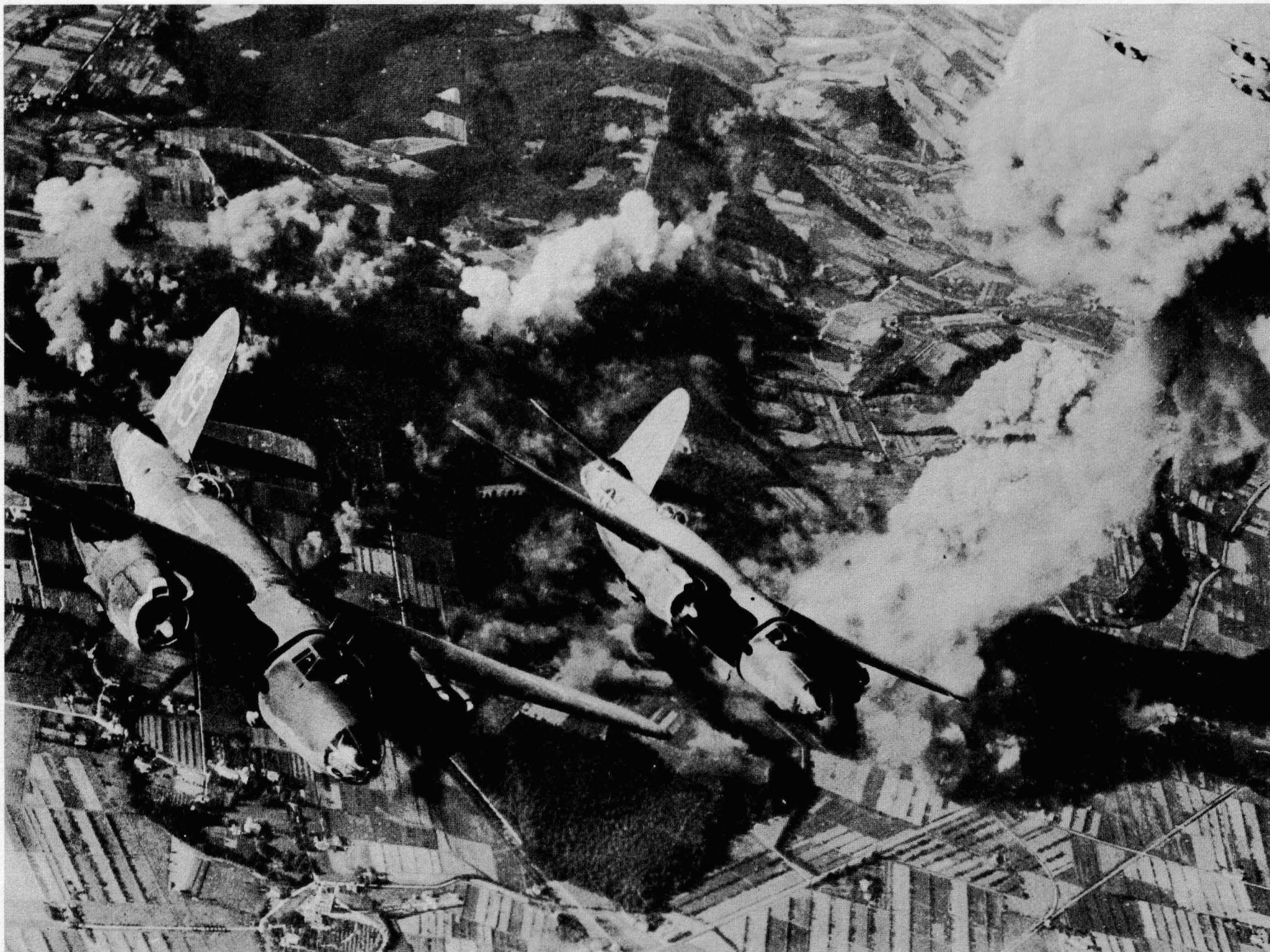


Over the  
*Mediterranean*



"The 12th Over the Mediterranean"  
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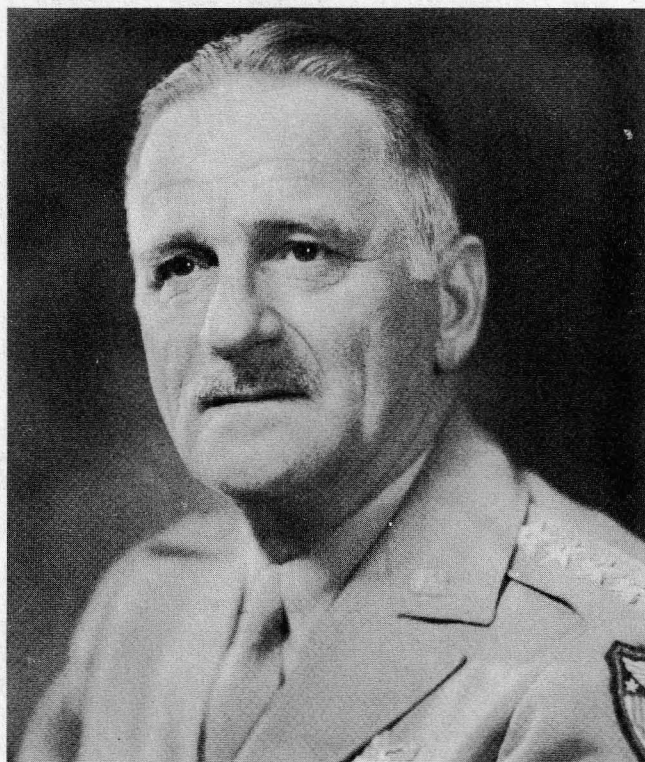




Bombing of Nazi fuel dump at Collecchio in Po Valley of Italy, by B-26 Marauders

# BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TWELFTH AIR FORCE

(As Released By U. S. Army Air Forces)



General Carl Spaatz

In the fall of 1944, German supply lines and transportation facilities in Italy were so cut to ribbons that a captured document from the Luftwaffe's 19th Field Division Headquarters advised its harassed supermen that the "best means of locomotion for individuals, as well as for whole units, is the bicycle."

This thorough going-over of German equipment was one of the amazing result of the terrific striking power developed by the Mediterranean Allied Tactical Air Force composed of the American Twelfth Air Force and the British Desert Air Force, working with the Fifth and Eighth Armies in their land campaigns.

By V-E Day, this Twelfth Air Force's scoreboard of victory registered 430,681 sorties, 217,156 tons of bombs dropped, 2,667 planes lost, 2,857 victories. But statistical records, however impressive, cannot tell the real story.

Over and above the bombs dropped and the battles won, the Twelfth made a great contribution to the Allied cause everywhere. For the Mediterranean Theatre was the primary

crucible for the development of tactical air power, just as Western Europe was the primary testing ground for strategic air power. Each succeeding air battle in the long march across Africa through Tunis, then to Pantelleria, Sicily, Salerno, Anzio, Rome, and finally to Southern France, witnessed further improvements by the Twelfth in the tactical employment of air power. The Twelfth had the largest experience of any air force in the art of supporting ground advances by air action. And its operations, from the North African invasion to the interdiction campaigns in the Battle for Rome, were recognized as masterpieces, and a model for air support procedure in all theatres.

The Twelfth—with a force of only a dozen planes—was established Aug. 20, 1942, at Bolling Field, D. C., and on Sept. 23 of the same year placed under the command of Lt. General Jimmy Doolittle. By the time of the landing in North Africa on Nov. 7, 1942, the embryo Twelfth at Casablanca had 551 aircraft. In its initial encounters with the German Air Force over Tunisia in later 1942, fighters and bombers of the Twelfth repeatedly achieved destruction many times that of their own losses on the ground and in the air, accounting for more than 400 enemy planes in a three month period.

Testing the highly controversial and untried principles of air power and building an air force from scratch on the desert sands of Africa was no easy task, despite the lopsided figures to prove its success. The dress rehearsal in North Africa that led eventually to the climax of the big show in the heart of Germany, had to be gone through. There could be no turning back, no failure. Men would have to die; they did. Lessons would have to be learned; they were. For the Twelfth, the going was tough and tedious.

The colorful Col. (then Maj.) Philip G. Cochran, who later led Air Commandos in Burma, was in on the opening scene in the African invasion as commander of the Twelfth Air Force's 58th Fighter Squadron. Here is what he says of the early days when airmen were living in caves and the only tactic known to save a pilot's life was a quick dive of his P-40:

"These fights with the Germans weren't Carolina or Louisiana maneuvers . . . Instead of saying 'Boom', we were going 'Boom'. We found right off the bat that the Germans knew an awful lot more about things than we did, and that all we had was our eagerness. We started out with very, very poor formations—silly formations, I don't know where they came from—and ended up with just about the best there is . . ."



By February 18, 1943—when the Twelfth merged with RAF units as the Northwest African Air Forces in the first assembling of various Allied air forces under one Command—the Twelfth's strength had grown to 1,038 planes. Gen (then Lt. Gen.) Carl Spaatz, who earlier had been a key figure in the planning and formation of the Twelfth, was placed in command. As the days lengthened and spring arrived, General Spaatz's forces proceeded with the arduous and necessary task of whittling down the Luftwaffe.

A constant problem in those days was how to find enough fighters to protect the bombers against the still threatening Nazi and Italian Air power. The original heavy bomber group, the 97th, found revenge for the pasting it had taken from the German Air Force on its first night in Algiers by plastering enemy shipping and harbor facilities. In December 1942, it was joined by three squadrons of Liberators from the 92nd Group in England. Living in the desert on processed canned meat and dehydrated cabbage, this group harassed Rommel's rear guards, and struck across the Mediterranean at Naples and Sicilian airdromes. Several groups of mediums, living under conditions just as rugged, gave the Nazis a foretaste of what B-25s and B-26s could do.

There were some bad moments in the Tunisian campaign. For example, when Nazi General Rommel flung his panzer units through the Kasserine Pass, everything with wings was thrown against him, even the heavies flying below medium altitude. But there were also red-letter days like the famous 1943 Palm Sunday engagement when P-40's of the 57th Group caught a swarm of JU-52s and ME-323s flying men and supplies to Rommel's hard-pressed forces and shot 79 into the sea in a slaughter reminiscent of the Battle of Britain.

The first great achievement of the NAAF was the establishment of complete air superiority in Africa. The second was the interdiction of supply lines in Tunisia by bombing ports, sinking ships and shooting down aerial convoys which



Brenner Pass near Dogna, Italy

were the Germans' last desperate resort. These achievements were two of the major reasons for the complete collapse of the Nazi armies in Tunisia.

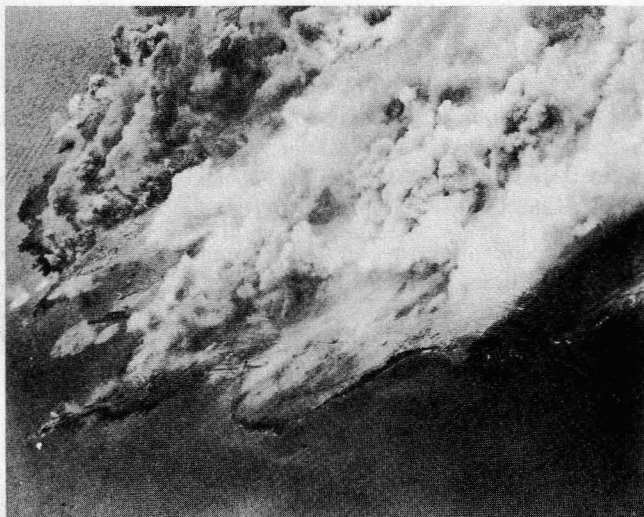
A third contribution of the Twelfth to the great victory was the intense close support of ground troops in the final break-through. Mounting concentrations of air strength by the Twelfth were utilized for the March 1943 smash through the Mareth Line, and for the final assaults on Tunis and Bizerte. Here the newly-formed Tactical Air Force brought to a new peak of efficiency the tactics learned since the days at Casablanca.

With the final collapse—after 191 days—of the Axis African forces May 18, 1943, the Twelfth was free to turn its attention across the Mediterranean to what Winston Churchill once called the "soft underbelly" of Festung Europe. All told, in the North African campaign, the Air forces dropped 11,708 tons of bombs, shot down 1,304 Axis aircraft and sank 76 Axis ships. British and American losses totalled only 651.

The striking power built up for the African campaign was used to reduce resistance on the 32-mile-square Italian island of Pantelleria which surrendered June 11, 1943, with 10,000 prisoners, after 12 days of relentless attack by aircraft of the Twelfth and Ninth Air Forces. This was history's first example of territorial conquest by air action alone. It was a great victory, and a relatively cheap one; the Allies lost 63 aircraft and claimed 236 of the enemy's planes while gaining fighter fields indispensable for the invasion of Sicily.

The next primary mission of the Twelfth and its British co-partner in the NAAF became the destruction of enemy air power in Sicily. Between July 1 and D-Day, July 10, 1943, nearly 3,000 sorties were directed against the airfields on the island and Italian mainland.

The Twelfth's flexible, co-ordinated air weapon forged in Africa served well in Sicily and in the succeeding stages



Raid on Pantelleria



of the Italian peninsular campaign. The ancient Saracens had once laid siege to the town of Enna in Sicily for 31 years, and it took the Normans a quarter of a century to reduce the same stronghold. Our ground troops landed on the island in July with only token resistance from the Luftwaffe, and by August 17 the last Axis soldiers had surrendered or fled across the Strait of Messina.

After Sicily, inevitably came Italy. On September 9, 1943, the U. S. Fifth Army, together with British and Canadian forces, landed on the Italian mainland in the Naples area at Salerno. For weeks before, the heavy and medium bombers of the Twelfth had softened up the enemy for the attack. They ruined airfields, pinned aircraft on the ground and weakened the striking power of the Luftwaffe by shattering the fighter formations which rose to meet them. The first objective was to disrupt the enemy's flow of supplies and reinforcements, and to isolate German divisions by dislocating their entire rail and communications system.

To this end, Italy was raked from toe to Brenner Pass in the Alps, with the Northwest African Air Forces flying 4,419 sorties and dropping 6,230 tons of bombs between August 17 and September 6, 1943.

On D-Day, the Twelfth swept forward in the attack with its full power, first setting about the job of isolating the battle area. From September 9 to 11, its planes flew 1,006 sorties and dropped 1,679 tons of bombs, achieving virtually complete interruption of traffic on the main lines leading to the contested region. The spectacular strafing of 200 JU-88s at Foggia enabled the beachhead to be established without air opposition.

When the ground battle began, cooperation between the ground troops and the Twelfth's planes was so precise that dive-bombing requests from the Infantry actually were passed to the attacking planes while they were in the air, on their way to, or immediately over, the invasion area. Fighter-bombers and dive-bombers hit enemy positions within from ten to thirty minutes after the ground troops had relayed the location of the targets.

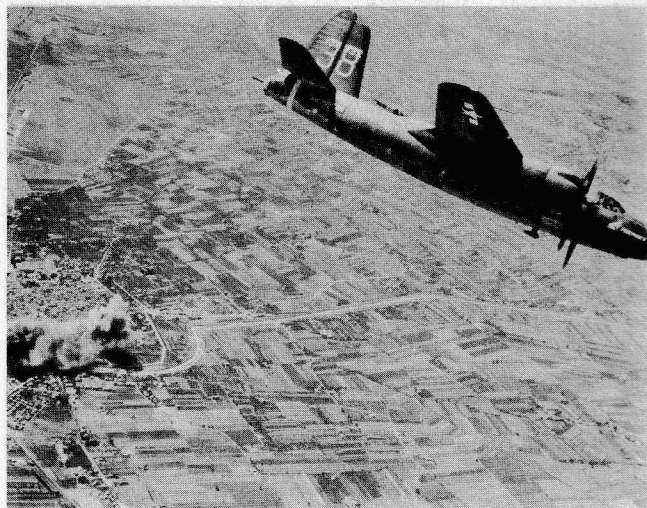
The Luftwaffe was beaten into the ground, but the Wehrmacht was tough, driving a counter attack to within a few hundred yards of the beach. Once again, as at Kasserine Pass, the heavies joined the mediums and fighter-bombers of the Twelfth to break up the attack and save the beachhead. On two successive days more than 1,000 sorties were flown, a commonplace later in the war but a distinct achievement in September 1943. The morale lift given our ground troops was enormous.

Two important raids accomplished by the Twelfth in late 1943 were striking evidence of things in store for the Axis. On October 24, 89 B-17s, 25 B-24s and 36 P-38s of the Twelfth bombed the Wiener Neustadt factory in the first attack on German-held Austria launched from Italian bases. And on November 14, 91 B-25s of the Twelfth escorted by 46 P-38s dropped more than 144 tons of 500-pounders (including 52 with 1-to-24 hour delayed fuses) on Sofia in the first raid to be staged on Bulgaria—a significant raid because of the limited range of medium bombers.

With the movement of the war entirely away from North Africa, the need for reorganization of Allied air units in the Mediterranean became obvious. The Fifteenth Air Force was activated on November 1, 1943, and the heavy bombers and long-range fighters of the Twelfth were assigned to the new organization, leaving the Twelfth with fighters, fighter-bombers and medium bombers.

In early December 1943, all air forces in the Mediterranean, including the RAF Middle East Air Force, were merged in the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces (MAAF). This brought Allied air power in the Mediterranean Theatre to its final organizational form and was followed within a few months by the achievement of its full strength in planes. On Jan. 1, 1944, Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker took over command of the MAAF, and on January 26, Maj. Gen. John K. Cannon succeeded General Spaatz in command of the Twelfth.

Twice during the first three months of 1944, the U. S. Fifth Army tried to break the Gustav Line and capture Rome.



During Operation "Strangle." Po Valley

Three divisions landed at Nettuno and Anzio on January 22, 1944, ably supported by the Twelfth Air Force and other MAAF units which neutralized German air fields and cut supply routes. These landings, thirty-six miles south of Rome, were intended to cut German communications and turn the flank of the Gustav Line.

The second offensive—attacks through the center of the Line at Cassino—was to carry through to join the Anzio beachhead and sweep on to Rome. The Germans, preoccupied at Cassino, were taken by surprise, and quick Allied advances carried through Aprilia before gathering German resistance stopped the advance.

The great buildup of the Twelfth and other air forces is dramatically reflected in the statistics of the difficult amphibious assault at Anzio. Whereas the Allied air forces had put up 25,000 sorties in support of the invasion of Sicily and



29,000 in support of the Salerno landings, for Anzio was kept free of all but token enemy resistance. And when the German counter-attack a month after the landing threatened to push the beachhead back into the sea, the air forces again mustered every available plane to play a major role in stopping the German attack.

On March 15, 1944, an attempt was made to blast a hole in the main front across Italy at Cassino. This was the first mass use of AAF heavy bombers (both strategic and tactical units joined in the attack) in close cooperation with the ground troops. A total of 483 planes dropped 1,205 tons of bombs on the town in a spectacular bombardment that caused world-wide comment. Cassino was pulverized, but no break-through was achieved. German forces were able to re-group and re-establish strong defenses while the Allied ground forces waited for bulldozers to clear a path for tanks through the cratered rubble. But a lesson was learned that paid off handsomely when similar concentrated bombing was used later at St. Lo, at the Rhine and before Cologne.

With the development of a stalemate at Anzio and Cassino, it became acutely apparent that additional measures were needed to help the ground armies get to Rome. This led to the Twelfth's participation in the historic "Operation STRANGLE," a tactical air operation which was a deciding factor in the fall of the first Axis capital and which set a pattern for all interdiction campaigns to come. Staged across the narrow waist of Italy, it was essentially a series of sharp one-two blows against the supply network of the enemy, driving him from the railroads to motor trucks, then smashing the trucks; backing up rail traffic, then going after the piled-up traffic; forcing the increased use of shipping, then bombing that. Supply problems of the German armies in central Italy were rendered so acute that when the Allies finally jumped off in the push for Rome, Nazi General Kesselring was unable to hold them.

STRANGLE was an air effort of heretofore unrealized dimensions. It probably began on March 15—the operations were defined by no exact date—at the time of Cassino bombardment. For it was the failure to break through that German stronghold which finally permitted the release of the main fighter effort from the immediate battle area to attacks on supply lines.

Once these aircraft were released, the accomplishments of the Twelfth Air Force under General Cannon in succeeding days exceeded even the most optimistic expectations. By March 24, 1944, all rail lines to Rome had definitely

been cut. At no time after that did any through traffic reach Rome. Between March 15 and May 11, 1944, when the ground advance began, MAAF devoted 65,003 effective sorties and 33,104 tons of bombs to this enormous interdiction program.

When CORONET began in May 1944, air and ground forces were given two complementary objectives. The Twelfth and other MAAF units had as their mission "to make it impossible for the enemy to maintain his forces on his present line in Italy in the face of a combined Allied offensive." Ground forces were to "destroy the right wing of the German 10th Army; to drive what remains of it and the German 14th Army north of Rome; and to pursue the enemy to the Pisa-Rimini line, inflicting the maximum losses on him



Palermo, Sicily — Bombing of Docks

in the process." In the next six weeks, working together in perfect harmony, the two forces did just that.

This accomplishment was a resounding military feat, causing the Germans at least 80,000 casualties, wiping out as effective fighting units a score of their most seasoned divisions, and destroying and damaging fully 15,000 German transport vehicles and immeasurable mountains of military supplies. It was the first Allied offensive to capture an Axis capital. It was also, in General Alexander's words, the "first blow in the final destruction of the Nazis."

The 24th of May, involving more than 3,200 sorties and well over 3,000 tons of bombs on roads, railroads, supplies, trucks and tanks, marked the beginning of a period of relentless air pounding unprecedented in the MTO. When



Lt. Gen. John K. Cannon

the break came, the fighters said in effect to the bombers, "You set 'em up and we'll knock 'em down." The bombers responded by creating road blocks in critical passes which forced traffic jams involving hundreds of vehicles that in turn became so many sitting targets to the machine guns, cannon and bombs of the Twelfth Air Force.

An example of one day's activity for one fighter group of the Twelfth is the account contained in the unit citation for the 88th Fighter Group. After Allied armies broke the 7-month stand at Cassino and plunged northward, powerful German forces attempted to re-form on a line between Frascati and Tivoli where they proposed to stop the Allied advance short of Rome. On May 25, the Tactical Air Force ordered the 88th to disrupt this strategic maneuver.

"Taking off at 0650 hours on 25 May," the citation reads, "the first flight began a grueling battle with enemy transports, diving through tense, accurate anti-aircraft fire to bomb traffic, effect road blocks, and create confusion, repeatedly returning at minimum altitude to strafe the streams of enemy reconnaissance cars, personnel, carriers, trucks, tanks, and horsedrawn artillery moving to the rear. When the final four-ship flight landed that night at 2020 hours, the 88th had, in 12 missions and 86 sorties, destroyed 217 and damaged 245 enemy vehicles, inflicted an unknown

number of casualties on hostile personnel, silenced several gun positions, and interdicted the highways into the towns of Frosinone, Cori and Cescano . . .

"This dawn-to-dusk aerial hammering, coordinated with the terrific assaults made upon adjoining areas by other units of the Tactical Air Force, so crippled the enemy's transport system and disorganized and decimated his ranks that he was forced to abandon his projected defense of Rome and hastily retreat northward to escape complete annihilation."

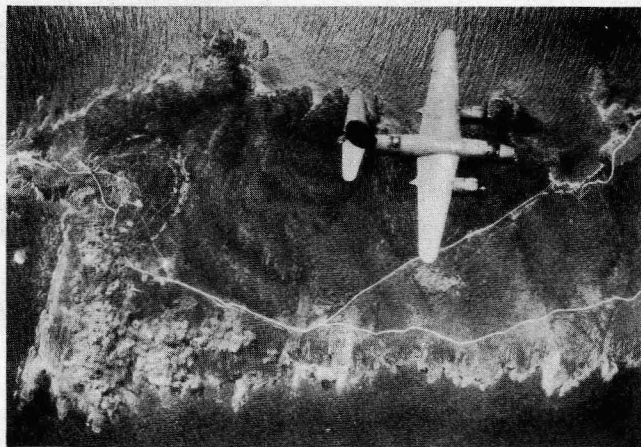
Taking full and immediate advantage of the breakdown of the German armies, General Clark's Fifth Army entered Rome on June 4-5, 1944, and shortly thereafter continued with the Eighth Army to move northward. On entering Rome, General Clark sent a message to General Cannon that the Twelfth's air effort "had enabled us to show the enemy how irresistible the air-ground combination can become."

When the Germans fell back in disorganized rout, the MAAF kept up its pressure on communication, concentrating on motor transports, with the Twelfth destroying 6,577. Between May 12 and June 22, 1944, MAAF flew another 72,946 sorties and dropped 51,500 tons of bombs. Seeing the fruit of STRANGLE in the break-through of Allied Forces and the fall of Rome early in June, General Cannon's airmen continued to harass the enemy's communications and supply lines, and at the end of 1944 were engaged in another strangle operation in the Po Valley, as well as flying in increasing numbers close support missions for the Fifth and Eighth Armies.

The retreat of the German army to the Pisa-Rimini line posed a new problem for the Twelfth. STRANGLE had cut the rail-lines in central Italy on a route-by-route basis, but the complexity of the rail system in the Po Valley precluded any operations of similar scope in the north. So came about the Twelfth's "Operation MALLORY," a spectacular bridge-busting campaign by Mitchel and Marauder mediums which resulted in the destruction of 25 primary road and rail bridges across the Po River in 72 hours. The Germans were reduced to using temporary pontoon bridges that could be thrown across the river at night and disassembled and hidden by day.

With the isolation of the German armies in Italy virtually complete for the time being, the Twelfth moved its P-47s and A-20s to Corsica. Then, both strategic bombers from their Italian bases and tactical aircraft from bases in Sardinia and Corsica coordinated in softening-up attacks on Southern France preparatory to the Allied Invasion. In the first half of August, the heavies and mediums struck road and rail communications from Lyon to the sea to isolate the southern coast from enemy supply and reinforcements.





Bombing of St. Tropez, Southern France, by B-26

In preparation for the invasion, the Twelfth continued to interdict northern Italian lines and cut the coastal rail system between Cannes and Genoa on the Riviera. In addition they destroyed all rail bridges across the Rhone River south of Valence. In the week before D-Day, medium bombers knocked out all the enemy airdromes in the Po Valley, at least temporarily, and, with the aid of fighters, carried out a concentrated assault on gun positions, radar stations, and bivouac areas on the French and Italian Rivas.

D-Day in Southern France—Aug. 15 1944—found the Twelfth helping to provide aerial cover, softening up coastal defenses and hammering at communications lines, while its own troop carriers were transporting the British and American paratroops and glider troops inland. Air mastery over Southern France was so complete for the initial landings that only one German plane was on hand to oppose some 2,700 Allied sorties that day.

As Allied forces advanced northward from the Southern French beaches, the air effort was concentrated on German road movements. Its effectiveness was indicated on a 120-mile stretch of roadway in the Rhone Valley where more than 2,000 burned-out vehicles were left from the bombing and strafing attacks. So swift was the Allied advance that the Aviation Engineers were hard pressed to prepare airfields fast enough to keep the Twelfth's Thunderbolts within close range of the retreating German 19th Army. The problem was aggravated by the difficulty in obtaining sufficient gasoline, oil and supplies. A-20 bombers, B-24 Liberators and C-47 transports were utilized in the emergency to bring up gasoline and oil, and the Thunderbolts continued to maul fleeing German motor convoys.

From May through October 1944, the Twelfth's planes destroyed or damaged 12,190 vehicles, 788 locomotives, 9,038 rail cars and more than 1,000 bridges, including those rebuilt and rededstroyed.

While northeastern France was being cleared of Germans, the Twelfth's fighter-bombers again turned their attention to Italy to renew the assault on German communications and behind-the-lines targets in the Po Valley and

northwestern Italy. In November 1944, the Twelfth took over the entire Brenner Pass region as its beat, and in "Operation BINGO" neutralized the line between Brennero and Vicenza by knocking out transformer stations at key points, putting the enemy to the inconvenience of converting to steam power.

The Twelfth's bomb tonnage for 1944 totalled 102,313 tons for all types of targets; the number of sorties flown reached 193,918.

During the winter, the Twelfth's fighter-bombers often operated when weather pinned down mediums. Result of this interdiction was two-fold. It prevented the Germans in Italy from moving out troops that were desperately needed on other fronts. And, with northeastern Italian-Austrian routes previously knocked out by bombing, stoppage of the Brenner line forced Lombard-based enemy divisions to use reserve supplies, as U. S. and British armies began their April offensive.

Attacks by the Twelfth on the North Italian and Brenner routes reached a climax toward the end of March 1945, when, in one week, nearly 6,500 sorties were flown with a loss of 30 aircraft.

In a final burst of action, the Twelfth and other MAAF units opened up on April 16, 1945, with a mammoth attack in cooperation with General Clark's Fifth Army to drive the Germans out of Northern Italy. But the complete surrender of German forces in Italy on April 29 and VE Day on May 8, made the coup-de-grace unnecessary.

The Nazi was a beaten foe, and the role of the Twelfth Air Force, whose invaluable contributions to victory included the unfolding of the technique and tremendous striking potentialities of tactical air power, offers some of the most exciting pages of the history of the development of America's powerful air arm.

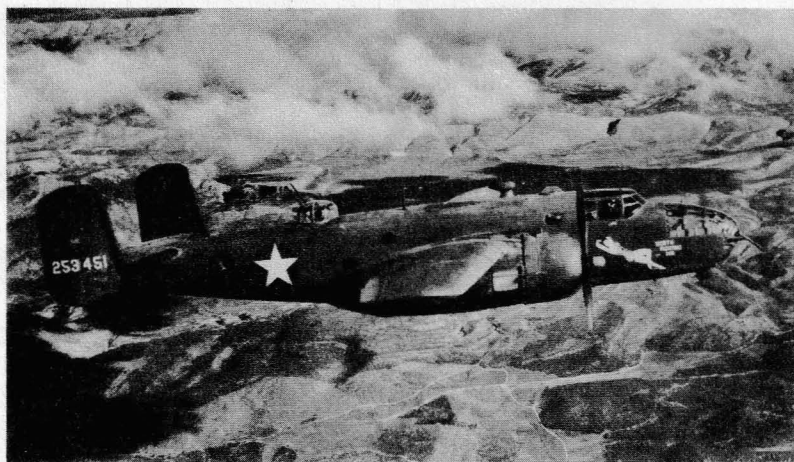


Ready to discuss surrender terms





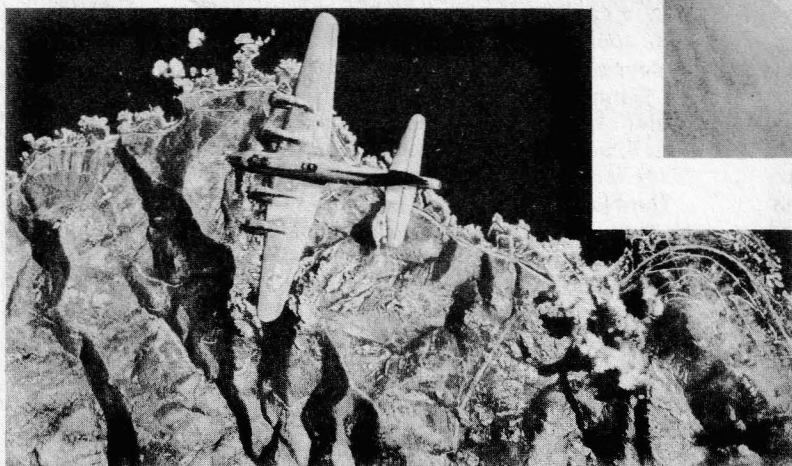
P-47s over Apennines of Italy



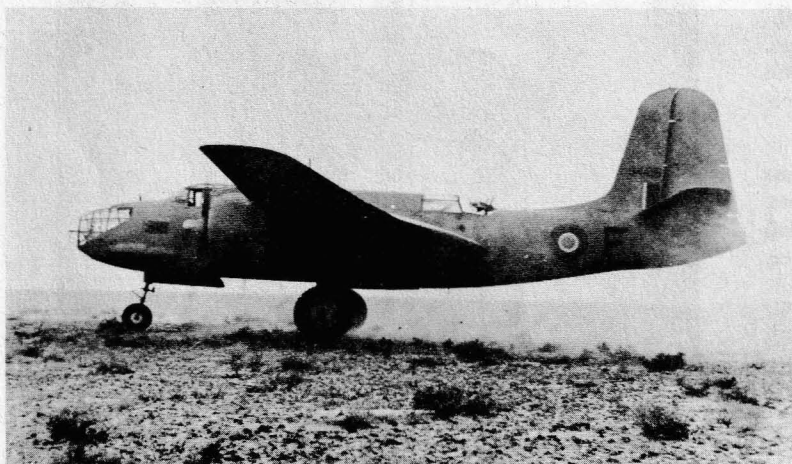
B-25 over Italy



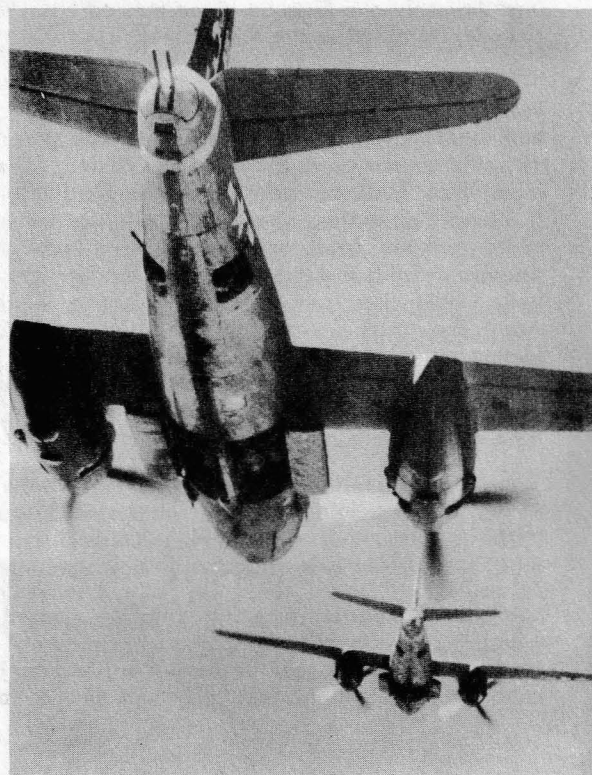
F-5a Photo Reconnaissance plane over No. Africa



B-17 over French Riviera, Oct. 31, 1943

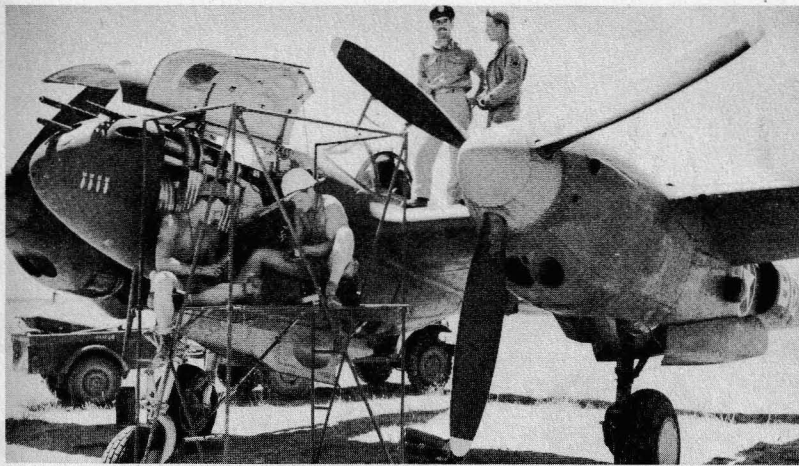


A-20 returns after mission to El Alamein, Egypt



Just before Incisa R. R. Bridge Bombing. B-26

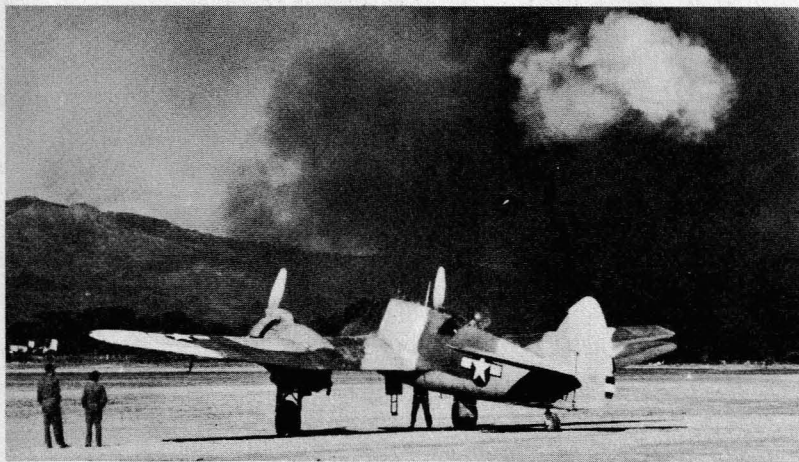




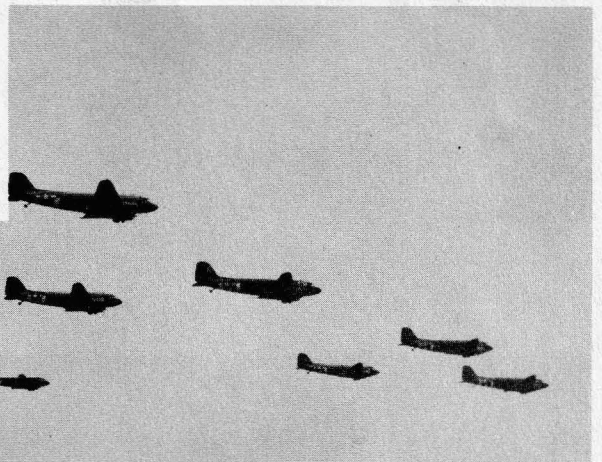
P-38 Pilot and ground crew. Algiers, Algeria



B-26 near Calafuria, Italy



American Beaufighter and crew, Italy



C-47's carrying load of paratroopers, Italy



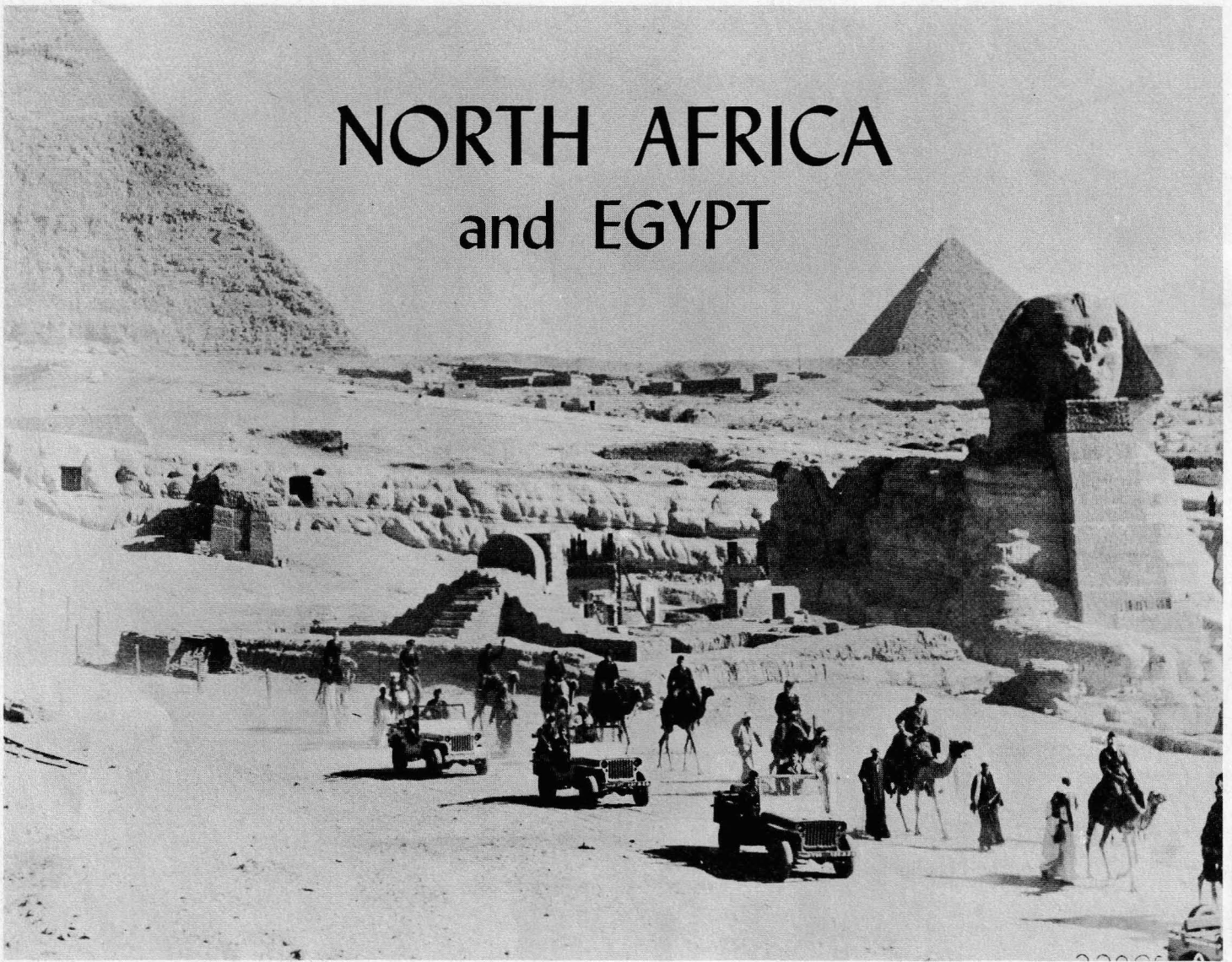
Direct hit on right engine by Nazi 88mm shell



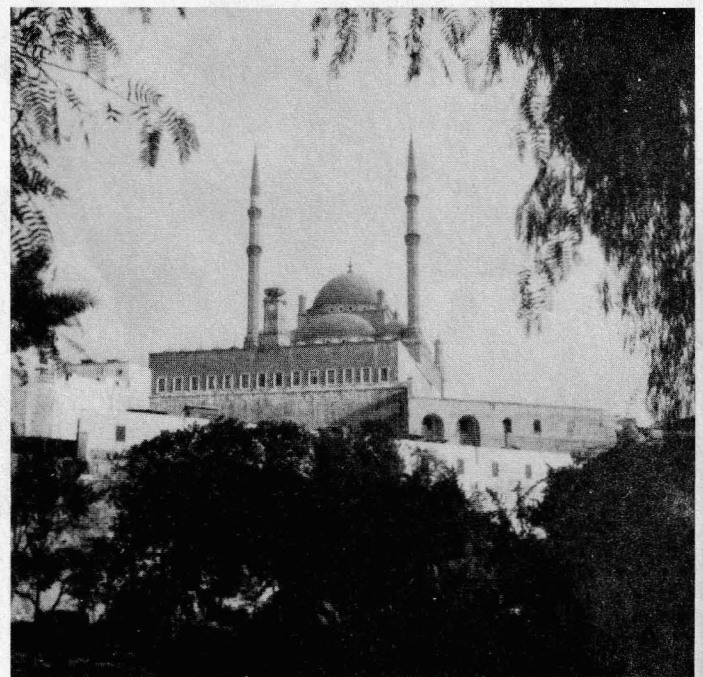
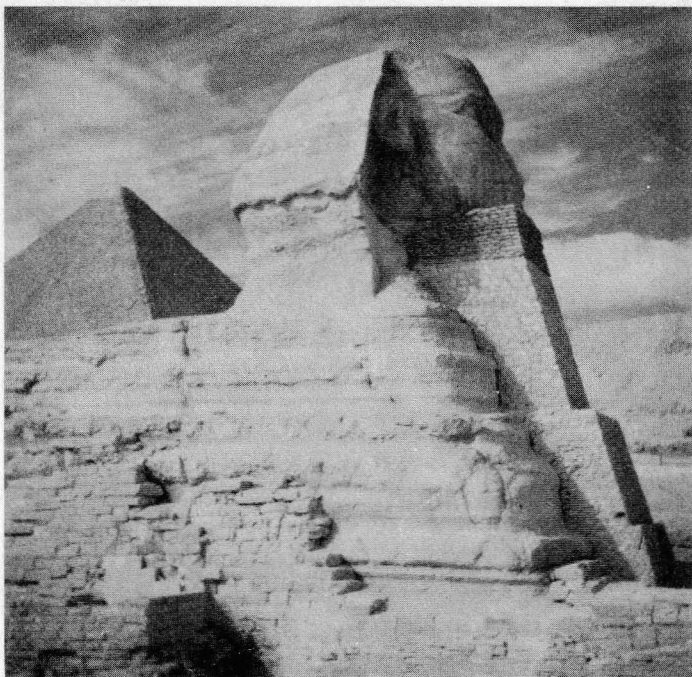
Protection from sudden sand storm in Libya



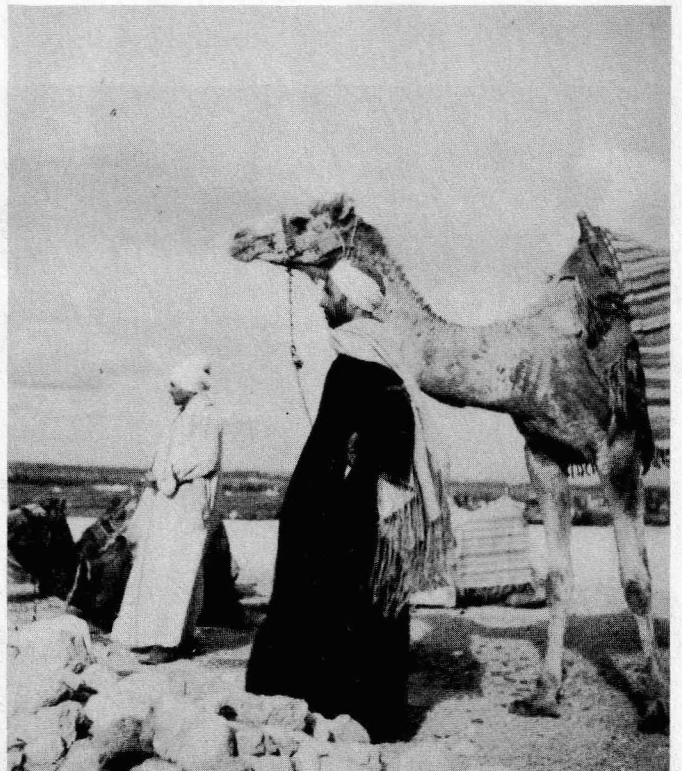
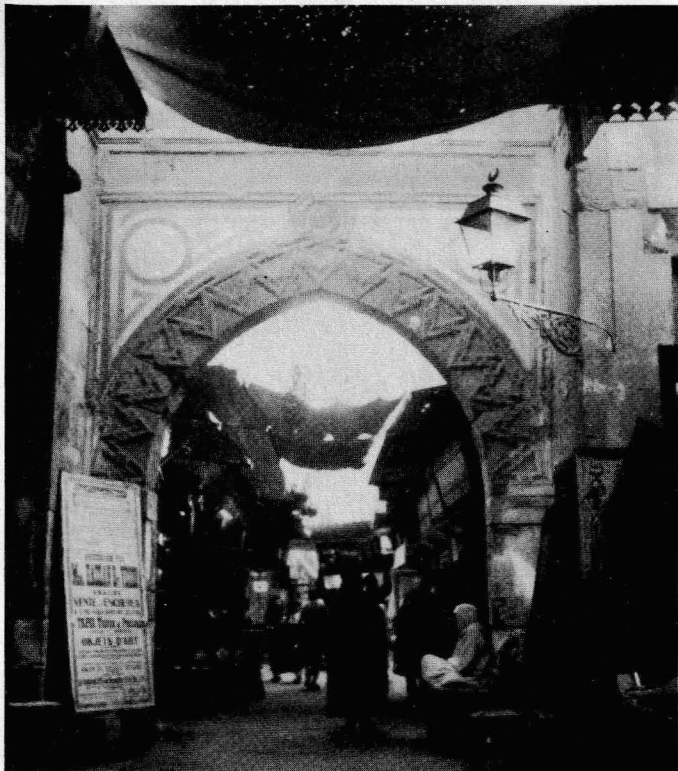
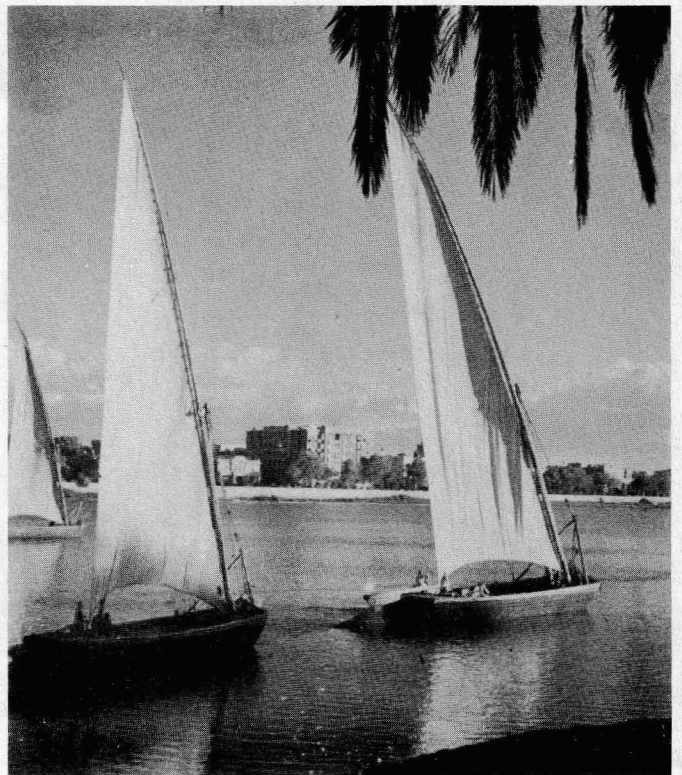
# NORTH AFRICA and EGYPT

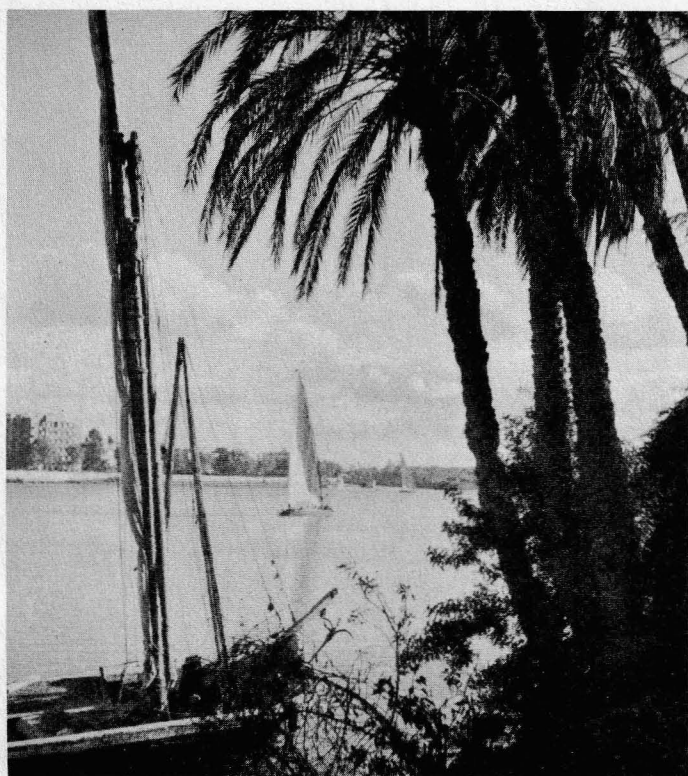
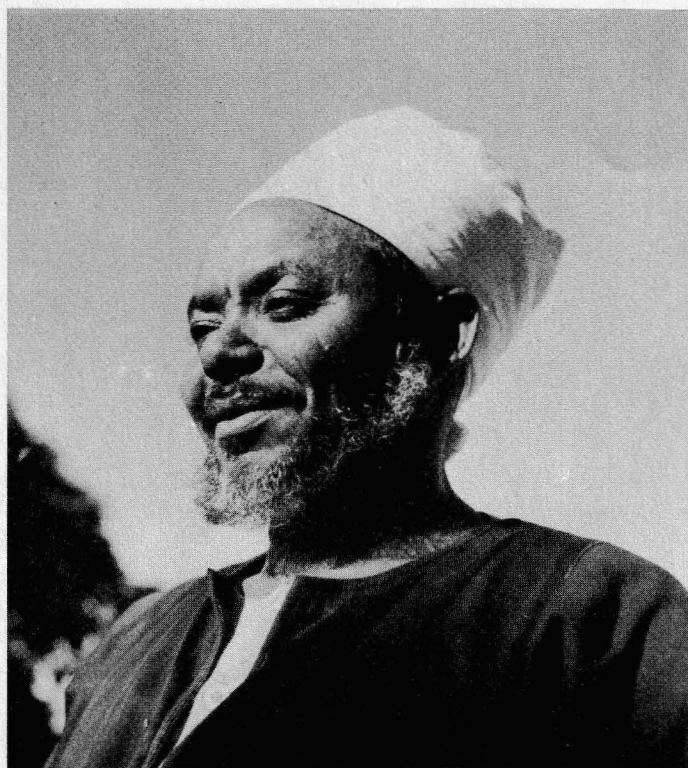


Above: Conclusion to a week-end leave in Cairo

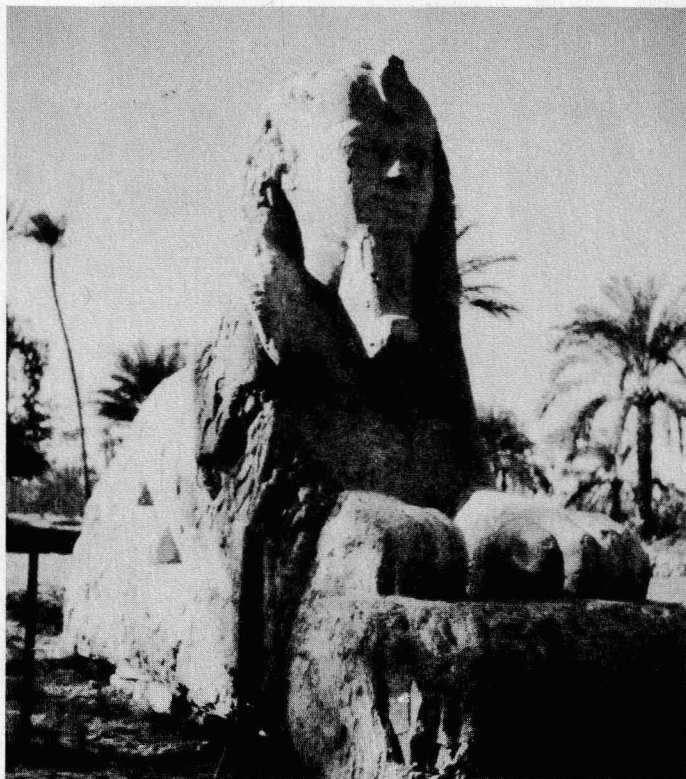




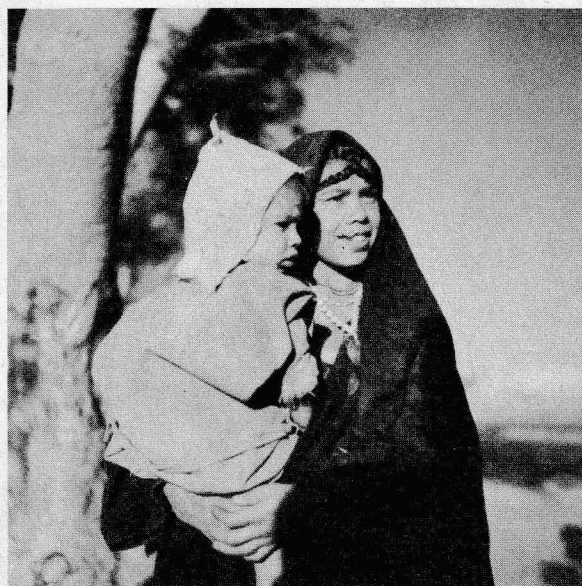
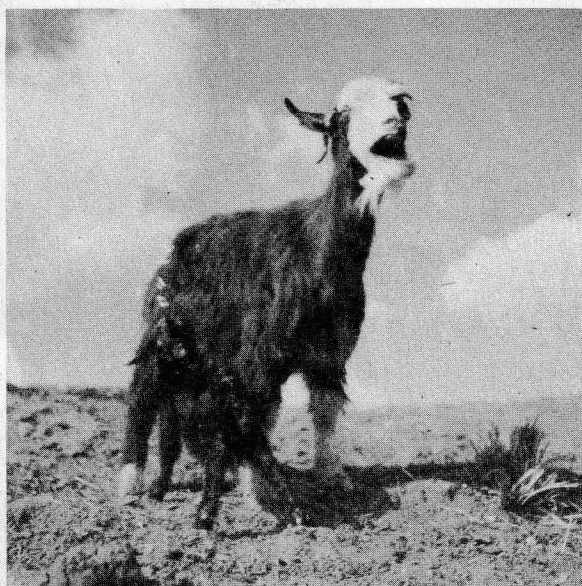




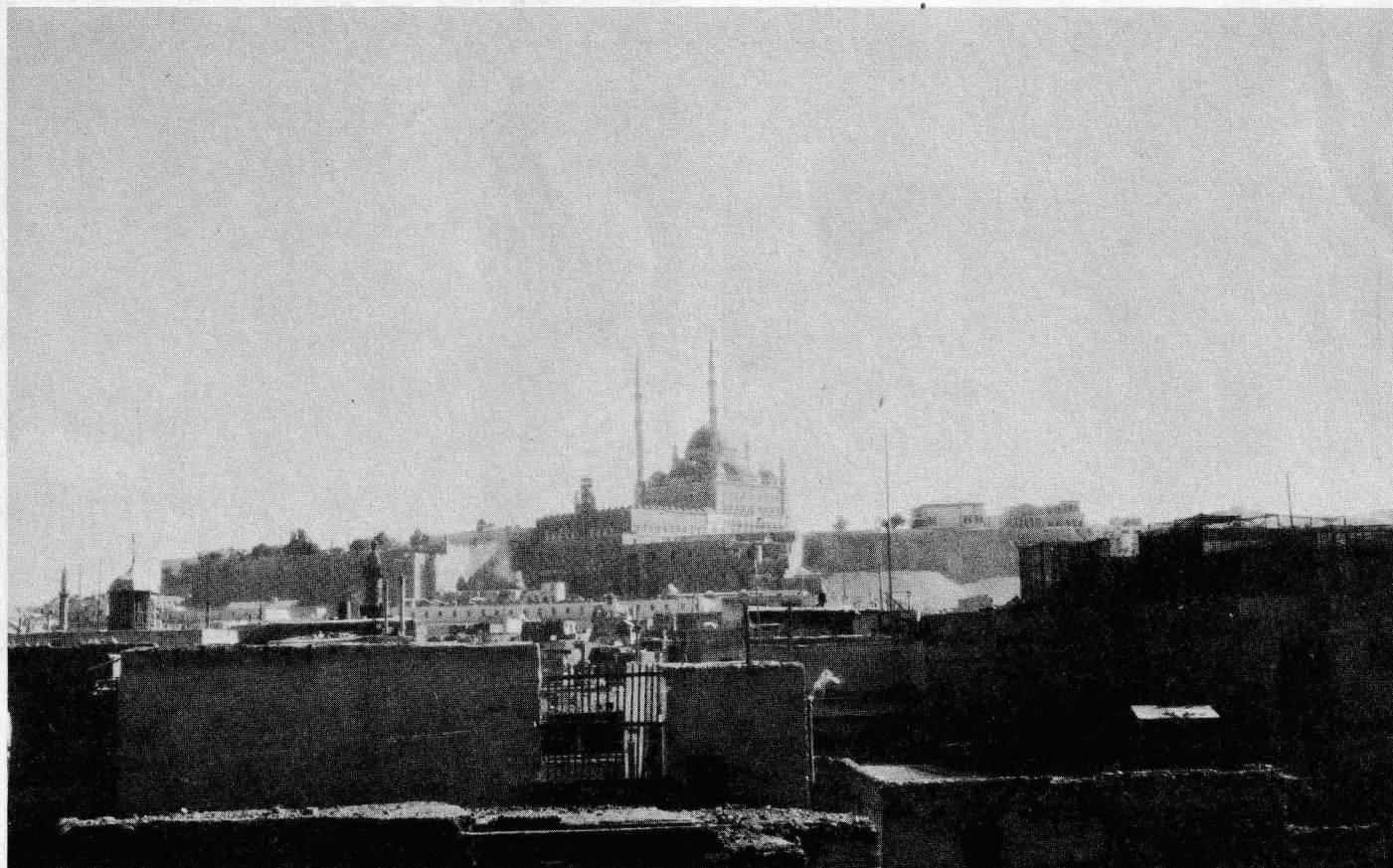
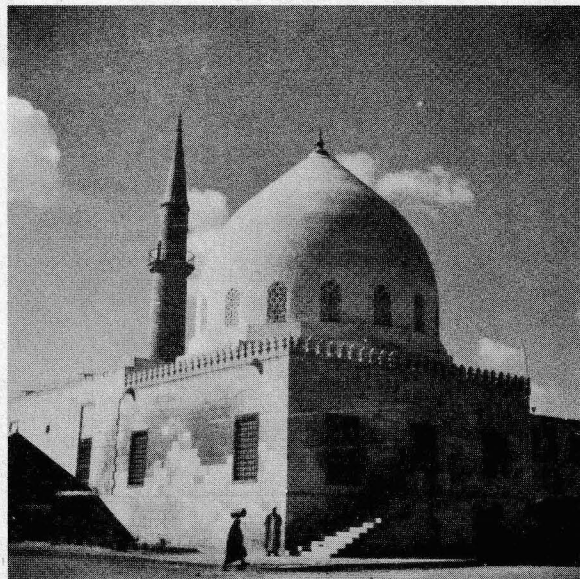
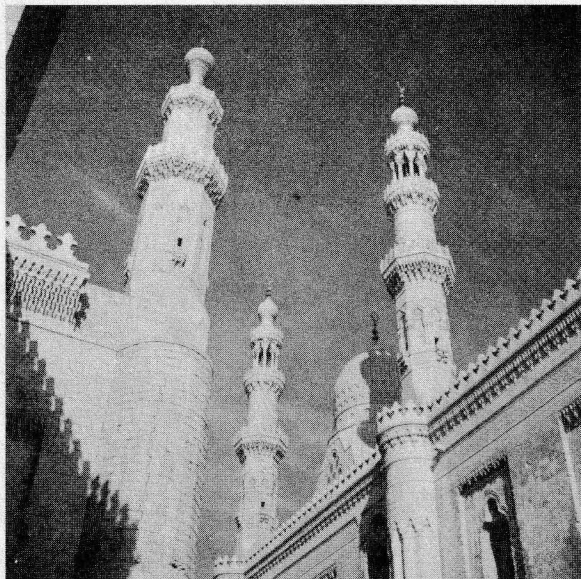




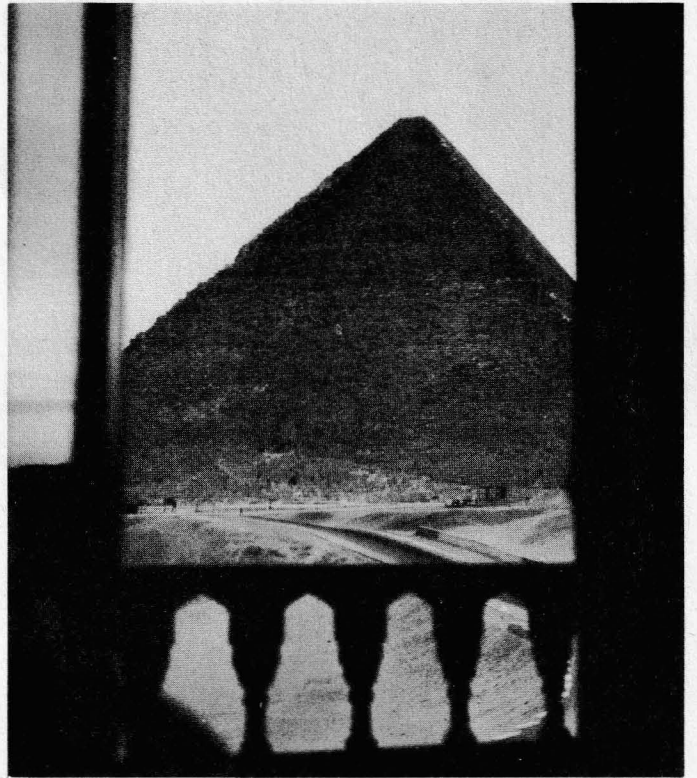




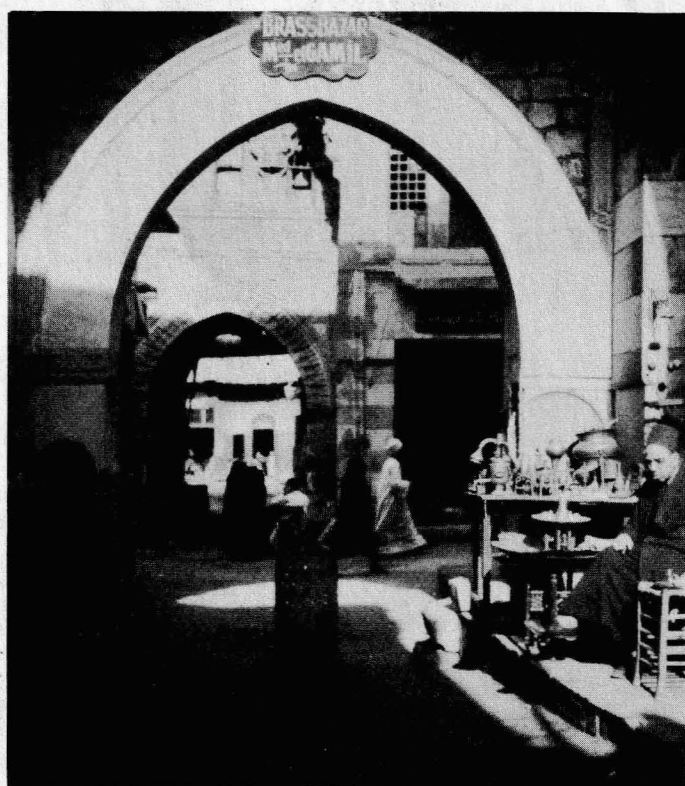
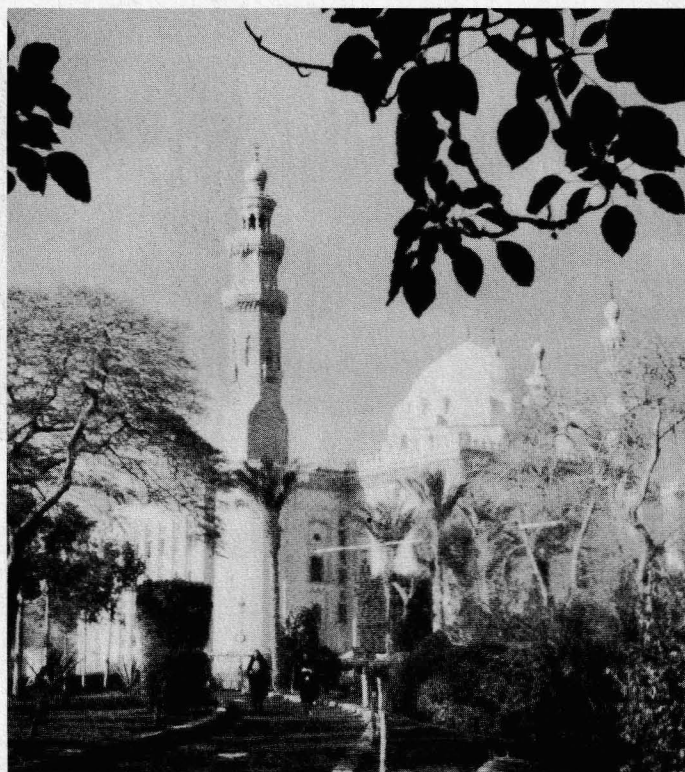
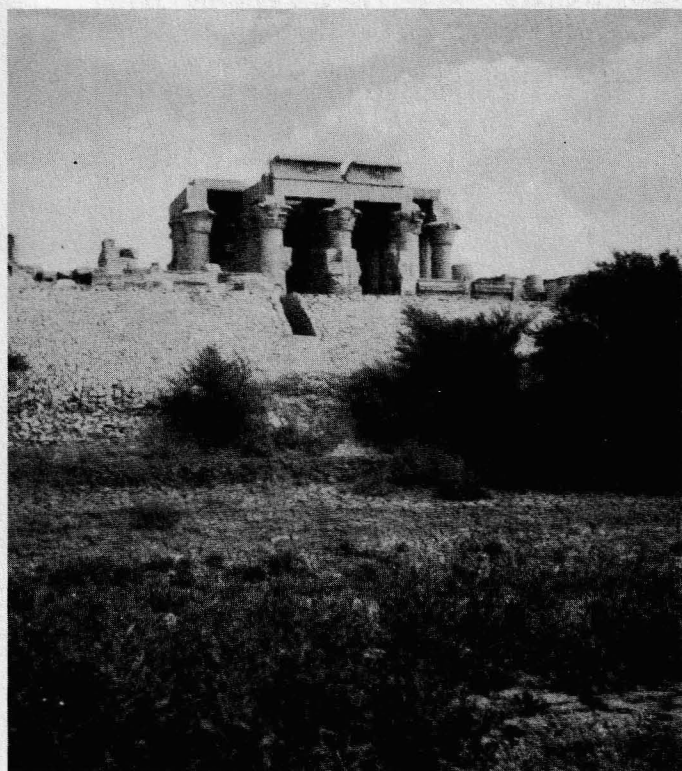






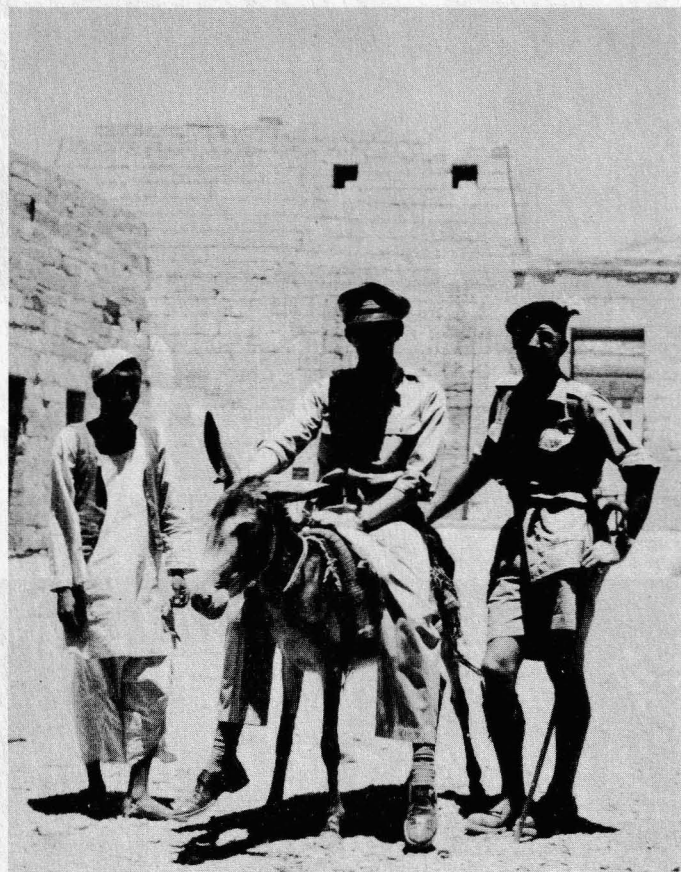




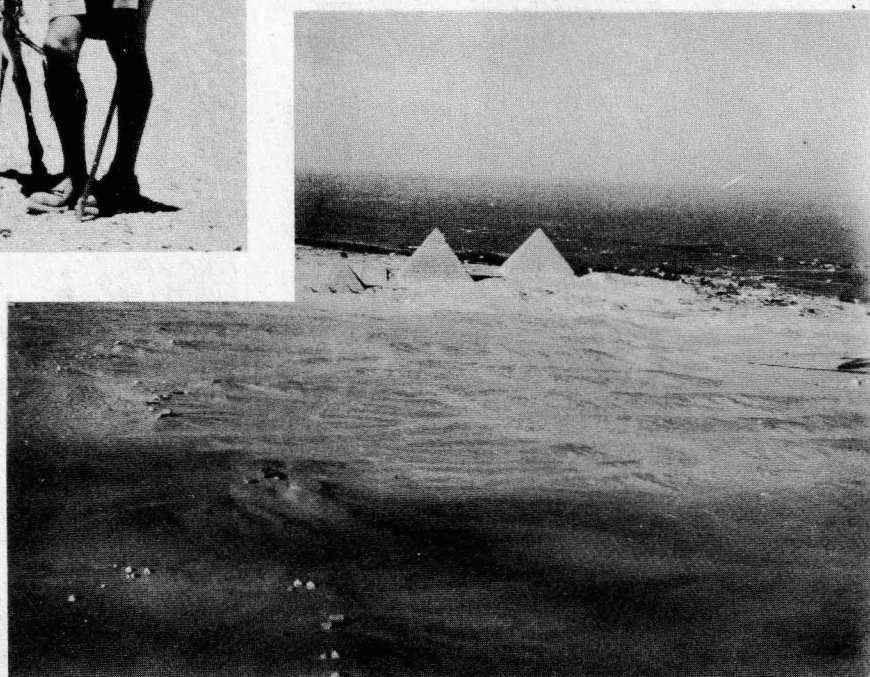




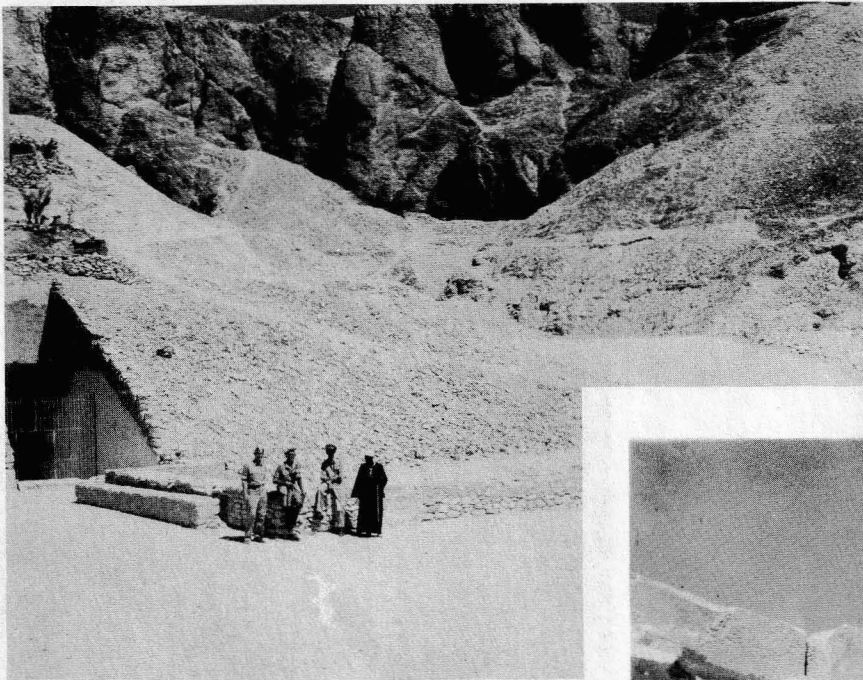
Looking from The Mena House



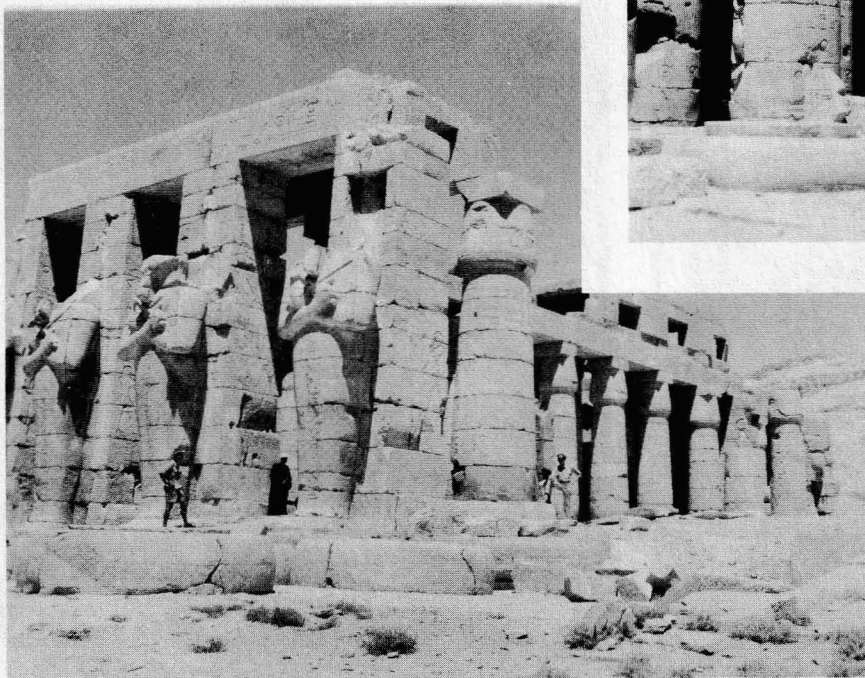
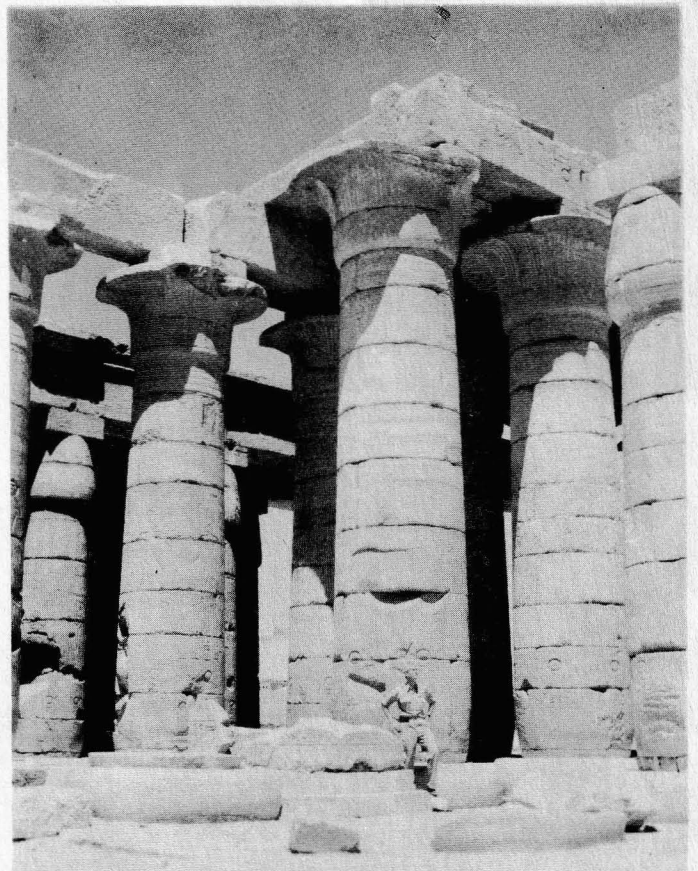
Right: The Pyramids.







Tombs Near Memphis



Above and Left:  
Old Temple Near Memphis.

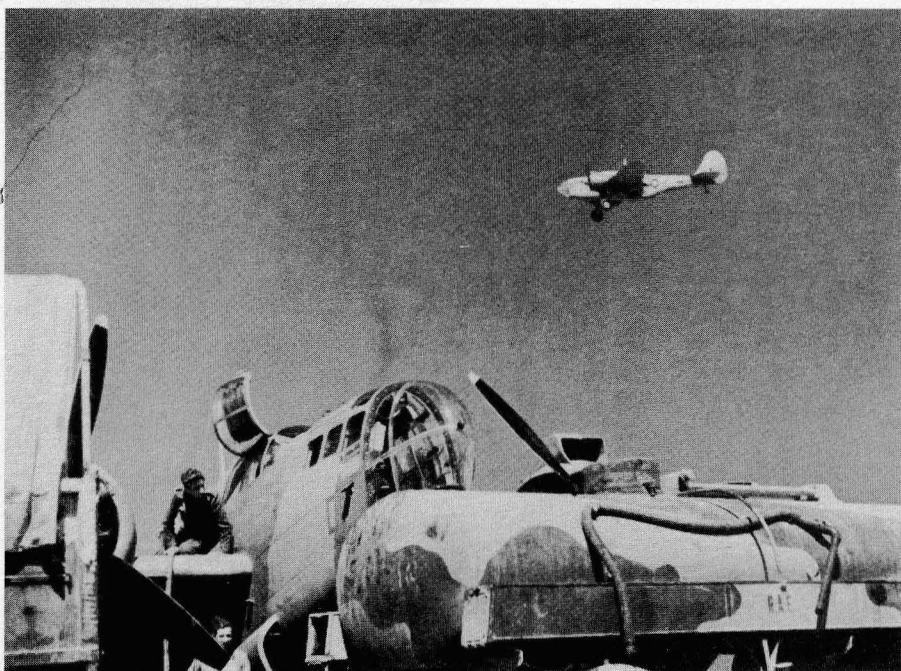




Scene of destruction in Bizerte, Tunisia, Nov. 16, 1943



The taxi from town, near Algiers



In the early days when the 12th AAF was part of Allied Air Force

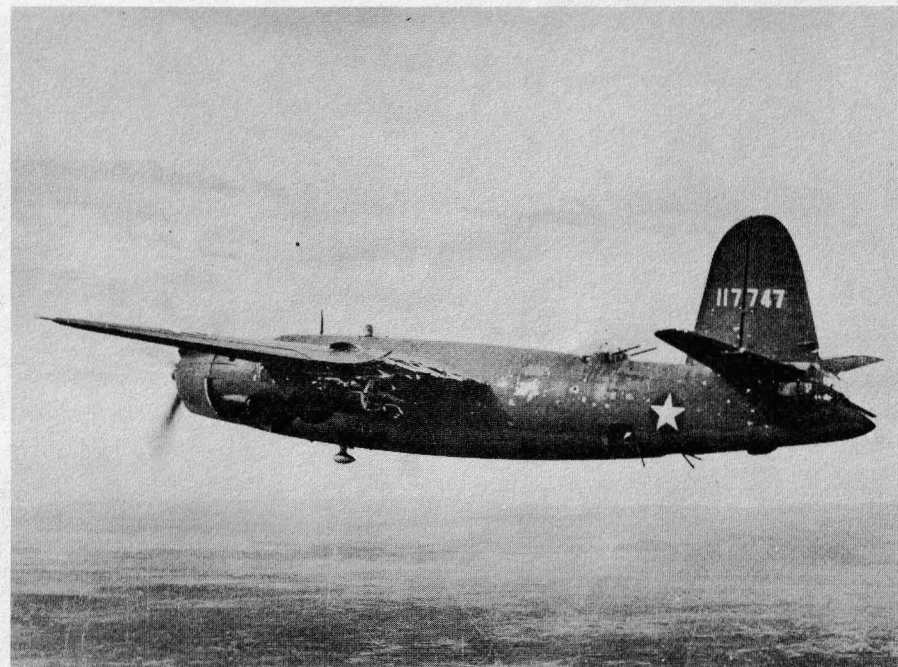


El Djem, Tunisia, December 12, 1942





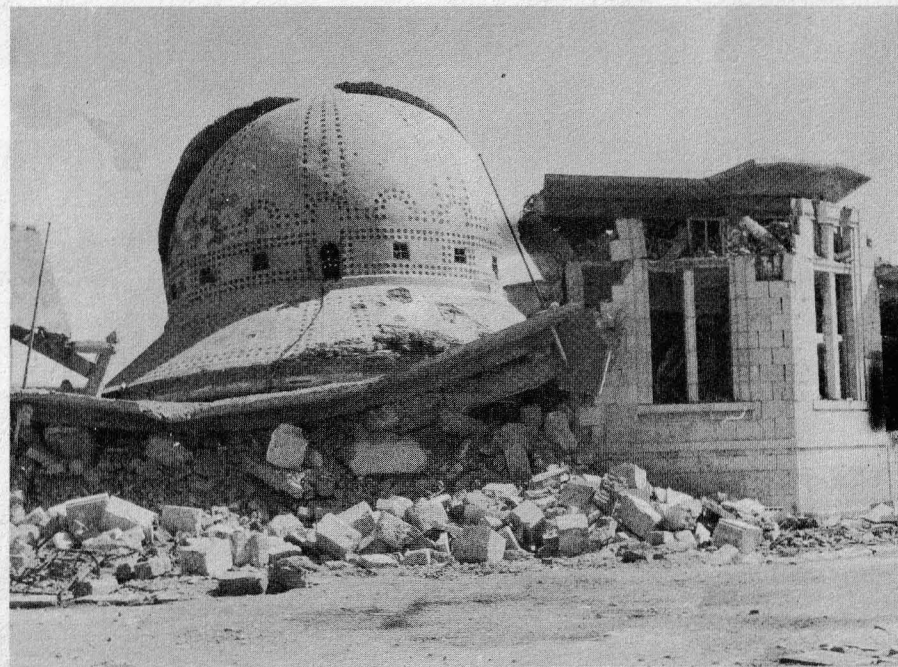
Somewhere in Western Desert, Egypt



Despite heavy flak damage this B-26 returned to base

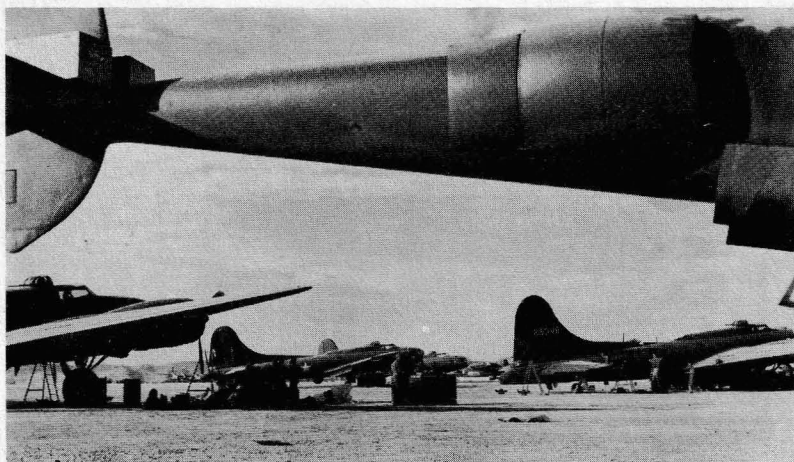


B-17 engine change. Algiers



Dome is intact after bombing of dock area, Tunis





View of airfield. Algiers



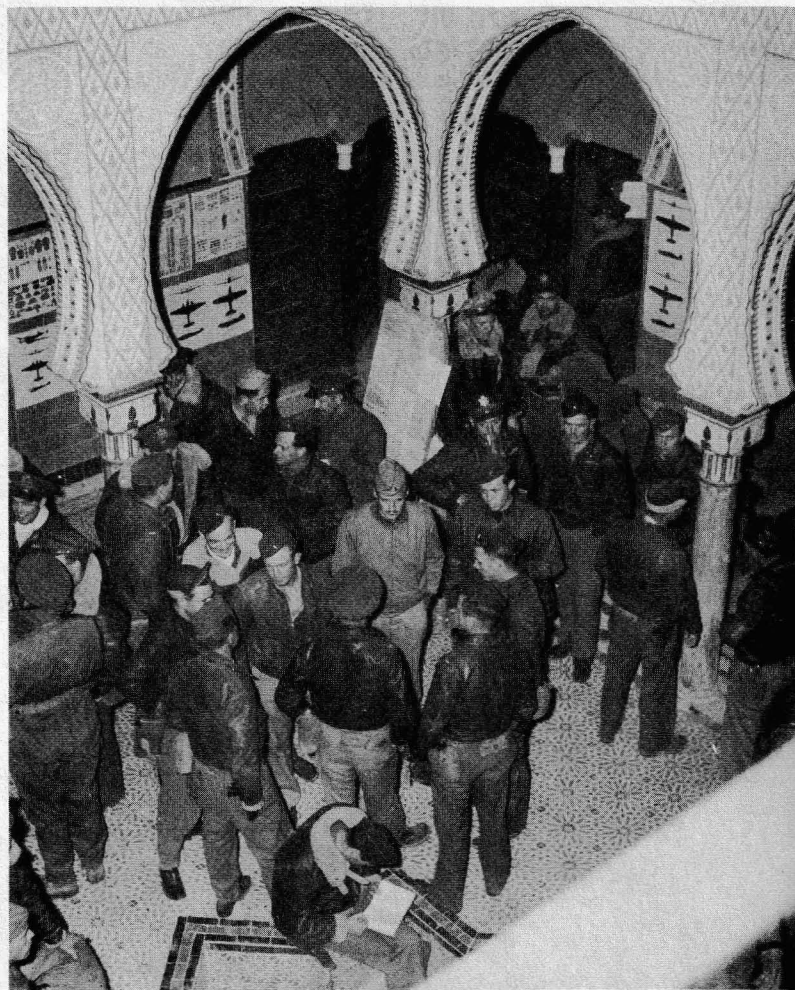
Chow line. Algiers



Sand storm near Cairo, Egypt. B-25



Tent and dugout (floor is 4 feet down). Algiers

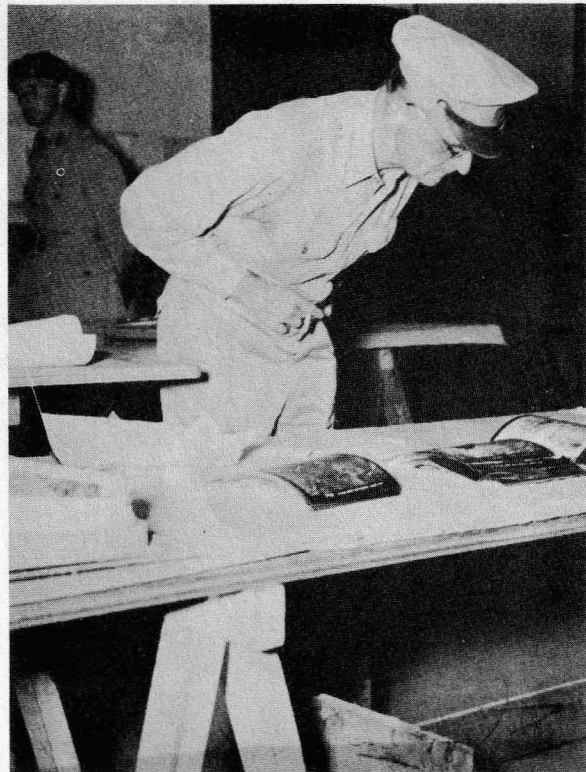


Pilots awaiting orders. Algiers





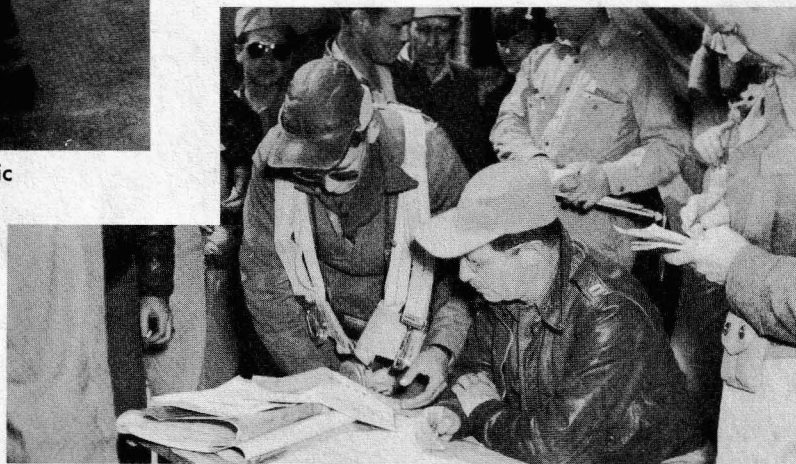
Mademoiselle from Old Algiers applying fabric



General Spaatz looking over photographs. No. Africa



"Ambushed" by enthusiastic natives. Tunis



Interrogation after a mission. Near Cairo

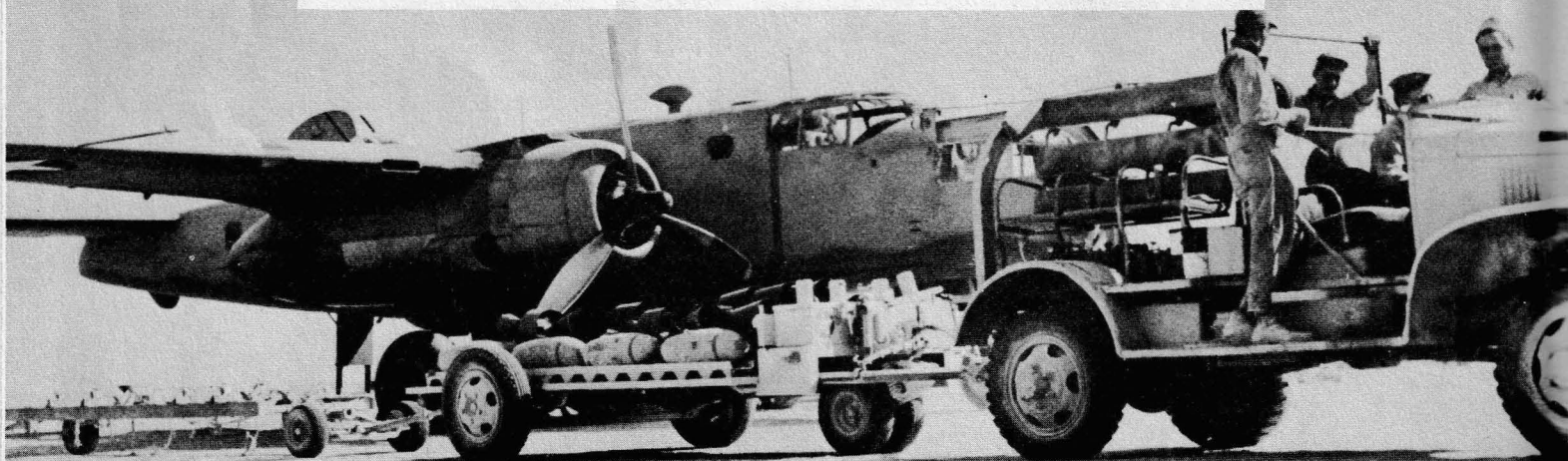


Digging emergency shelter in Western Desert, Egypt





Left: Having Chow.  
Algiers



Above: Western  
Desert, Egypt.  
Re-servicing and  
re-loading B-25  
for another  
mission



Left: Mail call,  
October 8, 1943



Right: Red Cross doughnuts and coffee after a mission while being interrogated

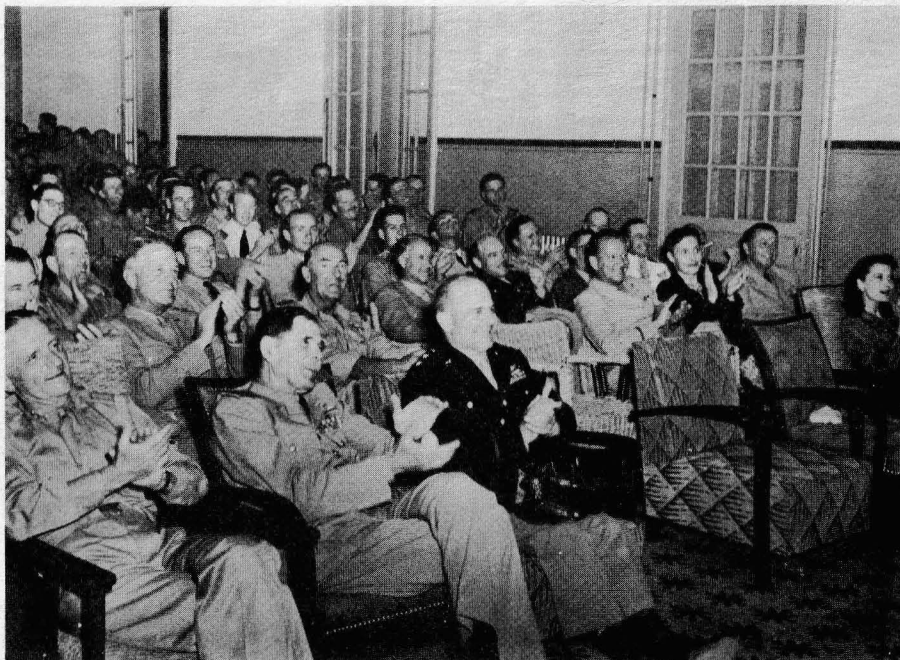


Right: A 12th AAF camp in Algeria

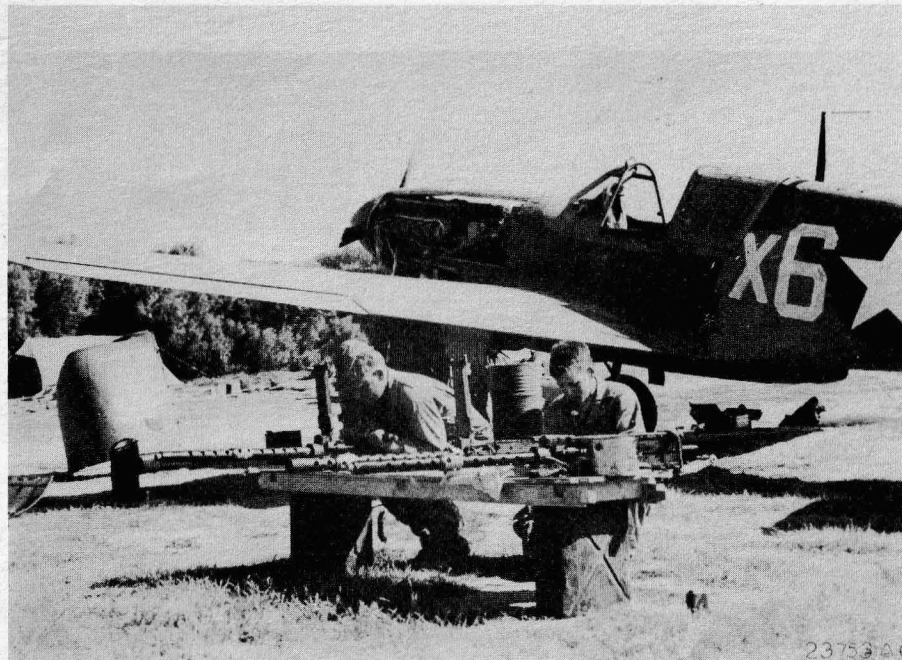


Above: Africa. B-17 is practically cut in two by a German fighter plane which crashed into it. Plane returned to its home base.

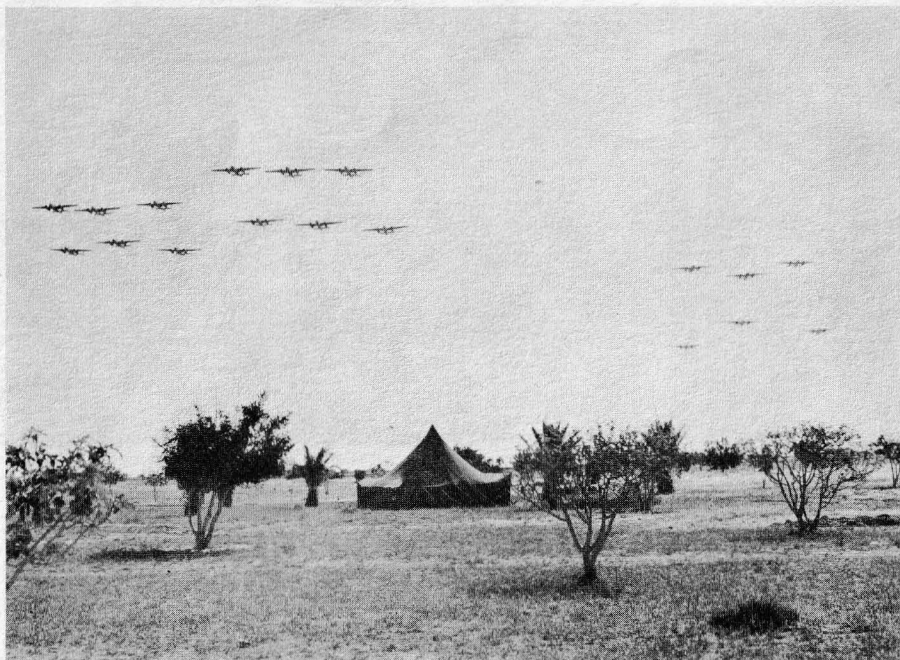




At African radio show. Lt. Gen. Spaatz, Lord Trenchard, Maj. Gen Doolittle.  
Vivian Leigh at extreme right.



Working on Kittyhawk fighter. Tripolitania, Libya



B-25 Formation over Africa



Last minute information from Intelligence. Egypt

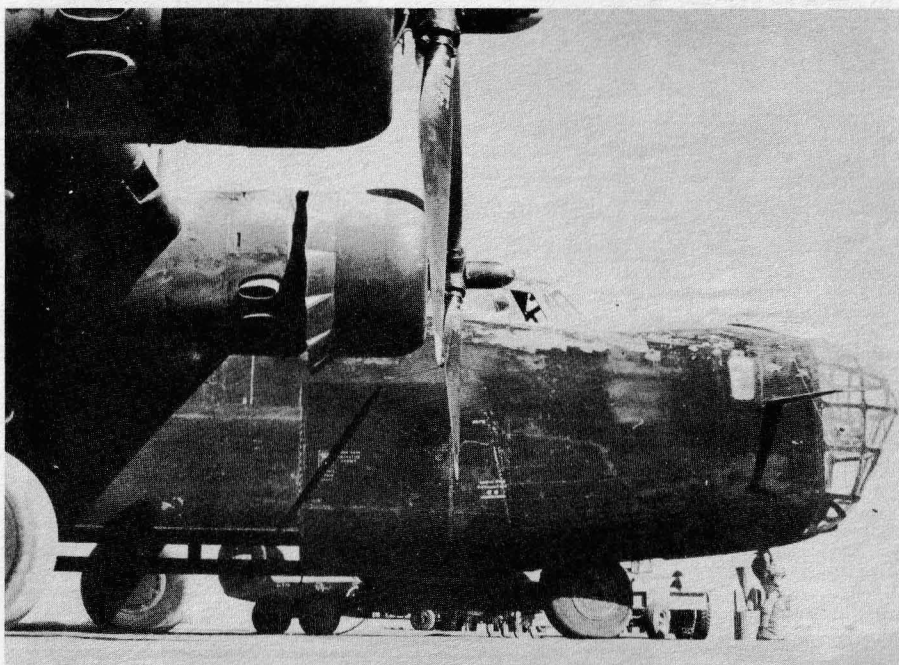




Easter Sunday Services. Bizerte, Tunisia



Eating chow in the mud near Bizerte. Nov. 10, 1943



B-24 Liberator, Western Desert, Egypt



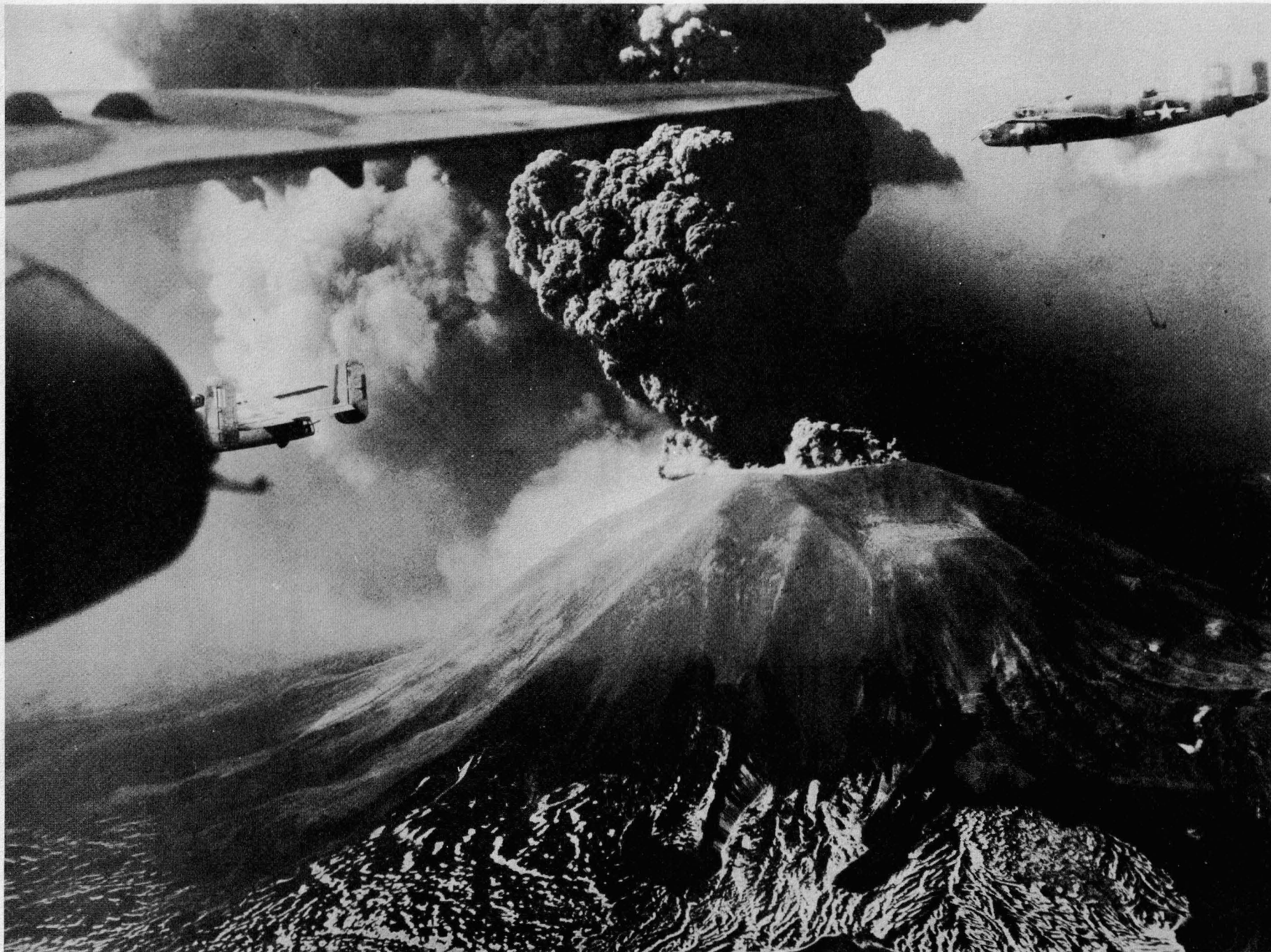
Six B-26's coming in to land. Africa





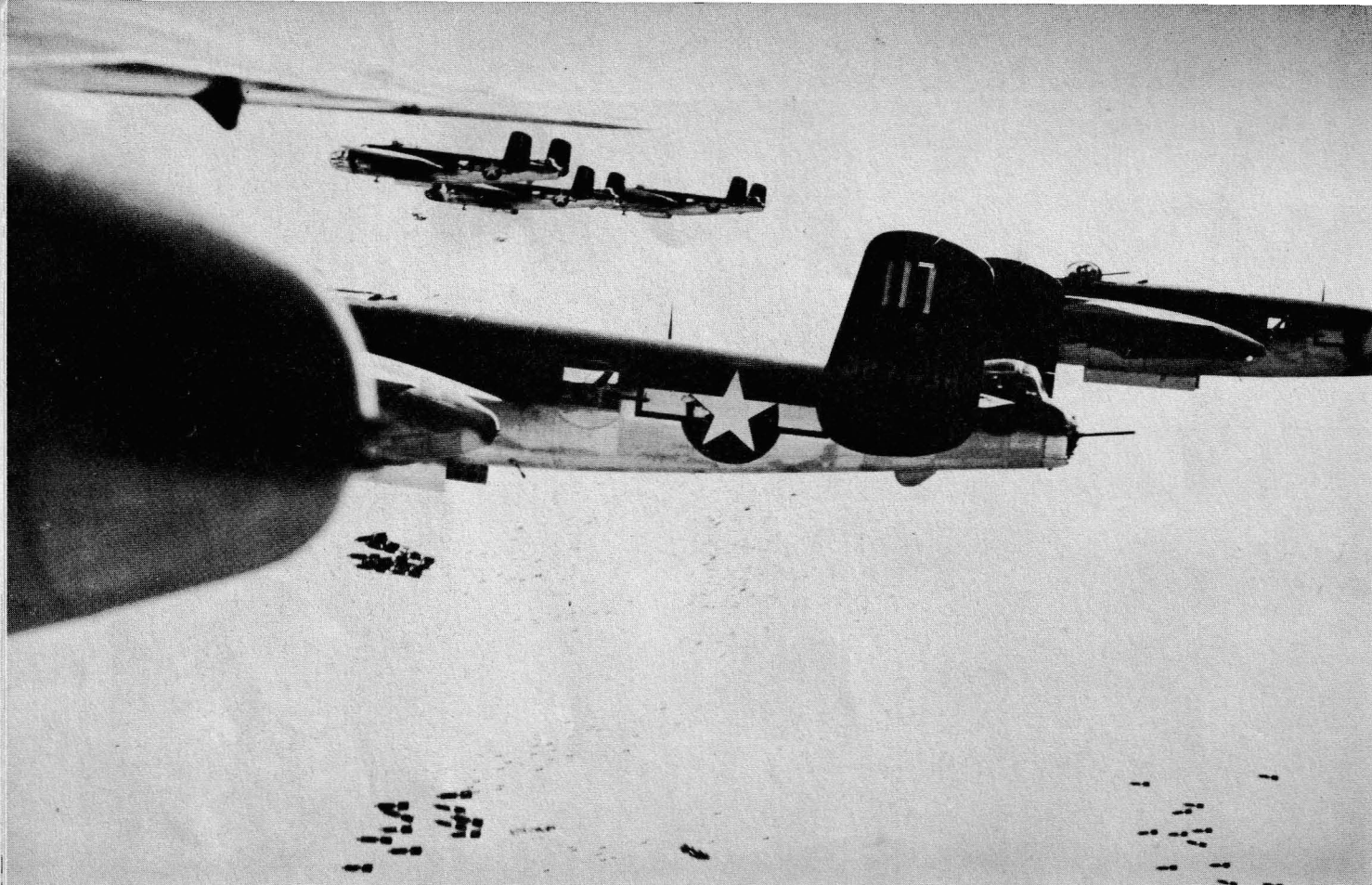
Bombing of bridge in Southern France by Martin B-26 Marauder





B-25s pass Mt. Vesuvius on way to bomb German troops in the Cassino area



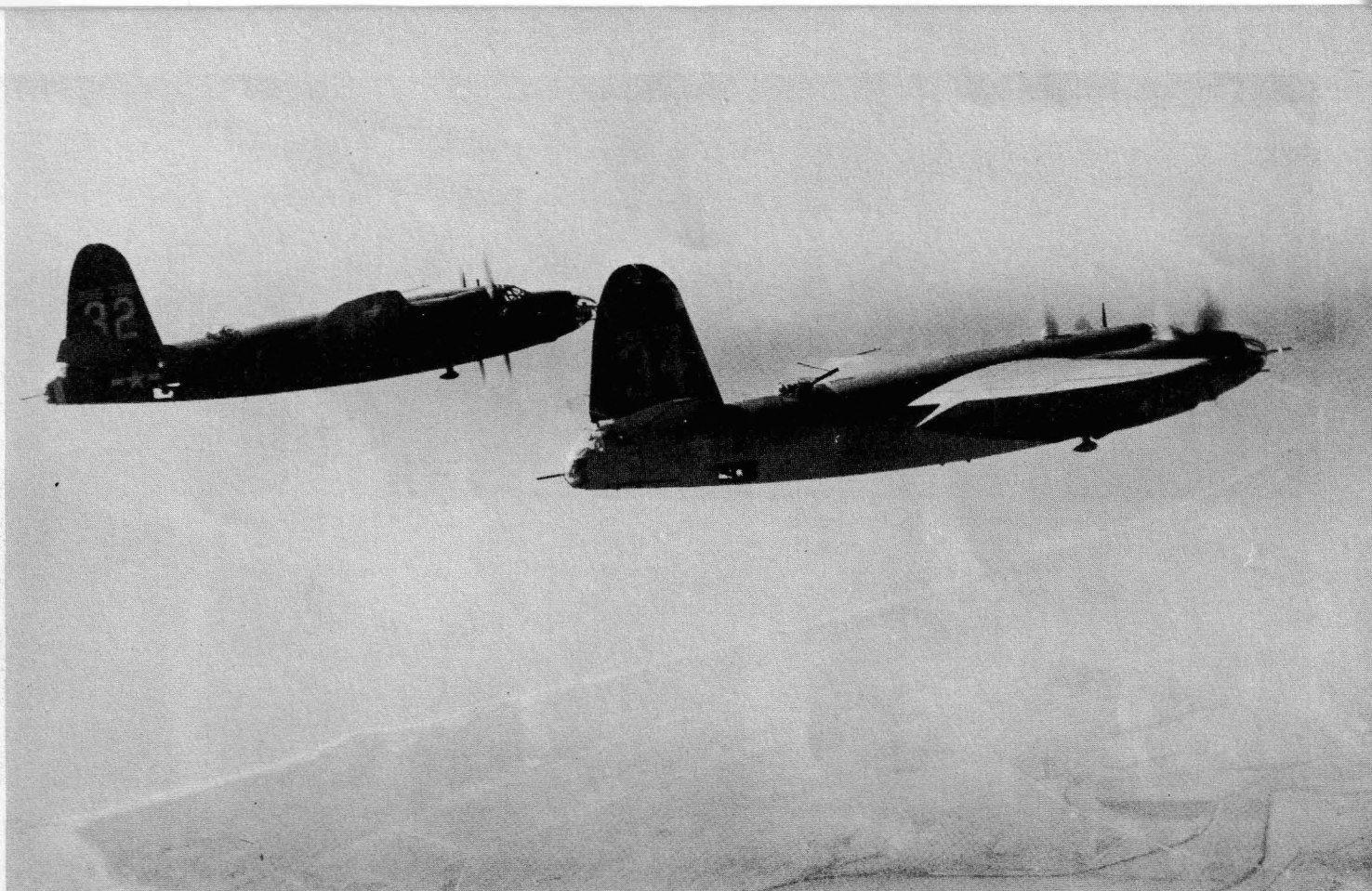


Above: B-25s drop fragmentation bombs on Gothic Line in Italy

Below: P-47s over the Appenine Mts., flying in cooperation with U. S. 5th Army.







Above: B-26s protecting allied landings during invasion of Anzio, Italy



Below: Airfield in Southern France. Beaufighters in foreground





B-25s and German AA flak bursts

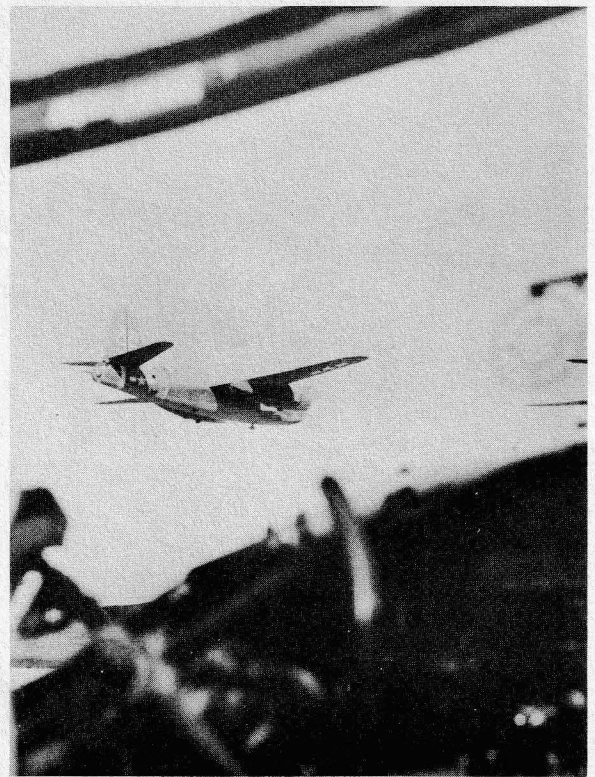


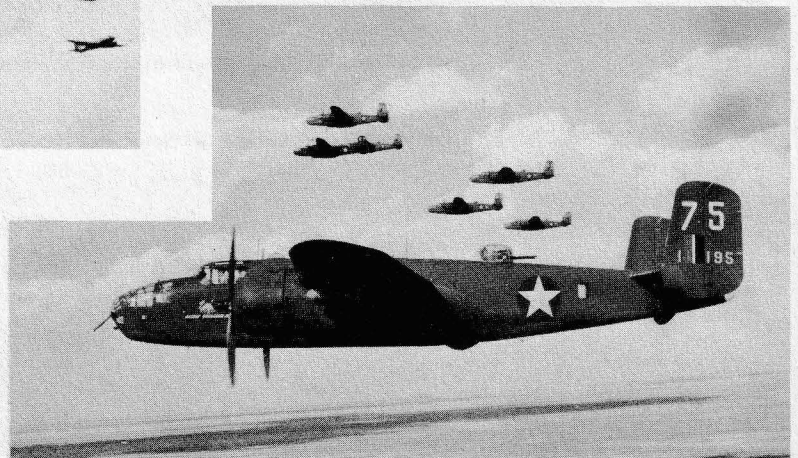
Photo taken from cockpit of B-26



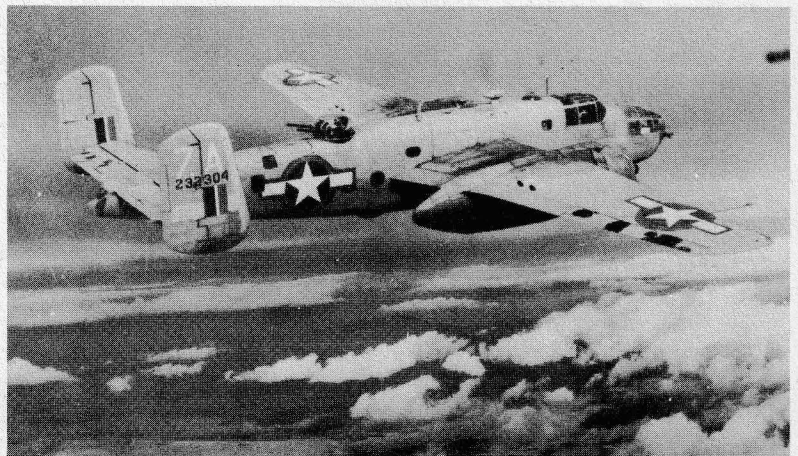
C-47s of 12th AAF Troop Carrier Air Division



P-47 strafing a road in So. France



Over Tunisia, North Africa



B-25s over Sibenik, Yugoslavia





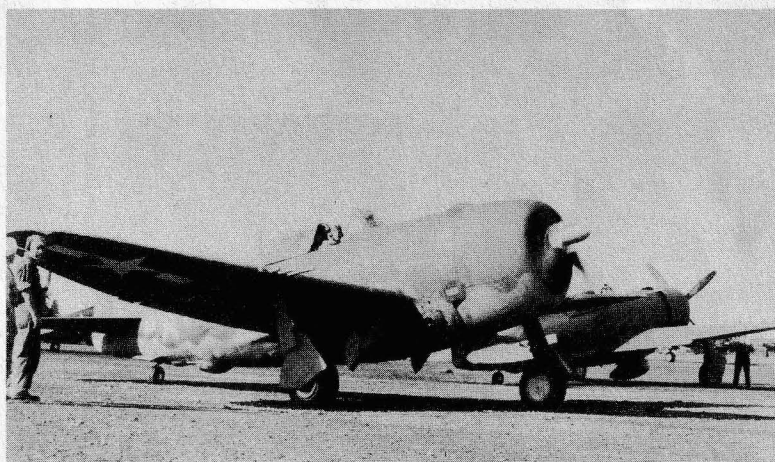
B-26 flies into a field of black flak



A-20 hits target at Cisterna de Littoria



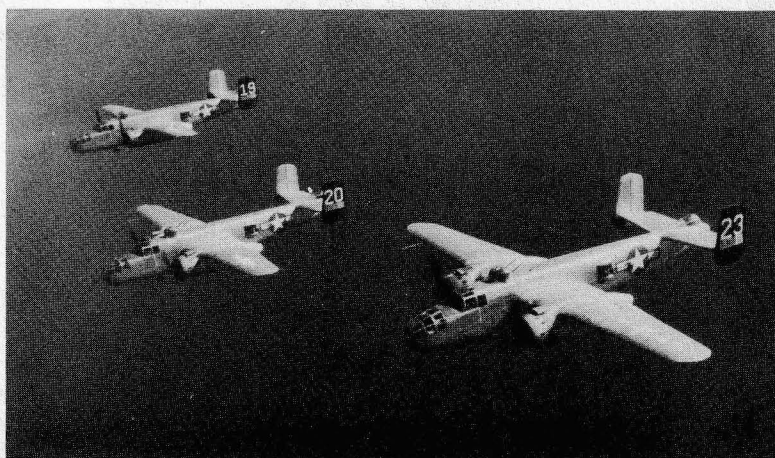
Bombing of Ostiense Marshalling Yards, Rome



Checking out P-47 at an Air Service Command base



B-26 leaves its card on Nazi guns at Toulon

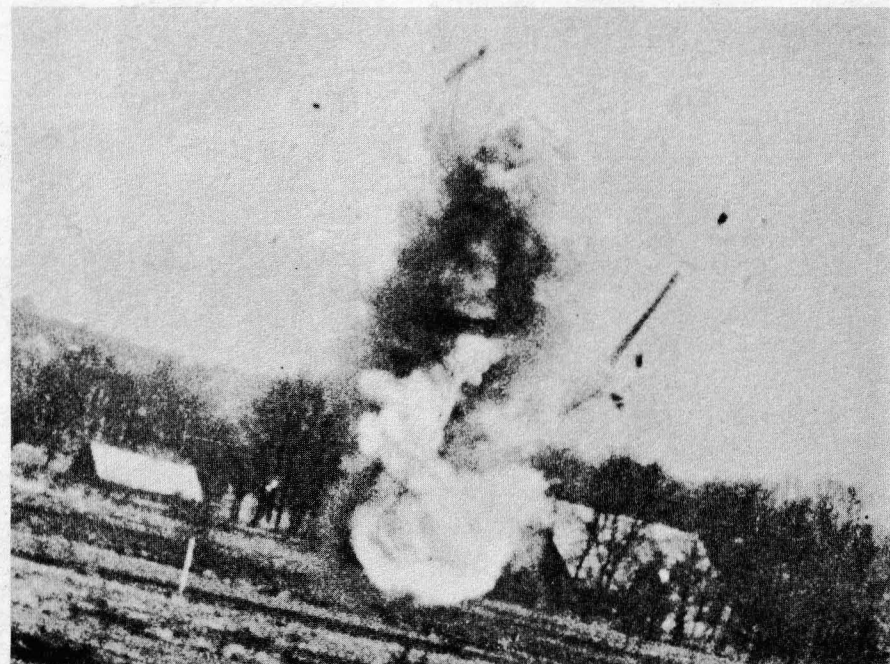
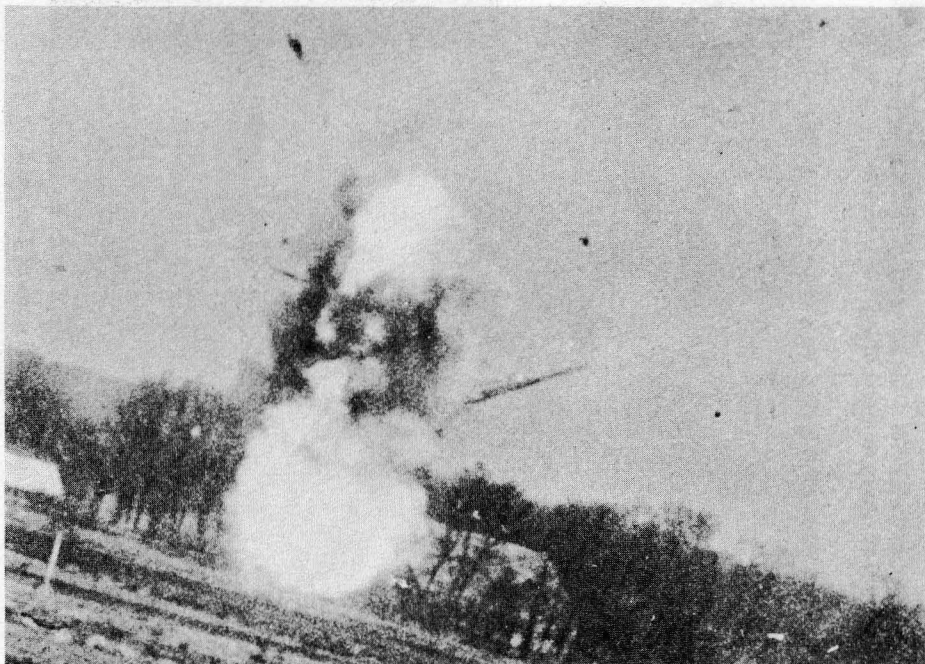


B-25 formation off the coast of Italy

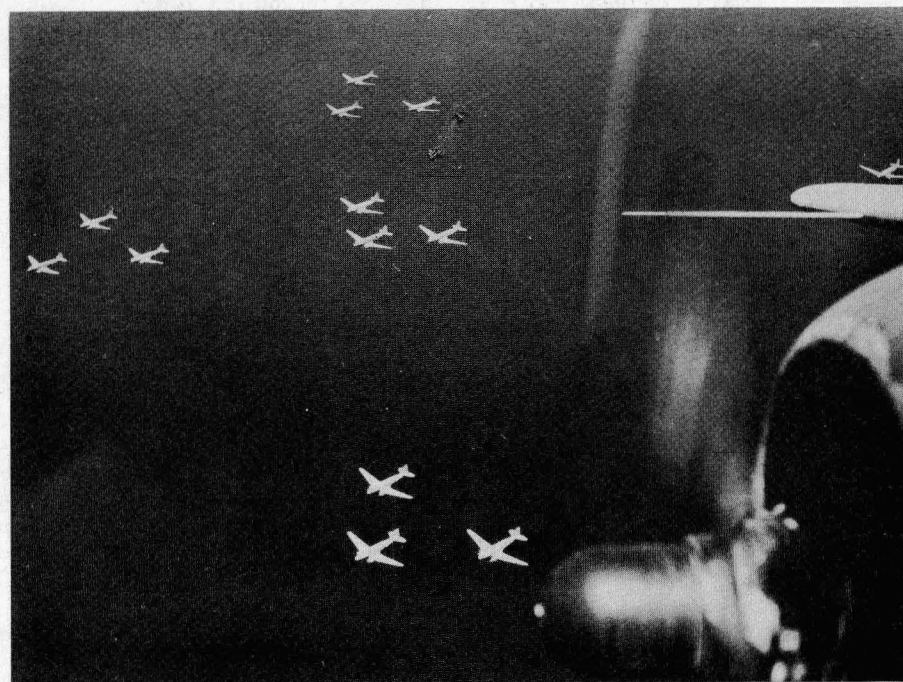
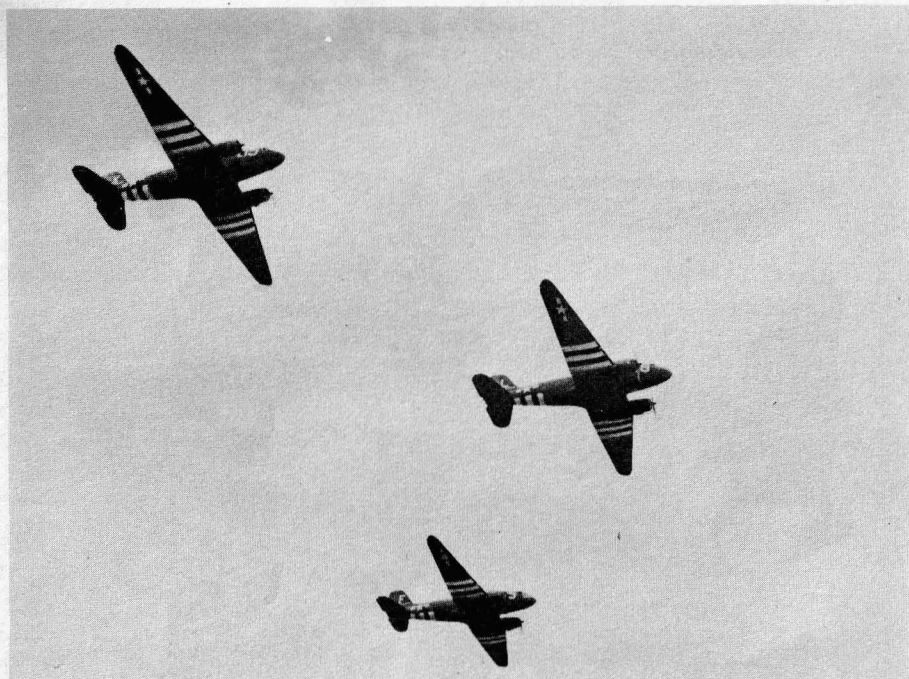




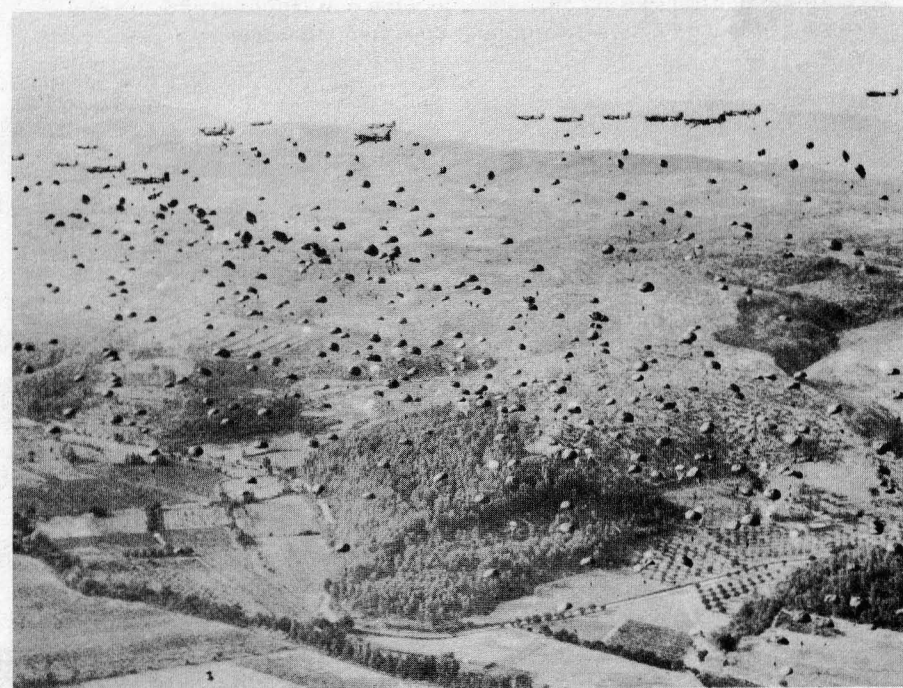
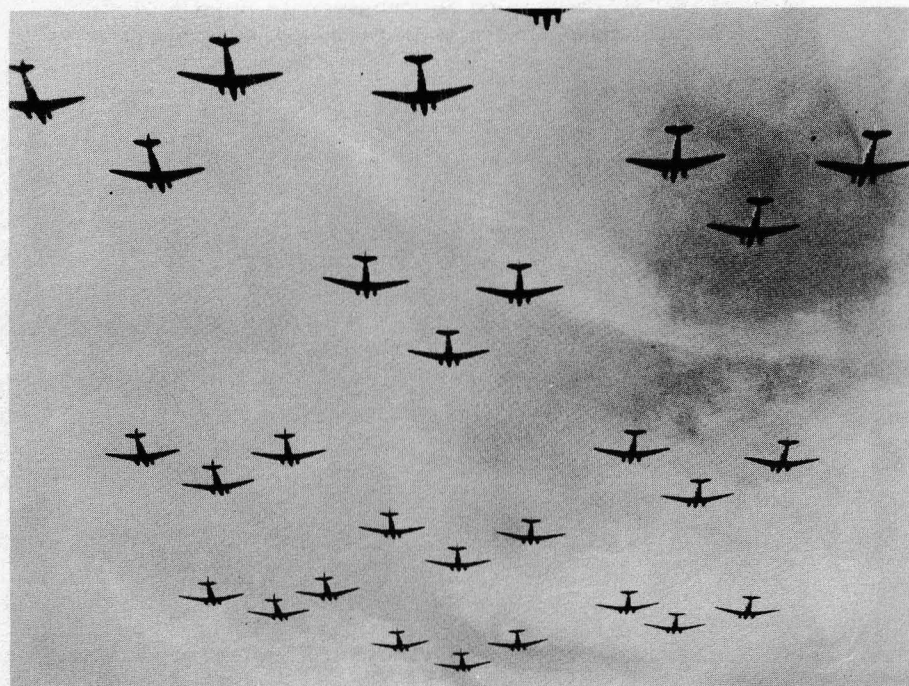
This series of four photographs shows the destruction of one Focke-wulf by an American fighter plane



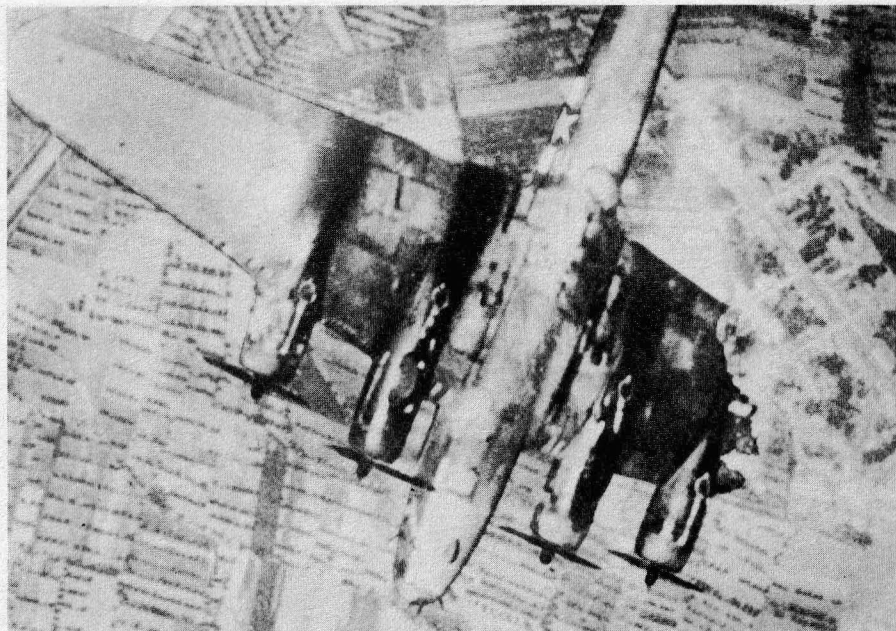




C-47s of the 12th AAF Troop Carrier Air Division



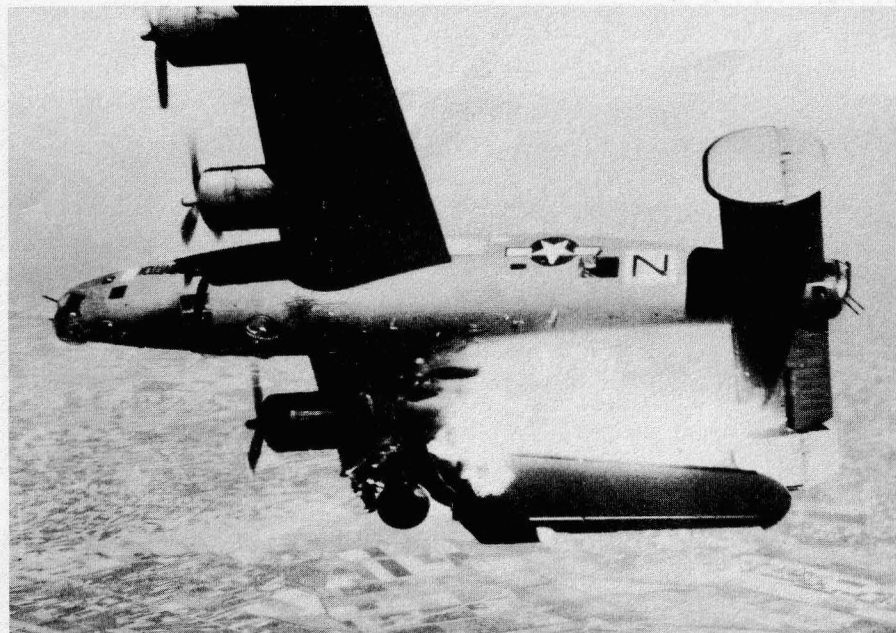




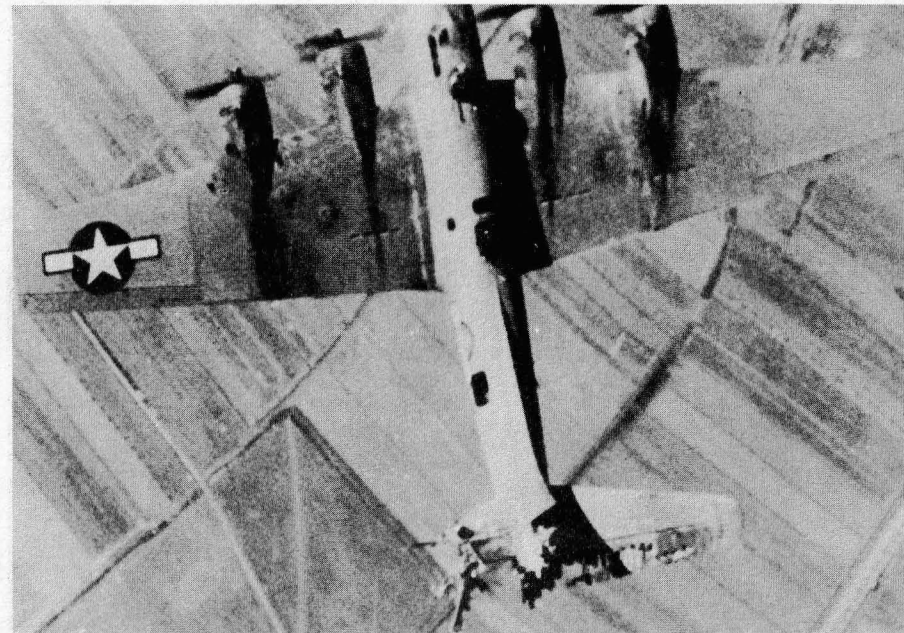
B-17 After Naples Raid — Despite serious damage, plane managed to level off at 1500 feet and five parachutes were seen to open.



12th AAF B-26 Marauder gets wing shot off by German 88 mm flak shell, plus damage to rudder and nose. She spun into the hills beyond the river.



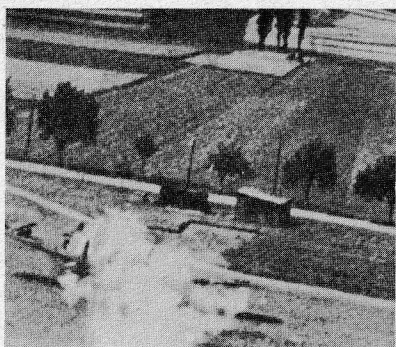
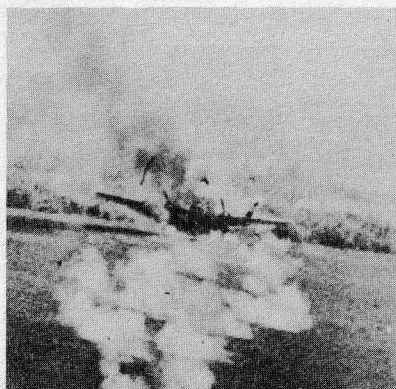
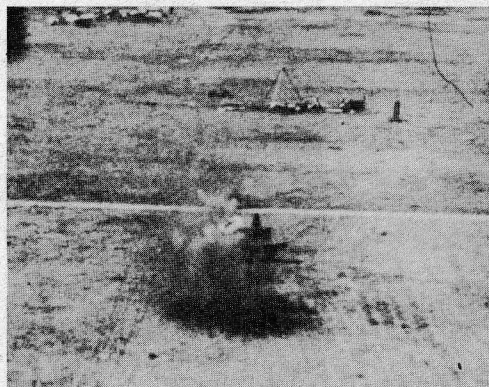
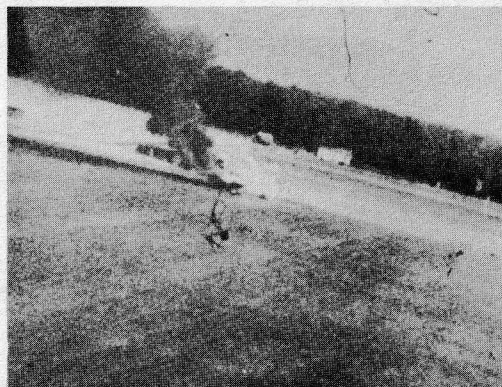
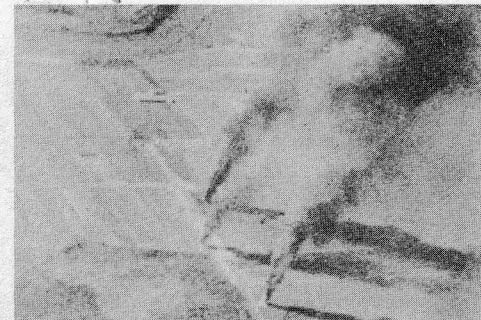
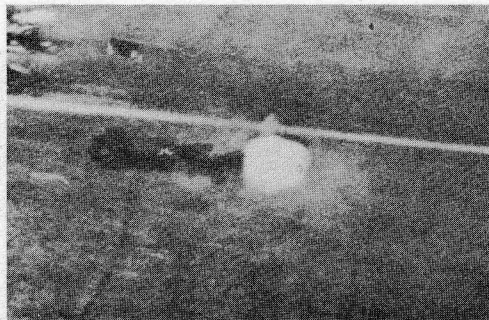
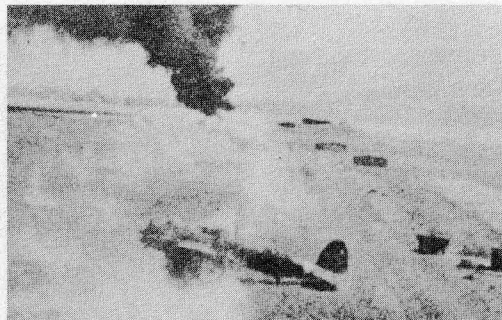
This B-24 Didn't Make It — Two men bailed out before she hit the ground.



This B-17 Had Tail Shot Away by Rocket from German Fighter After Attack on Villaorba Airfield on March 18, 1944 — Tail gunner was blown out but his chute opened. Plane returned to base.



blown off for his chute opened. Plane returned to base.



#### G.A.F. HIT ON THE GROUND

On this page are more illustrations of why the Luftwaffe was not an effective force in the battle in Normandy. The destruction of aircraft on the ground was enormous. A plane with imitated Allied markings will be noted in the upper left hand corner, an enlargement of this picture shows a swastika on the tail.





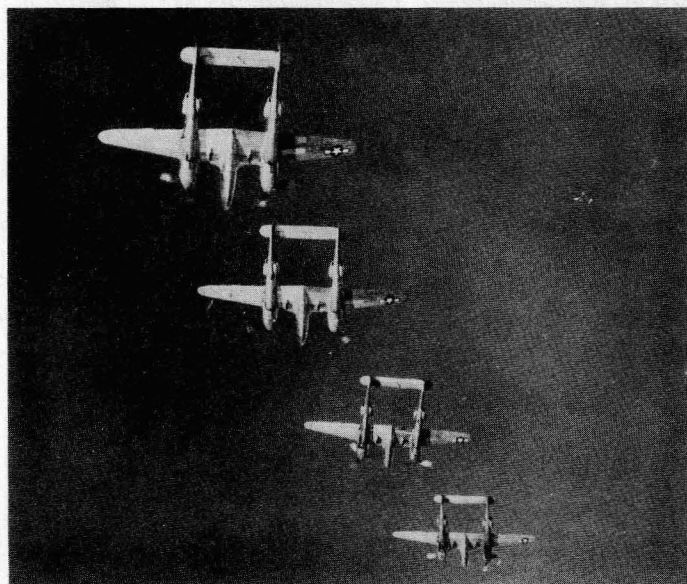
Briefing of P-38 Pilots



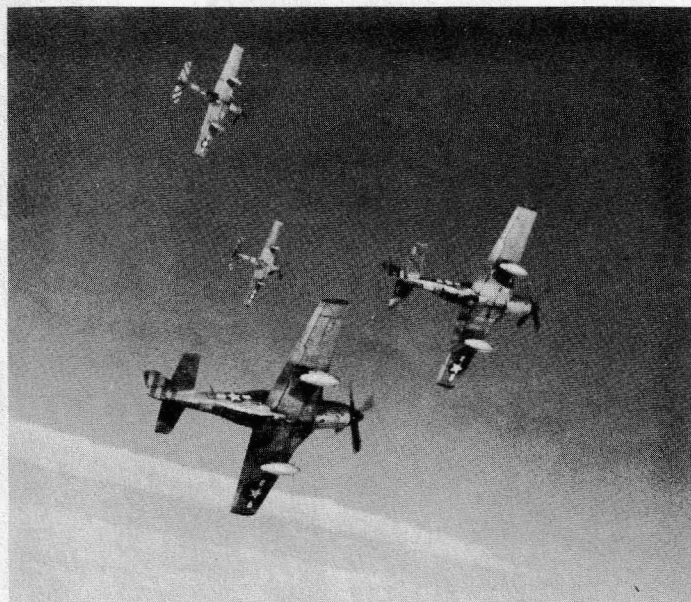
P-38s on the Line at Florence Airport



P-51 Mustangs Ready for Takeoff



P-38 Formation



P-51s Carrying Wing Tanks



P-47s in Formation





Above: P-38 Lightnings.

# FORMATIONS

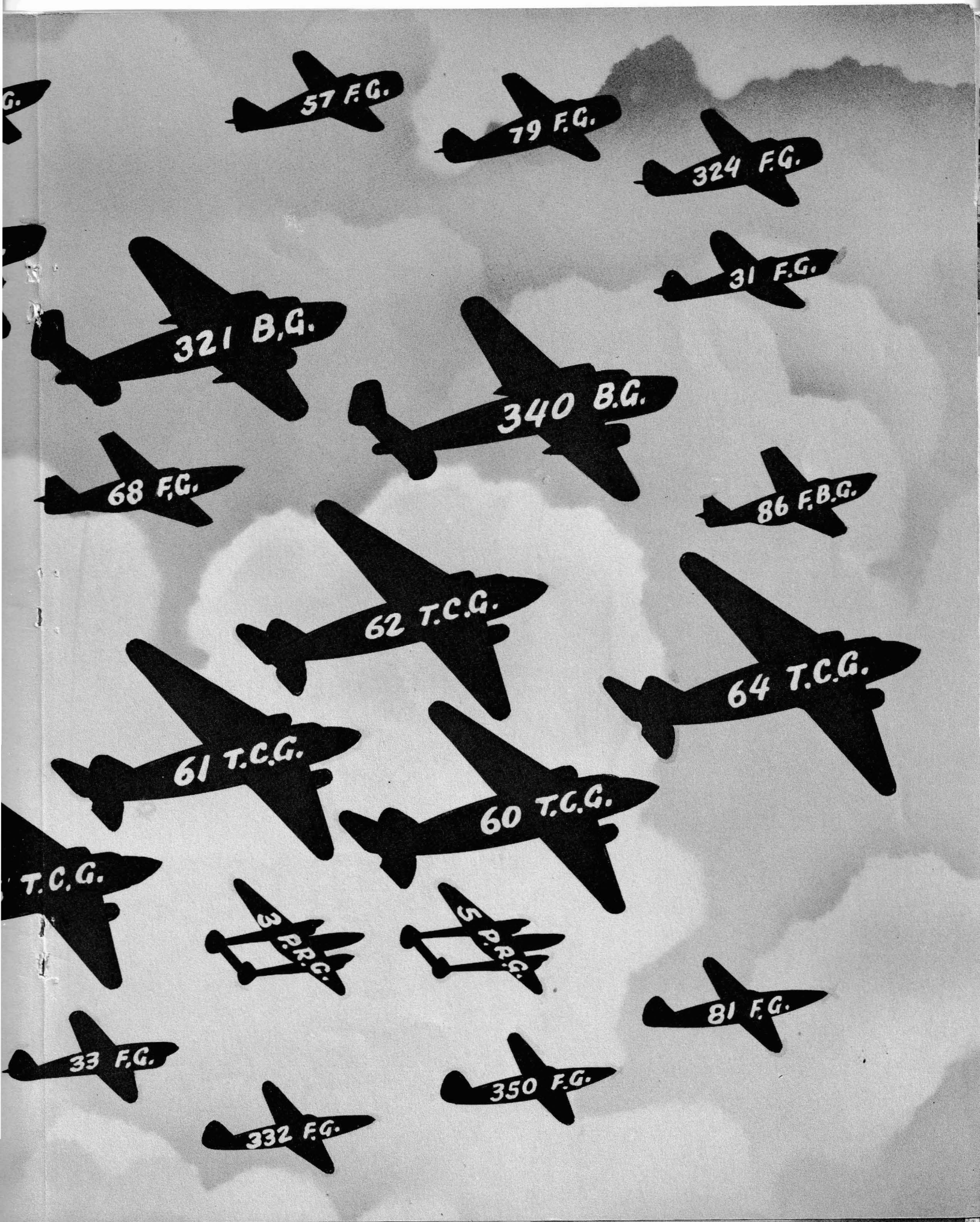
Below: P-51 Mustangs.









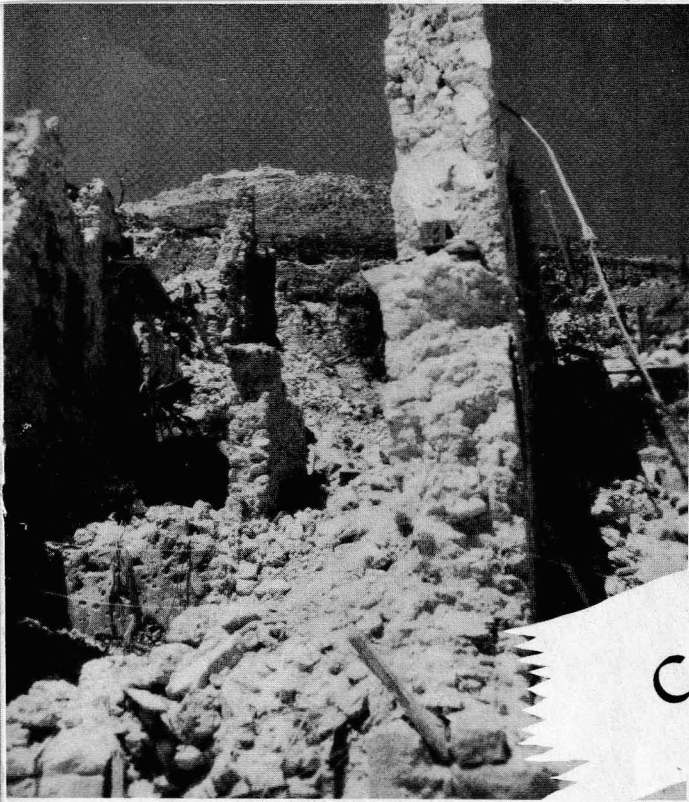




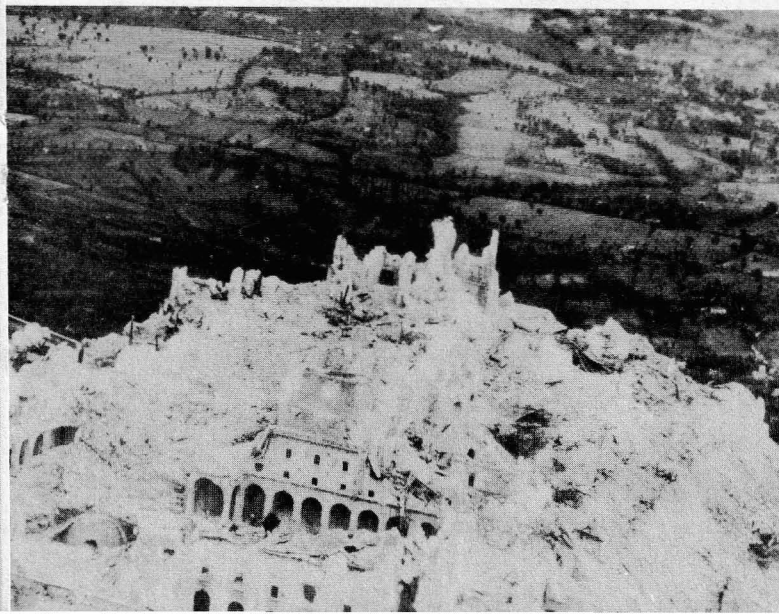


SOMEWHERE IN ITALY





# CASSINO





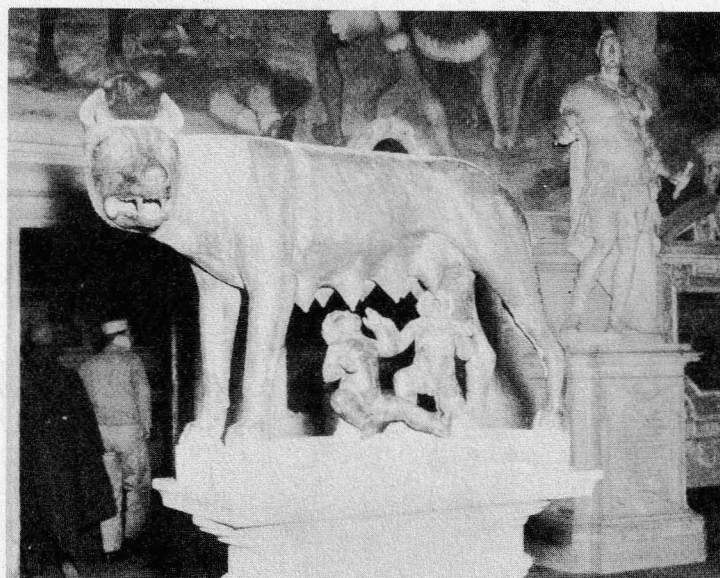


Monument to Victor Emanuel I

# ROME

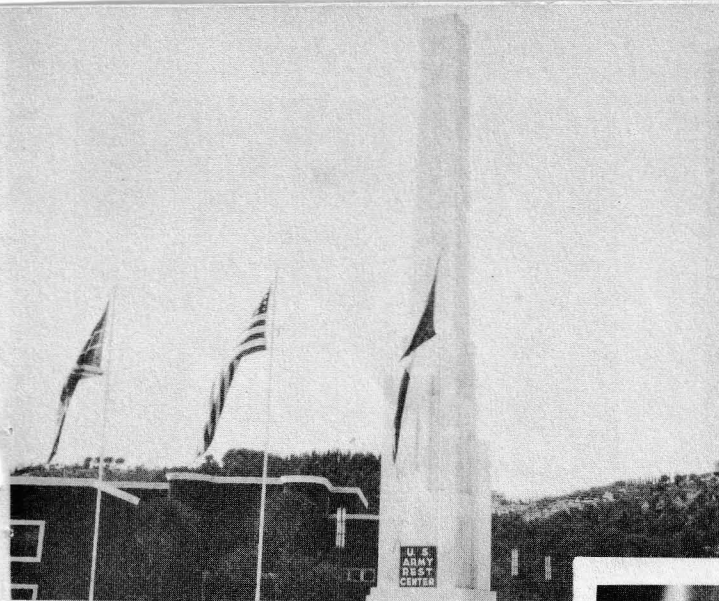


Arch of Septimo Severo.



Statue of Romulus and Remus.





Above: U.S. Army Rest Center.



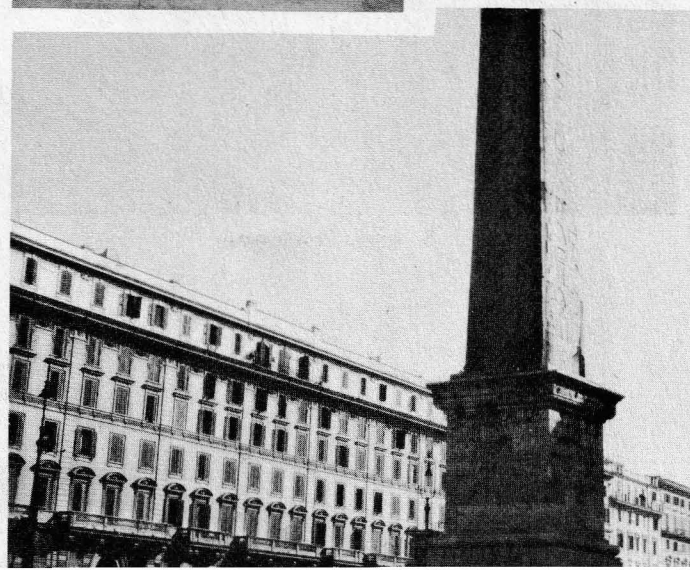
Above:  
Along Appian Way  
Near Rome.



Below: Pantheon



Below: Center of Rome.

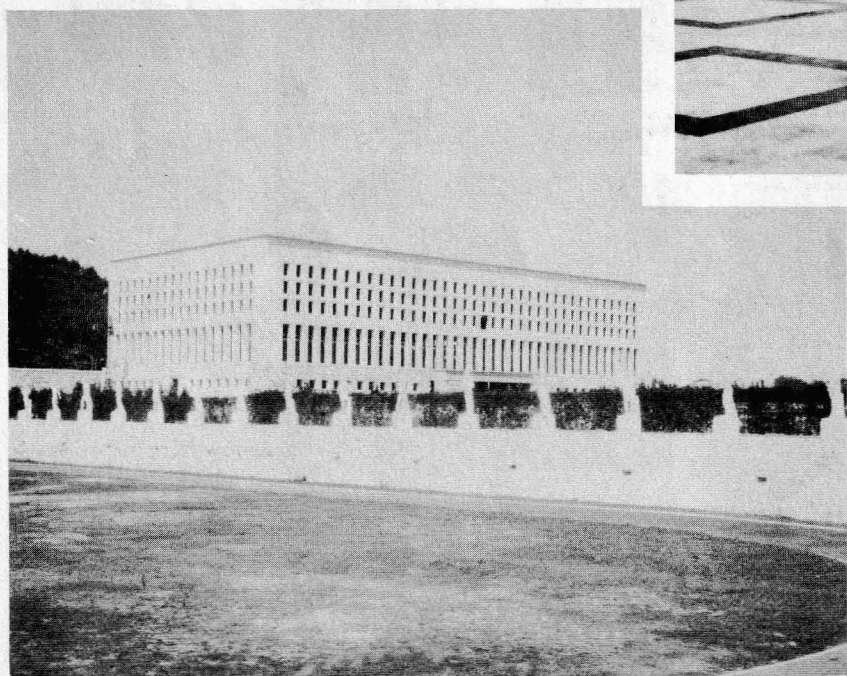
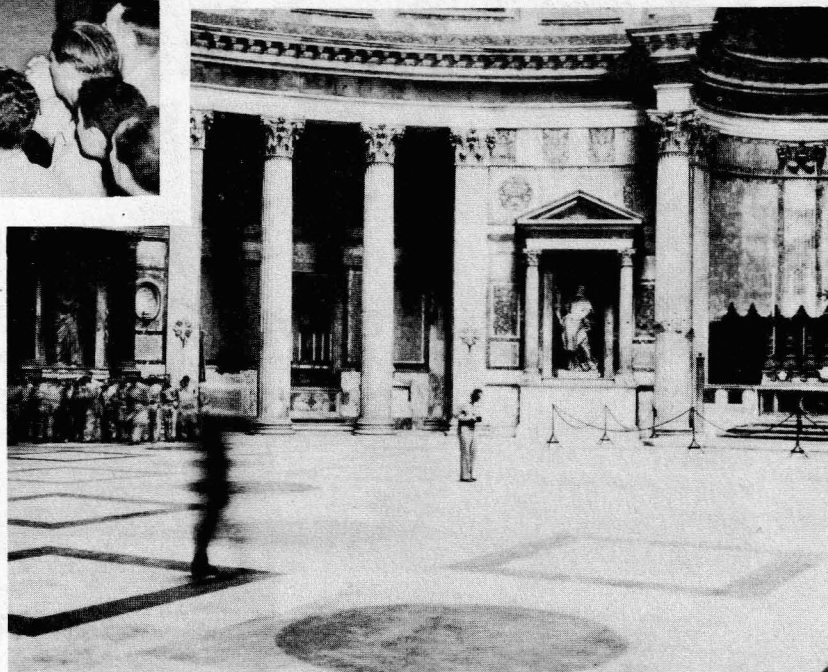






Pope Pius XII.

Below: Under Main Dome in Vatican City



U. S. Army Rest Center.

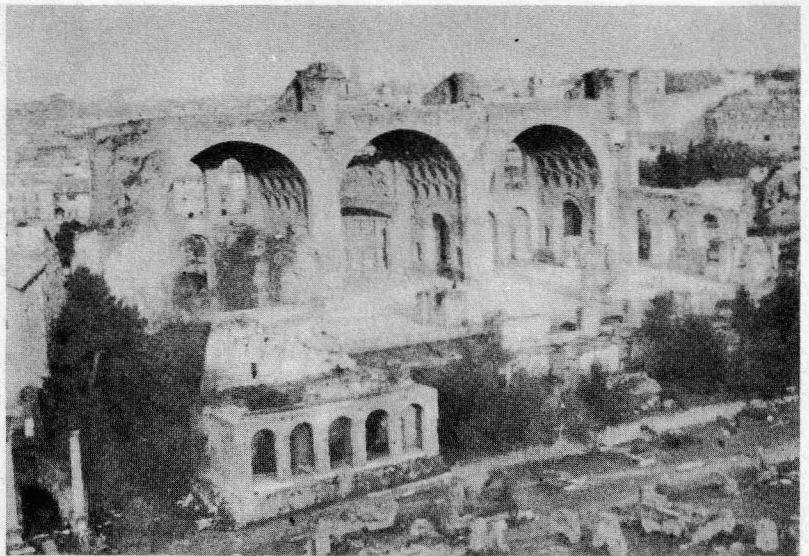
Below: Enlisted Men's Rest Center on Tiber River.







Temple of Antonio and Faustina.



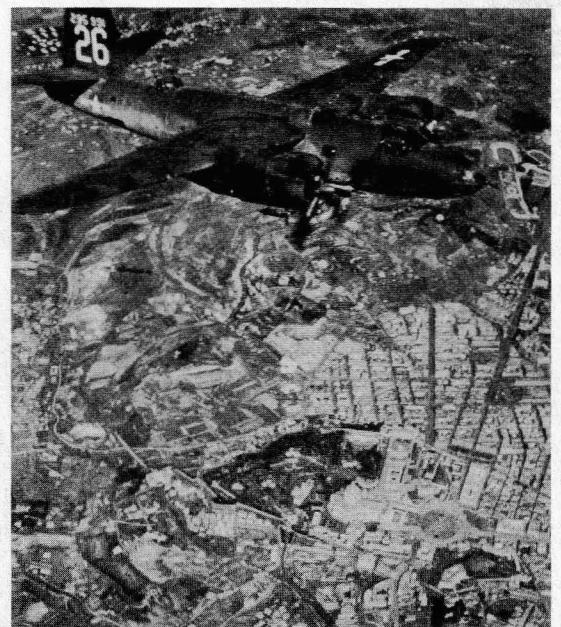
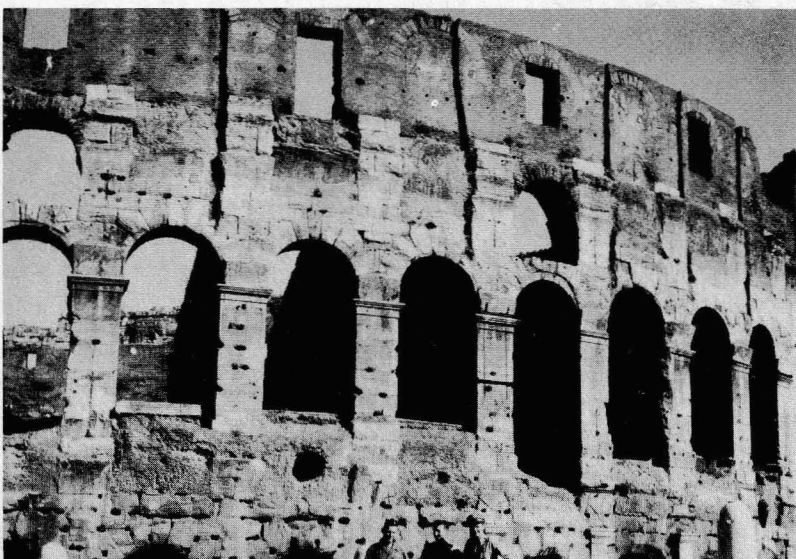
Upper Right: The Basilica of Maussenzio.

Center Right: The Colosseum — Interior.

Lower Right: 12th AAF B-26 Marauder over Vatican City



The Colosseum







VATICAN CITY





THE COLOSSEUM, ROME — Arch of Titus in Foreground.





"Christ at the Cross" by Michaelangelo.





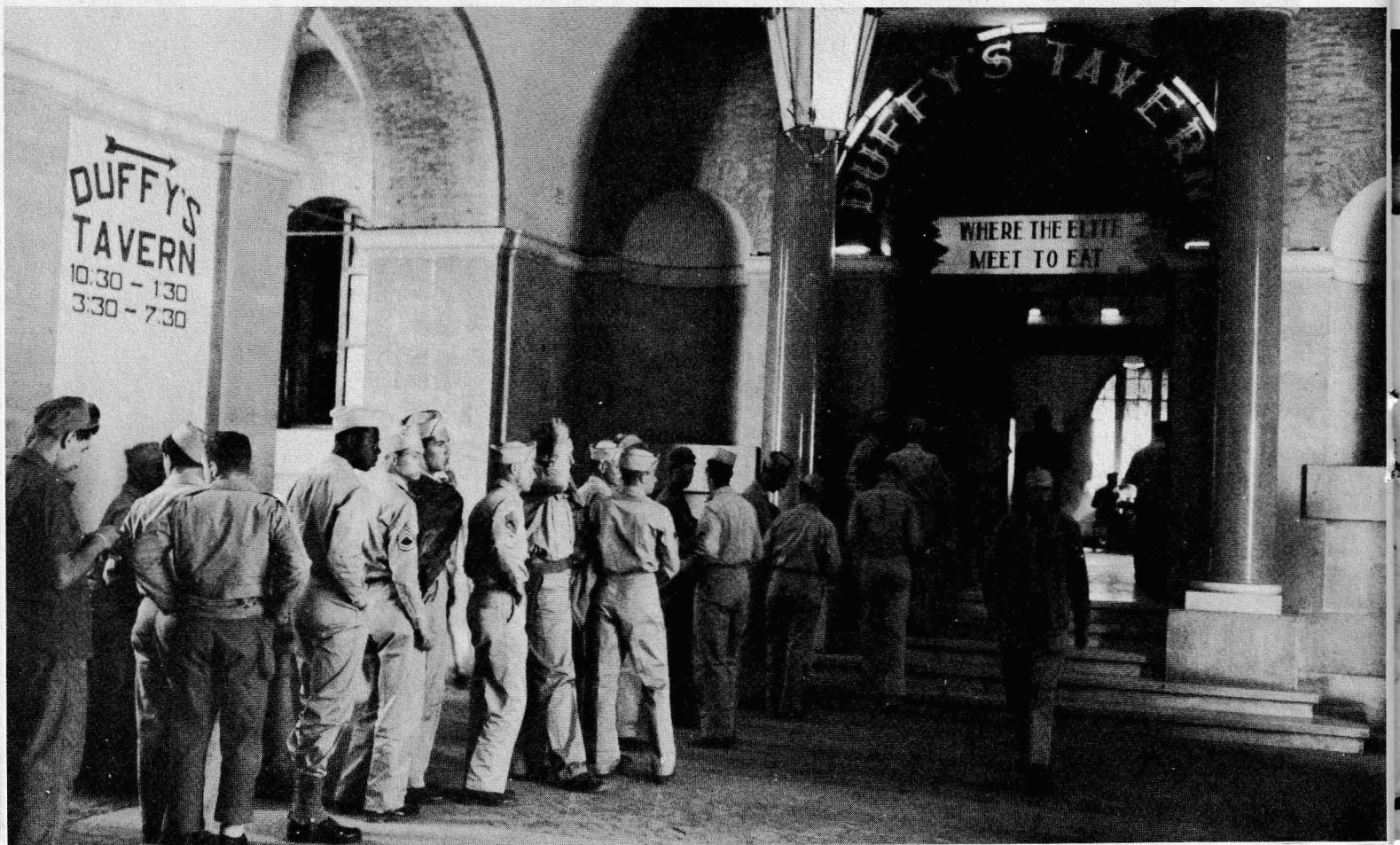
Inside Saint Peters Cathedral.



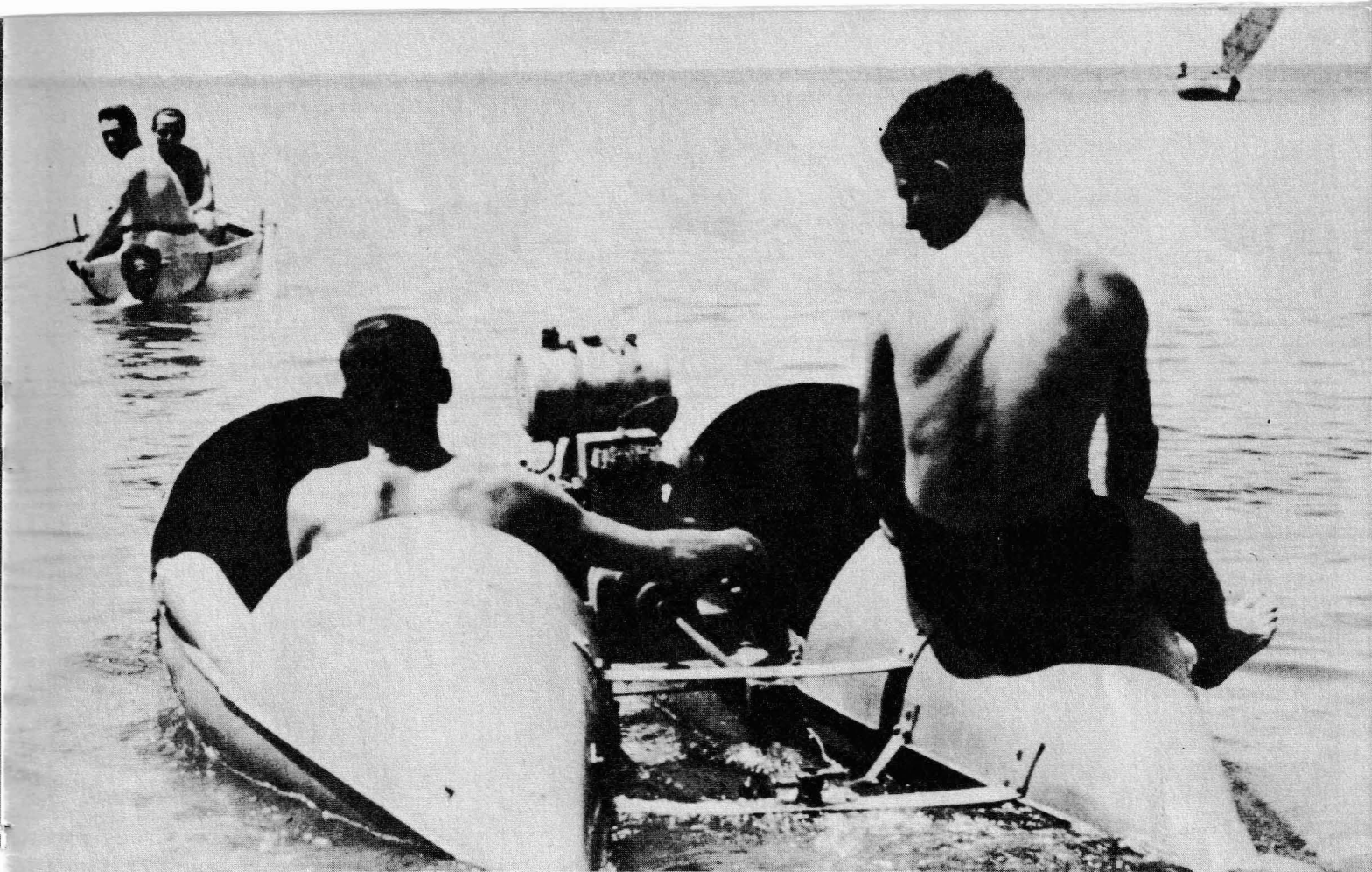


Above: Mt. Vesuvius in Night Eruption — Red hot lava streaming down mountain — accumulation of static electricity over fiery crater.

Below: Red Cross Club





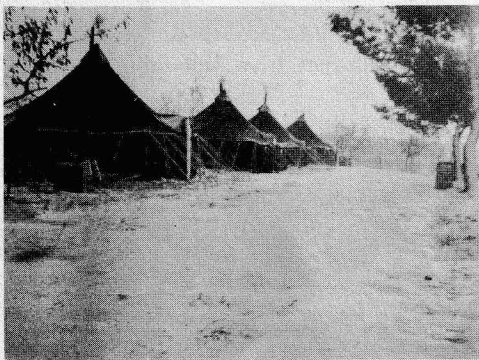


Above: Aaaah! But This Water Is Appreciated — Made from two P-38 auxiliary tanks and a "Put-put" from Italian Bomber.

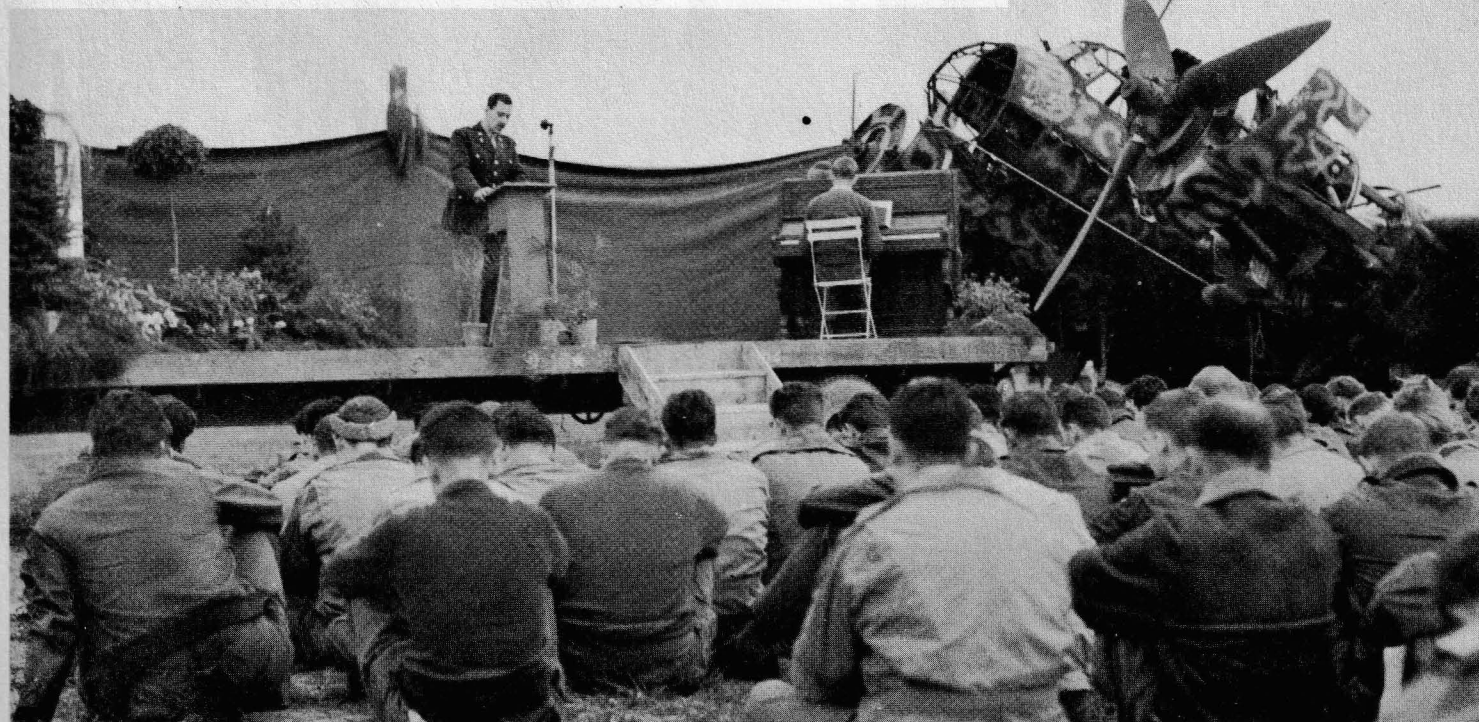
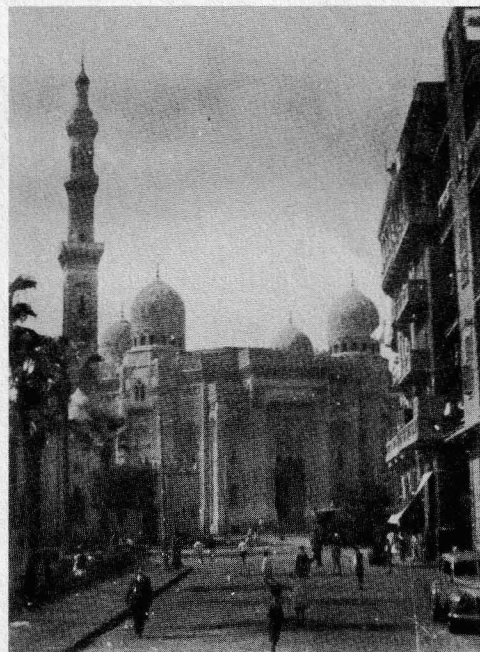
Below: Every now and then the "pasteboards" came out.



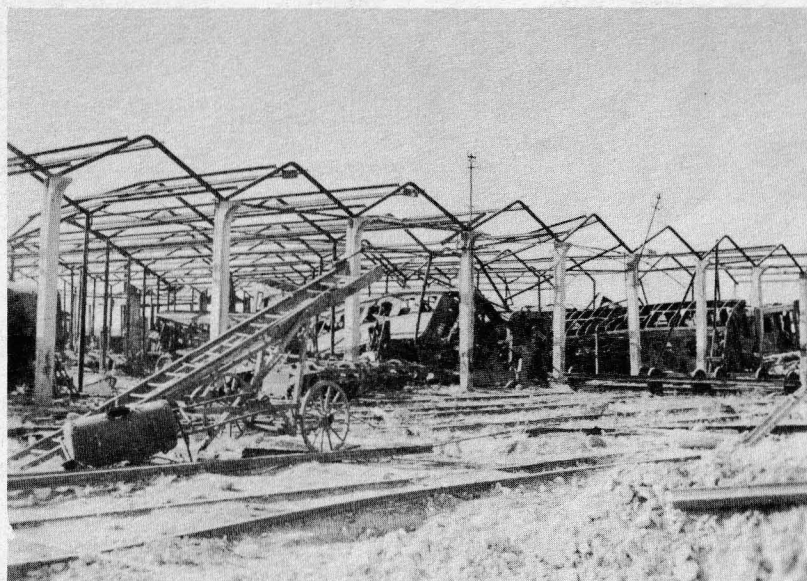












BOMB DAMAGE AT FOGGIA, ITALY







FLORENCE, ITALY





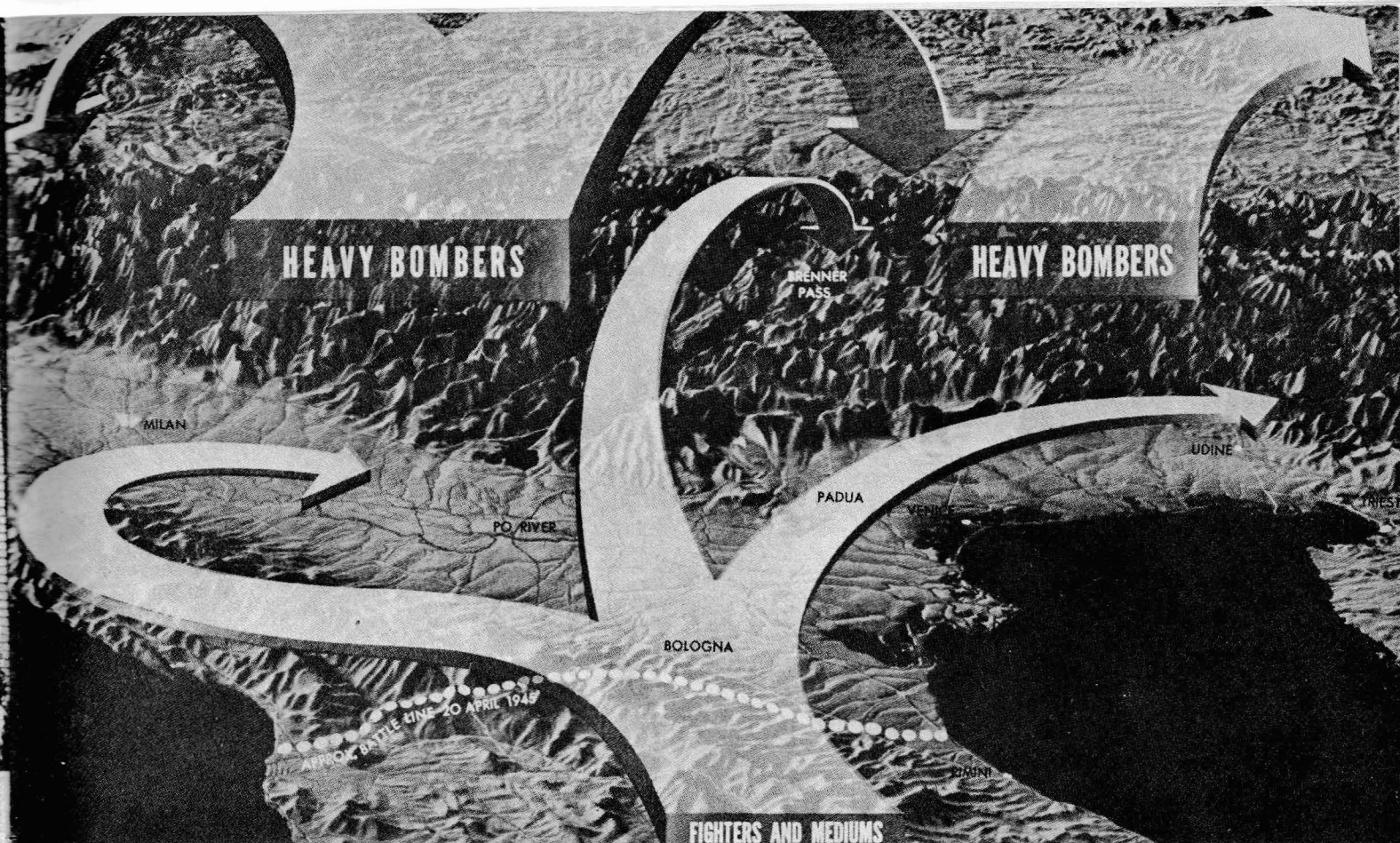


Above: Enlisted Men's Red Cross Club

Below: Church at San Sabastiano crumbles under steady flow of lava.





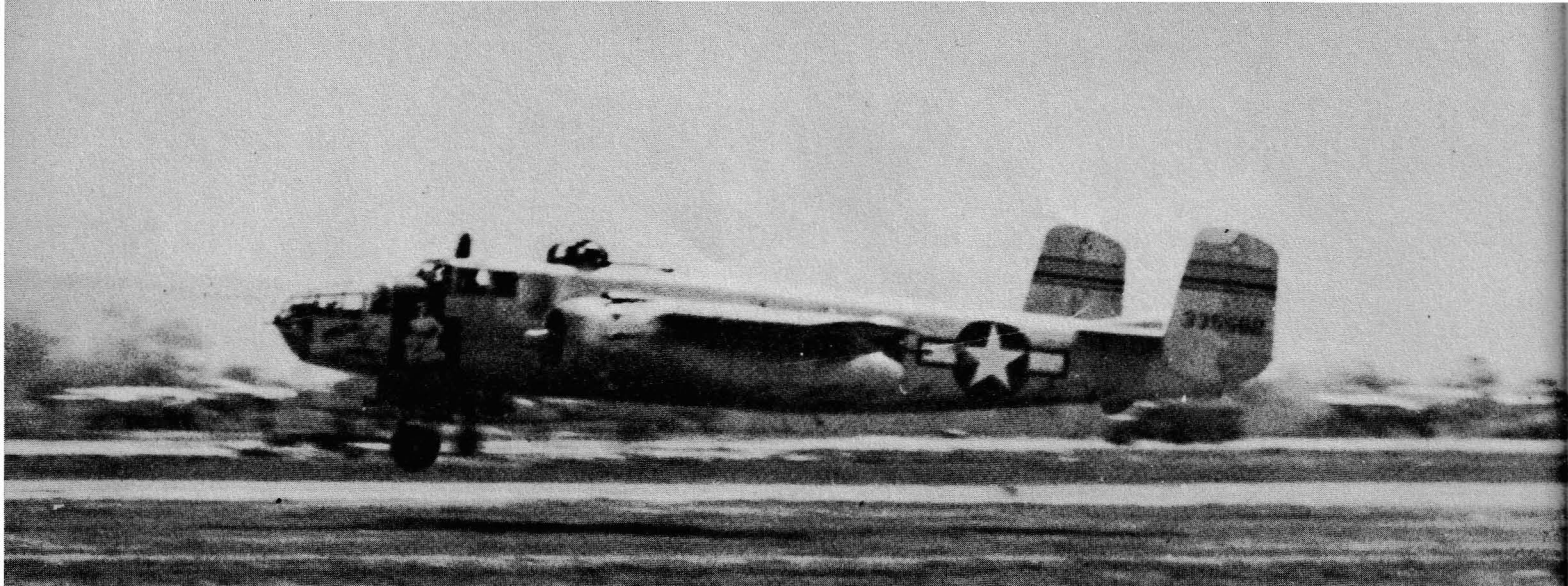


Above: AAF cuts enemy supplies by destroying Po River bridges, attacking Brenner and other rail routes. The Heavies hit beyond the Alps.

Below: B-25 attack on oil dumps in Po Valley near Ostiglia, Italy





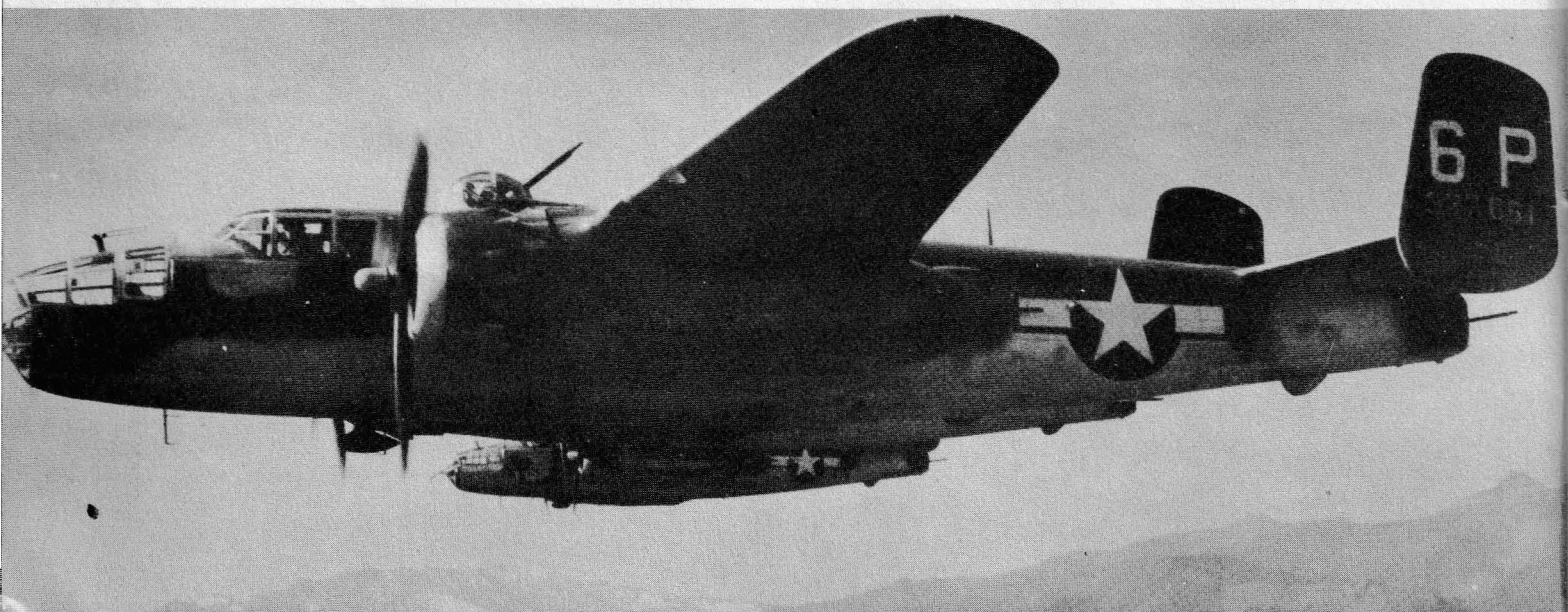


Above: With only the nose wheel this B-25 comes in for a belly landing.



Below: P-47s waiting in Italian mud for next assignment

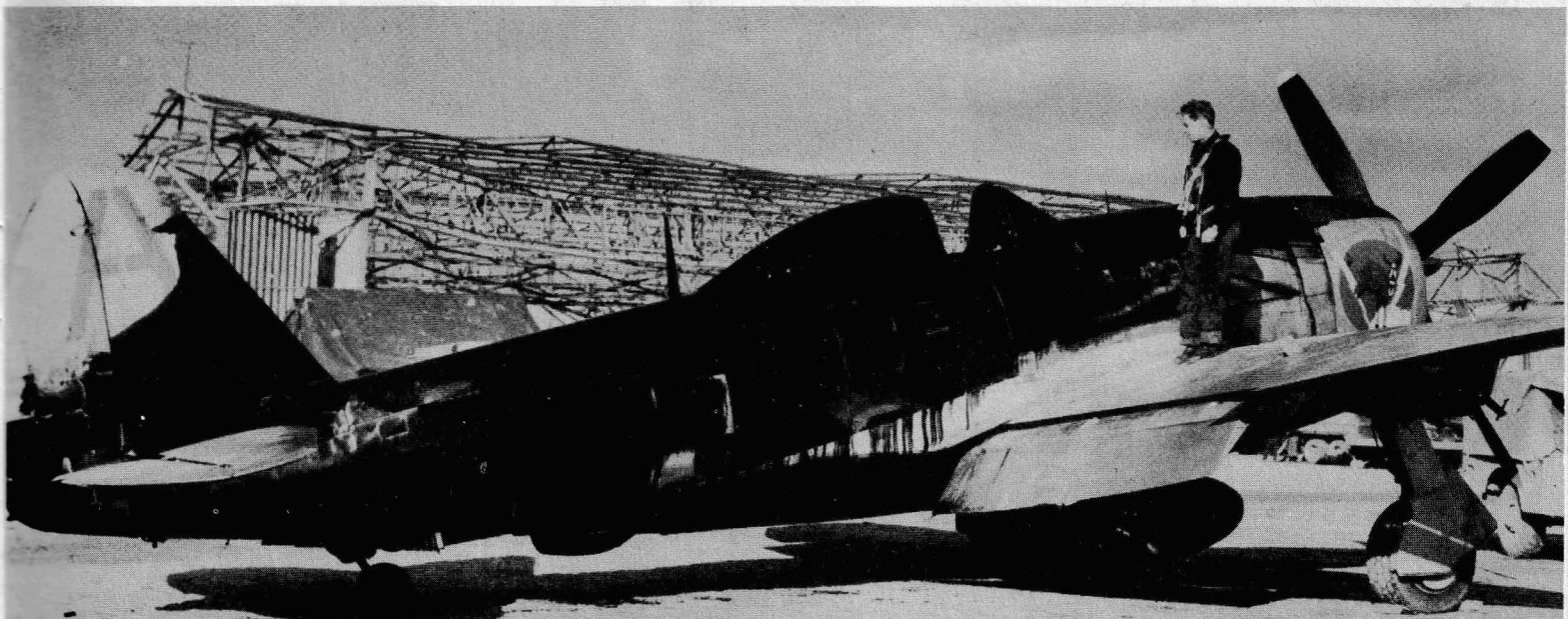
Below: February 27, 1945. B-25 enroute to bomb arsenal at Spilimbergo, Italy





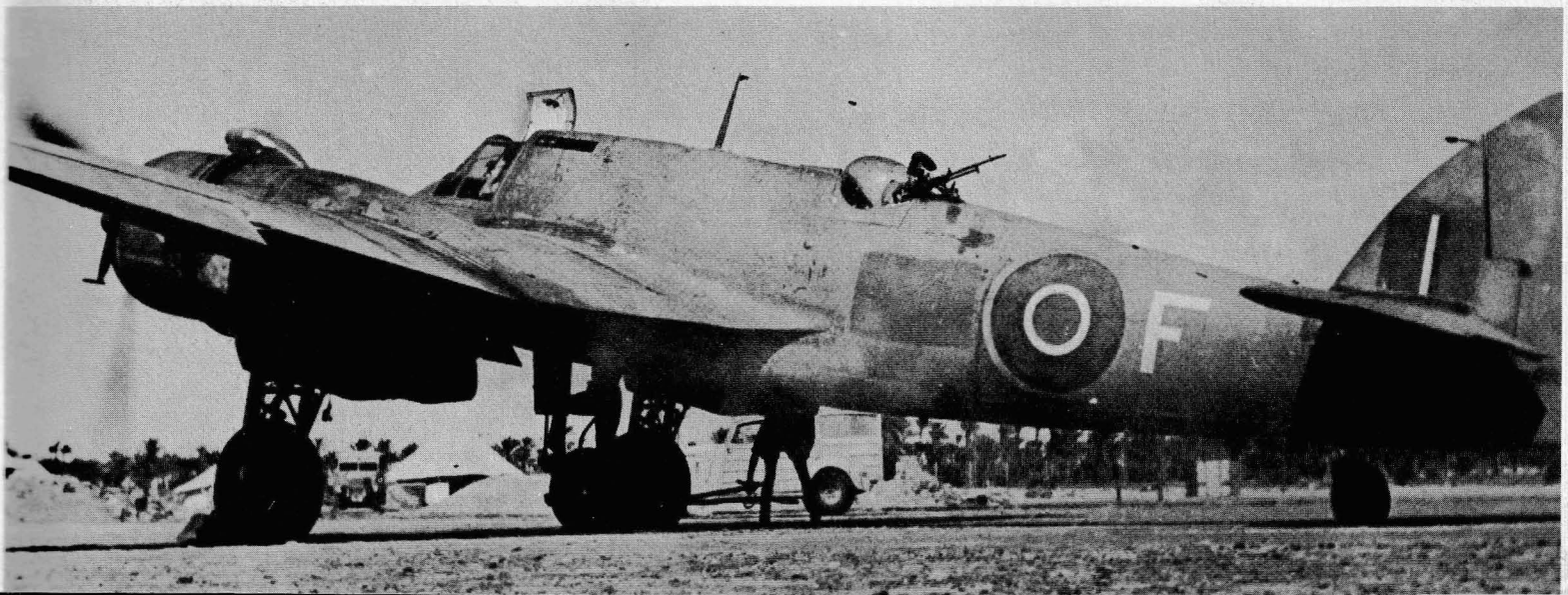


Above: Spitfires and Douglas A-20 Havocs get a taste of sunny Italy



Above: P-47 and results of an oil leak caused by flak hit

Below: RAF Beaufighter just before taking off on a sortie







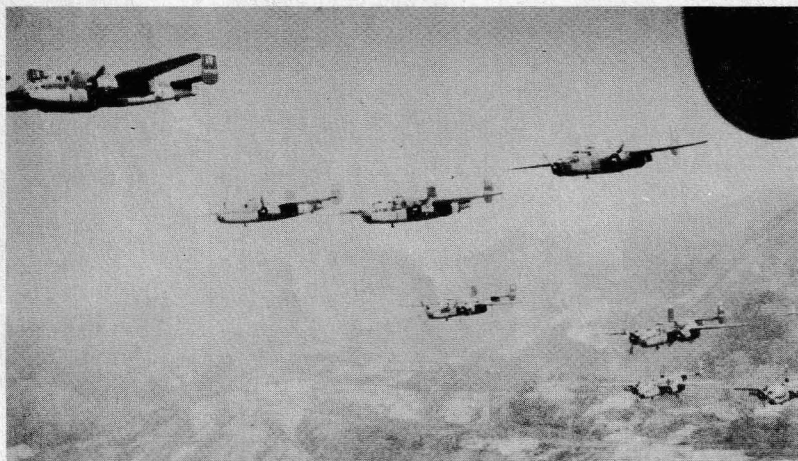
Bombs loaded with leaflets



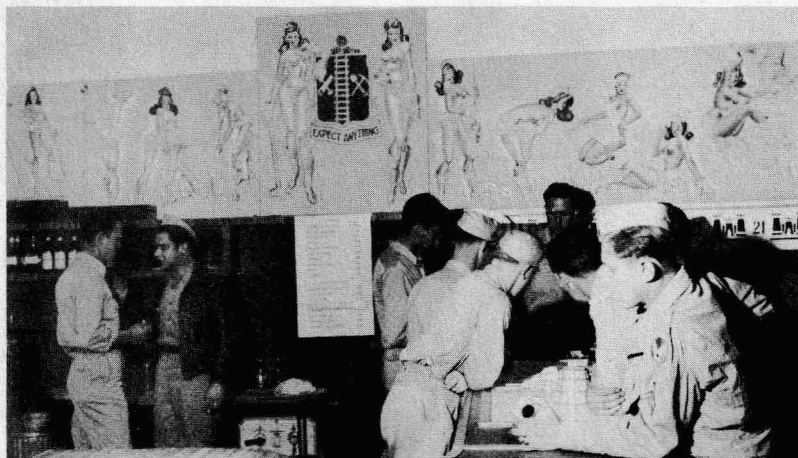
Armament workers roll a 1000-lb. bomb to a B-25



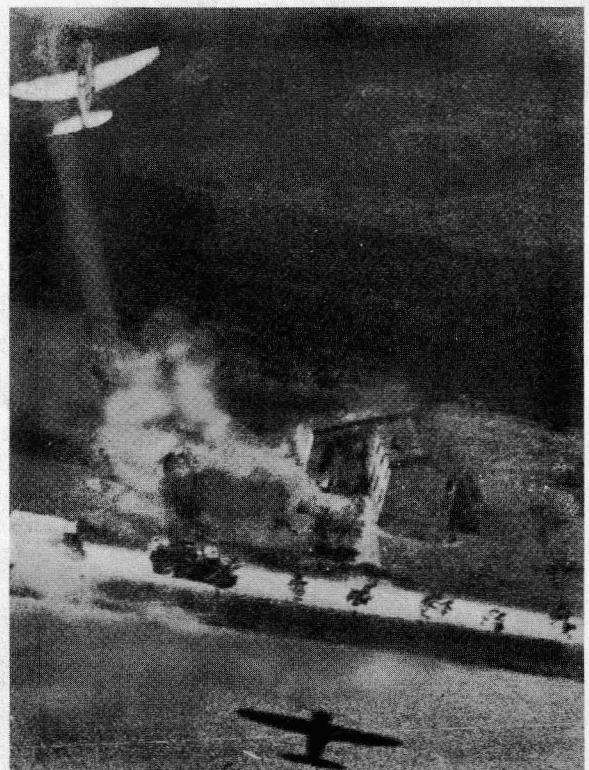
At an Air Depot of 12th AAF Service Command



B-25 formation over rugged Italian soil



Enlisted Men's Club in Italy

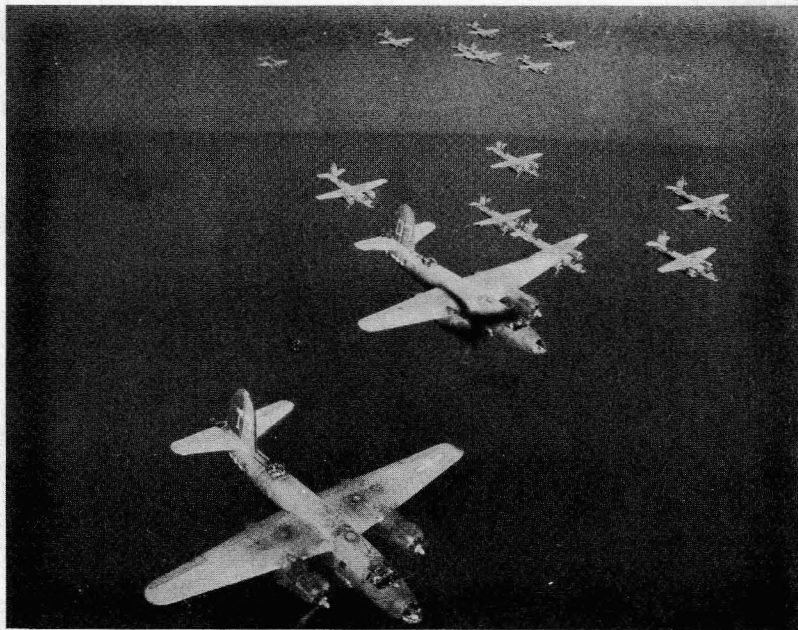


P-47 strafing German transport





Celebration of V-E Day at Italian base



B-26s over Mediterranean. Note P-38 tagging along.



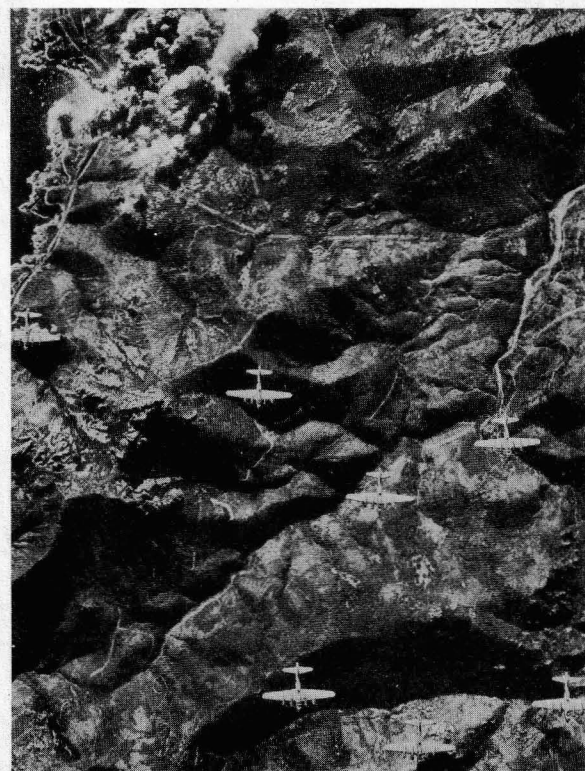
Two former luggage racks make this house



Typical scene on Italian air bases

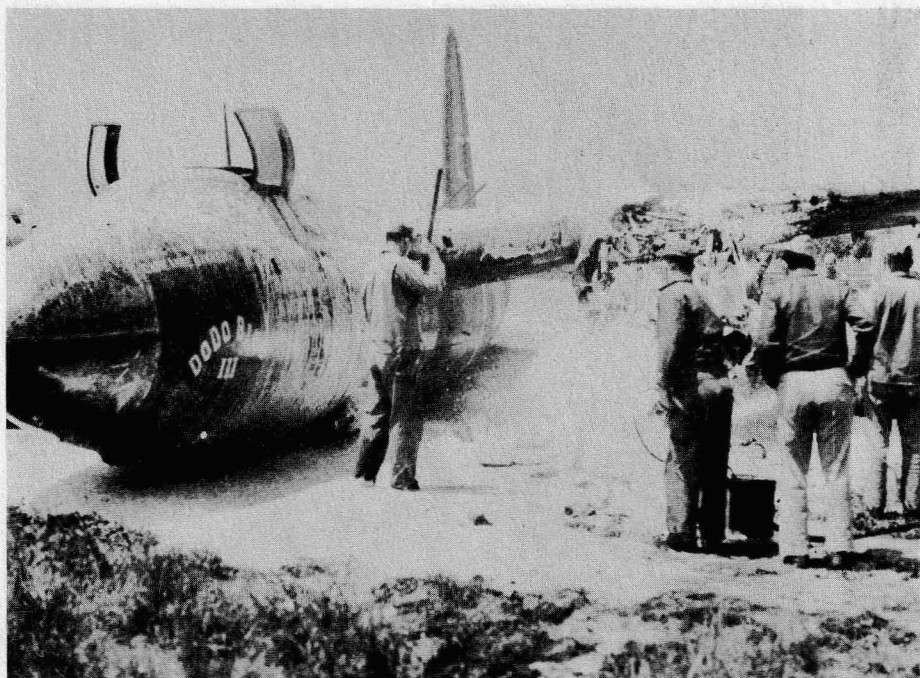


Loading bombs on P-40. Italy. "Operation Strangle"



12th AAF B-17s over French Riviera near Cannes





Left: A fire fighting crew extinguishes the last remnants of a blaze in the left engine. A flak-severed hydraulic system caused this B-26 to come in for a wheel-up landing.



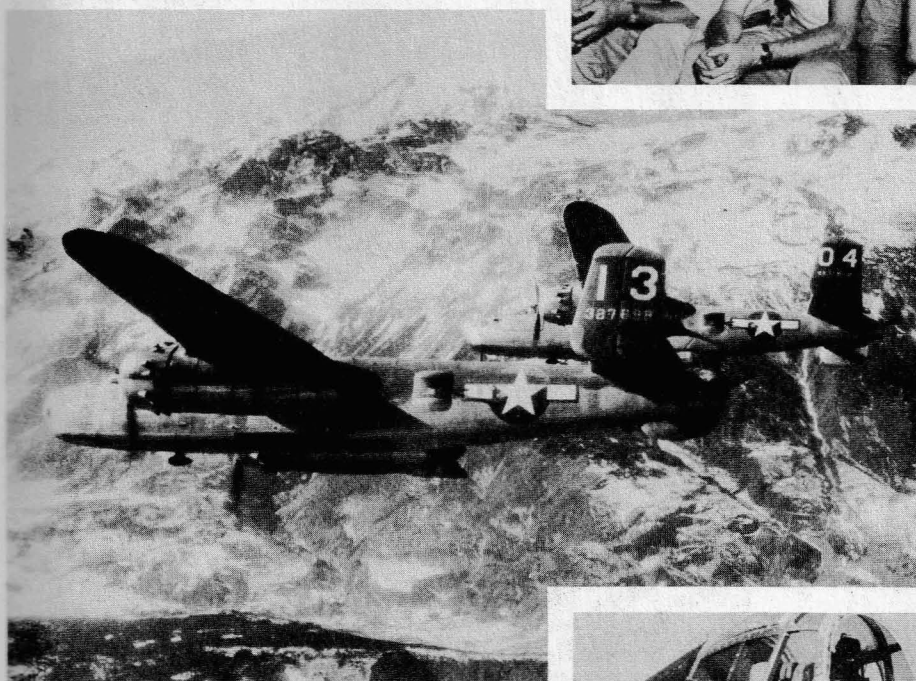
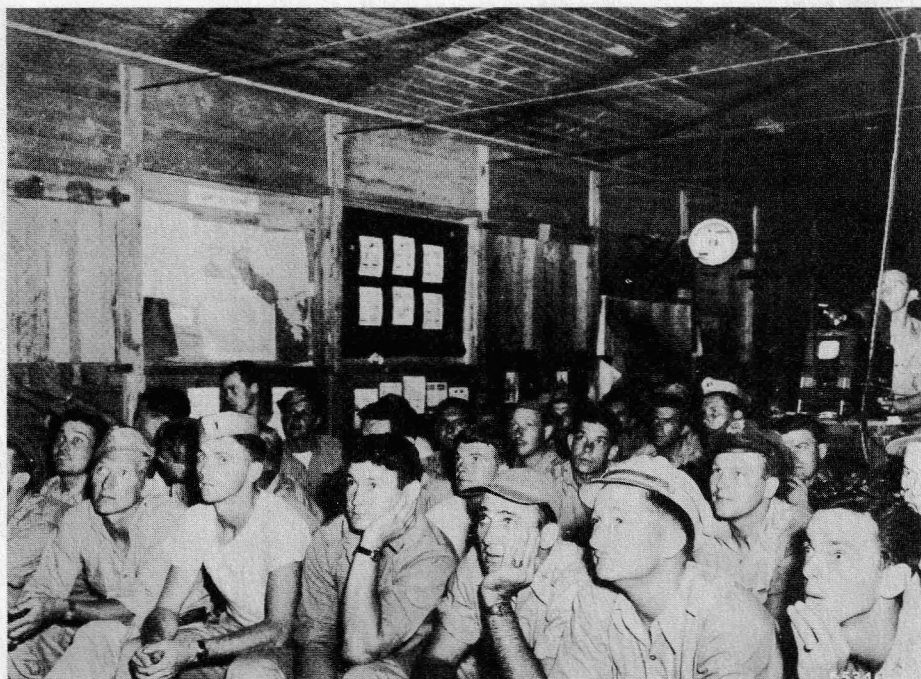
Above: More of "sunny" Italy during the rainy season.



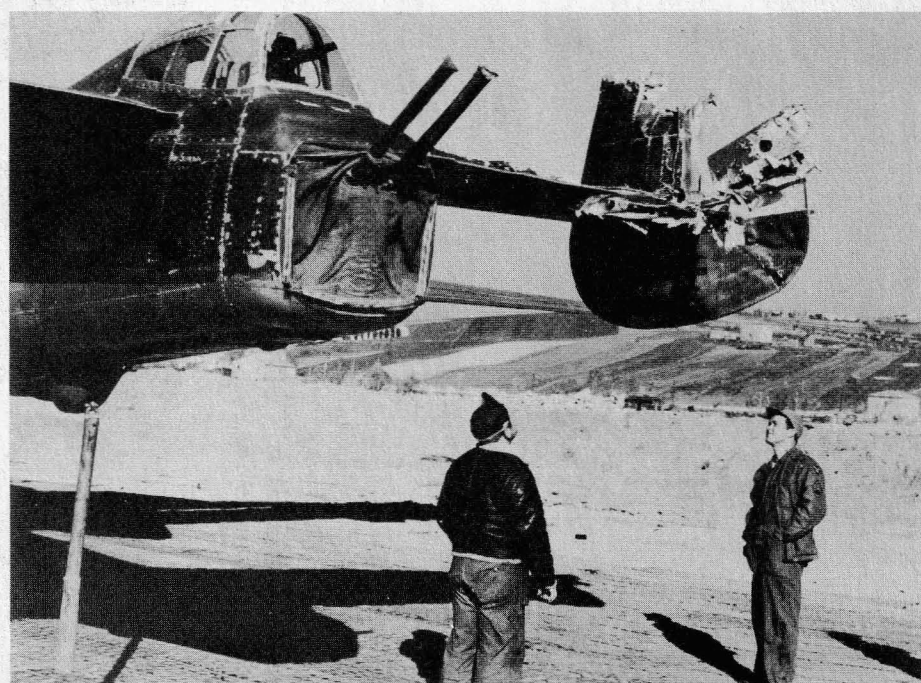
Left: Fitting rocket launcher tubes on a P-47



Right: B-26 crews at briefing before they took off for Southern France. August 15, 1944. Italy



Above: B-25s after releasing their bombs on bridge at Staz di Geraino. March 10, 1945



Right: This B-25 tail was shot away by 88mm shell while plane was on mission over Yugoslavia.

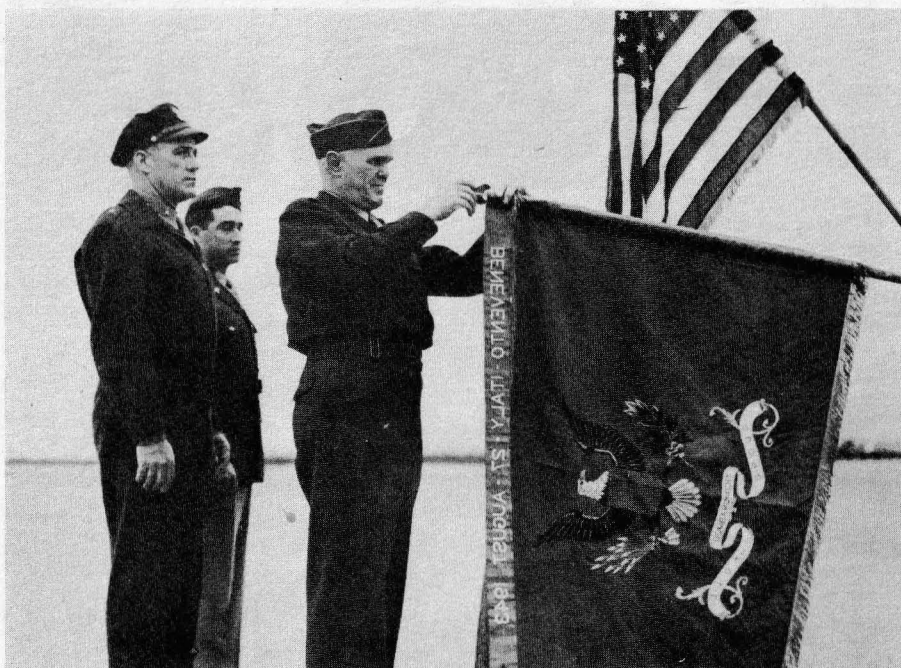




B-26s approach bomb run over bridges at Ceprano, Italy. January 22, 1944



The "Battle of the Brenner" continues



Presentation of Distinguished Unit Citation streamer by Maj. Gen. Cannon



B-26s on way to bomb railroad bridges. Orvieto, Italy





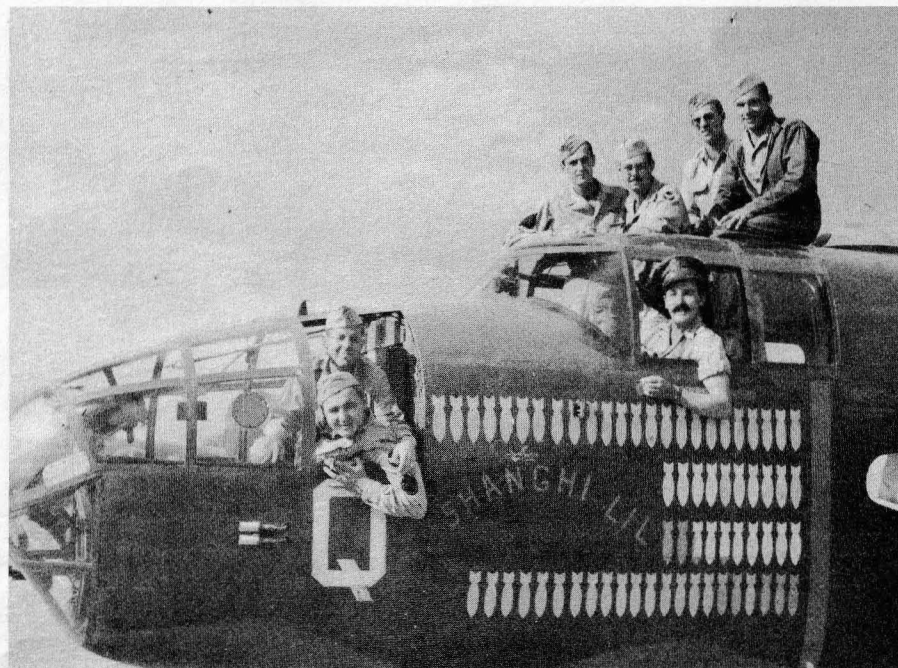
B-26s blazing their trail in the sky



Continuing "Operations Strangle"



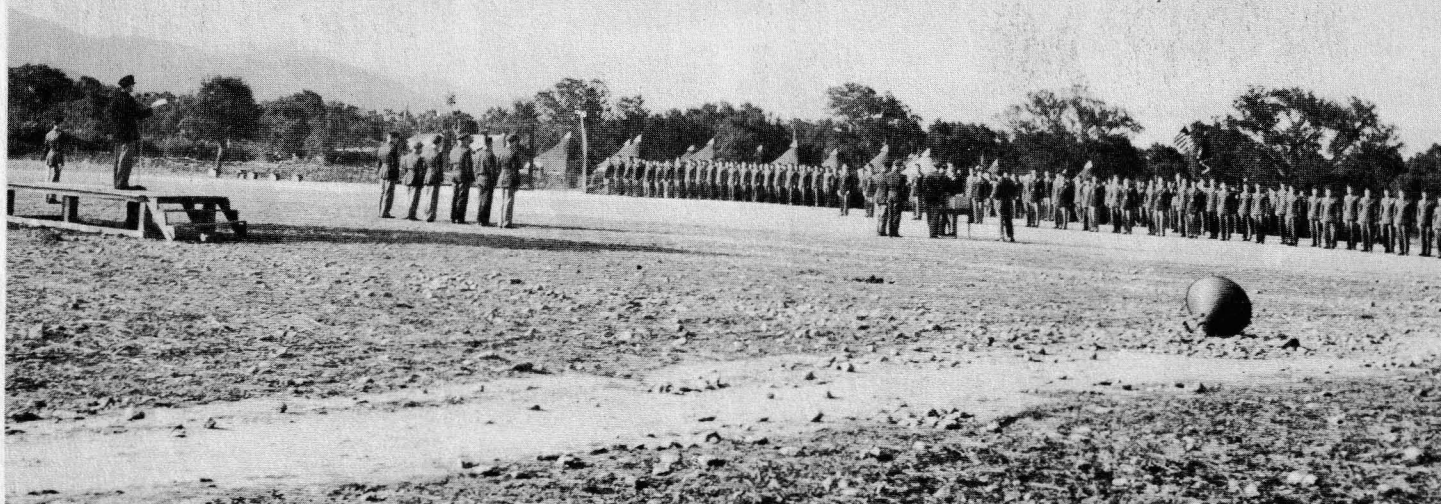
Anti-flak bomb bursts in mid-air on the Brenner route.



Veteran bomber and crew about to take off for good old U.S.A.



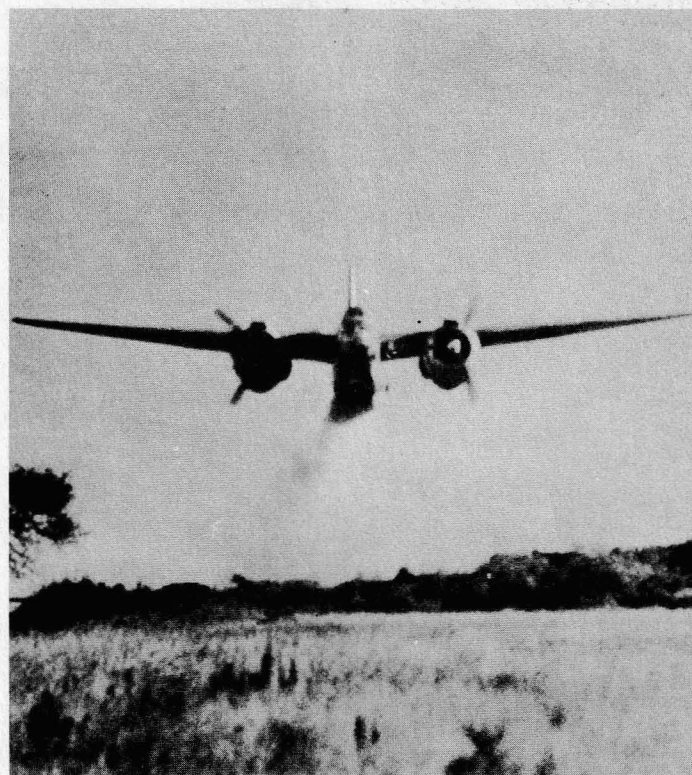
# CORSICA



Presentation of Presidential Unit Citation, Solenzara, Corsica, March 16, 1945

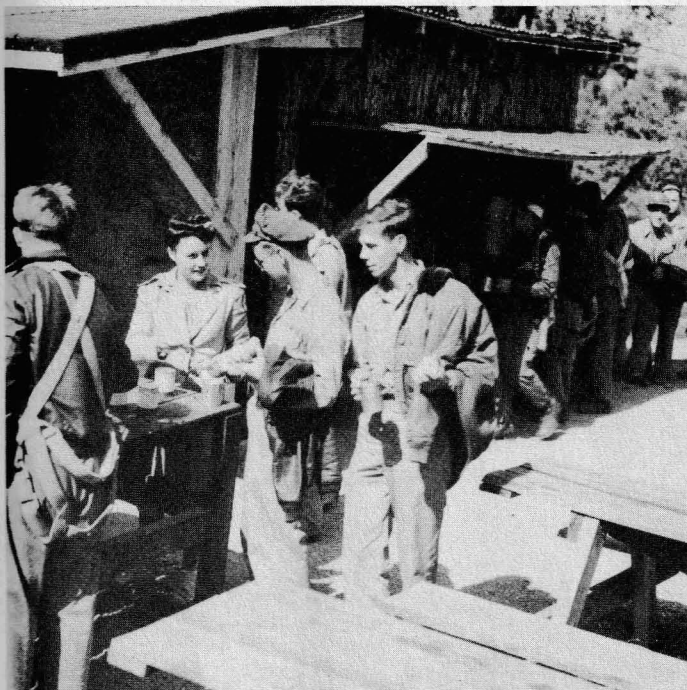


B-25s over Corsica

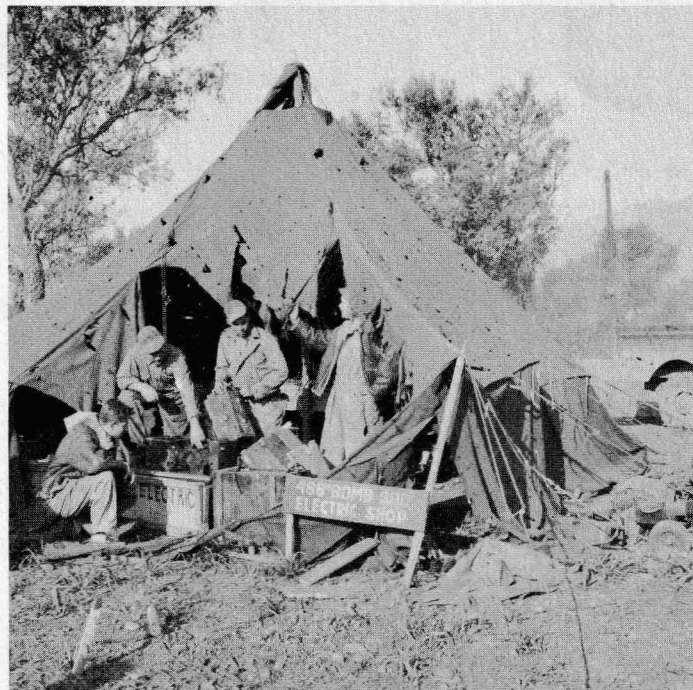


A-20 laying a wide stream of Paris Green over swamp land surrounding the bomber bases on Corsica





ARC "doughnuteers" serve crewmen after a mission.



After a Nazi aerial attack



Scene from "Thunderbolt" filmed in Corsica



USO show, Solenzara, Corsica, January, 1945





Ground crew members load Paris Green and lime dust into hopper of this A-20 for aerial mosquito spray. Corsica



German prisoners being evacuated to Bastia, Corsica

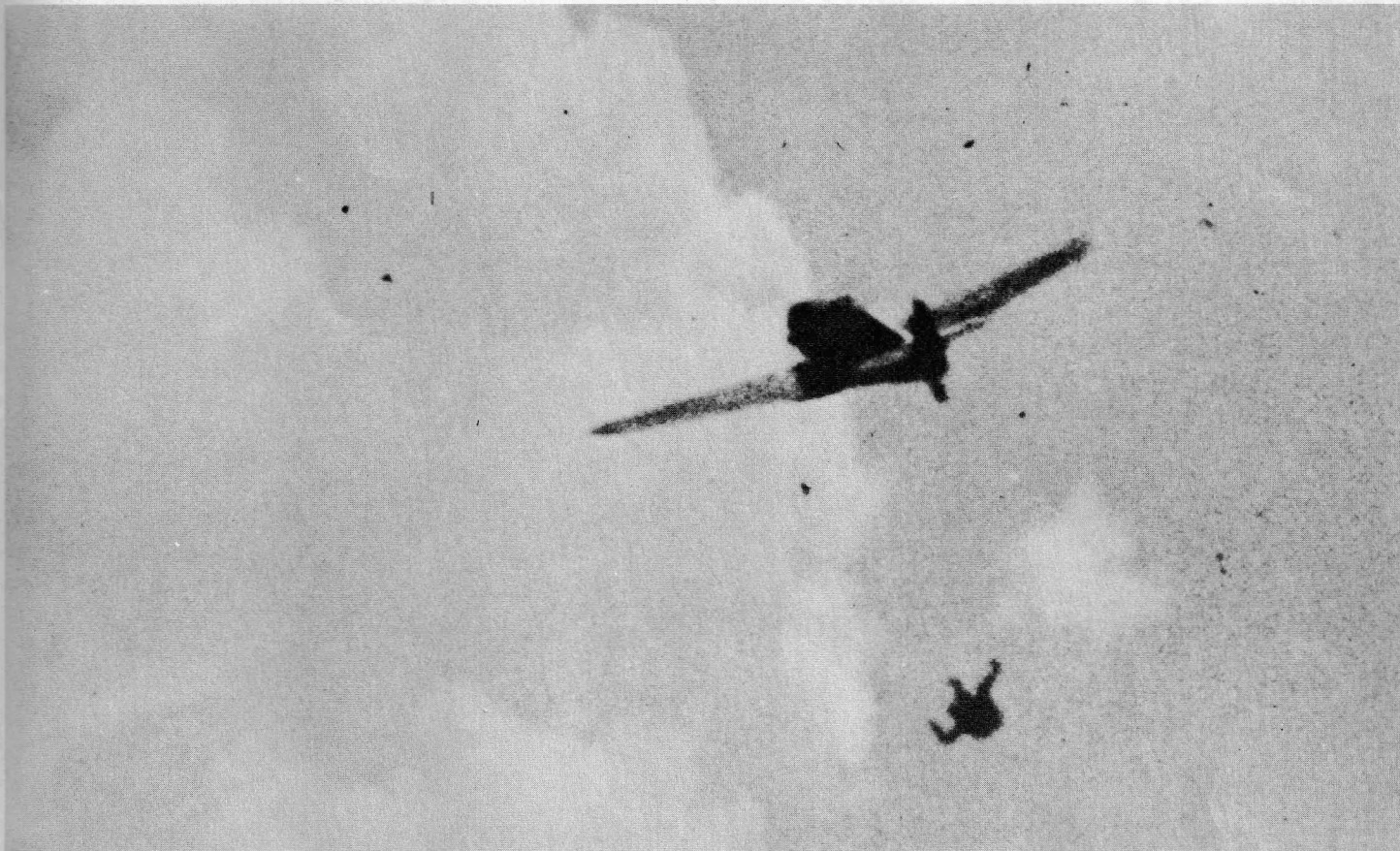


Typical interrogation, Solenzara. Summer 1944



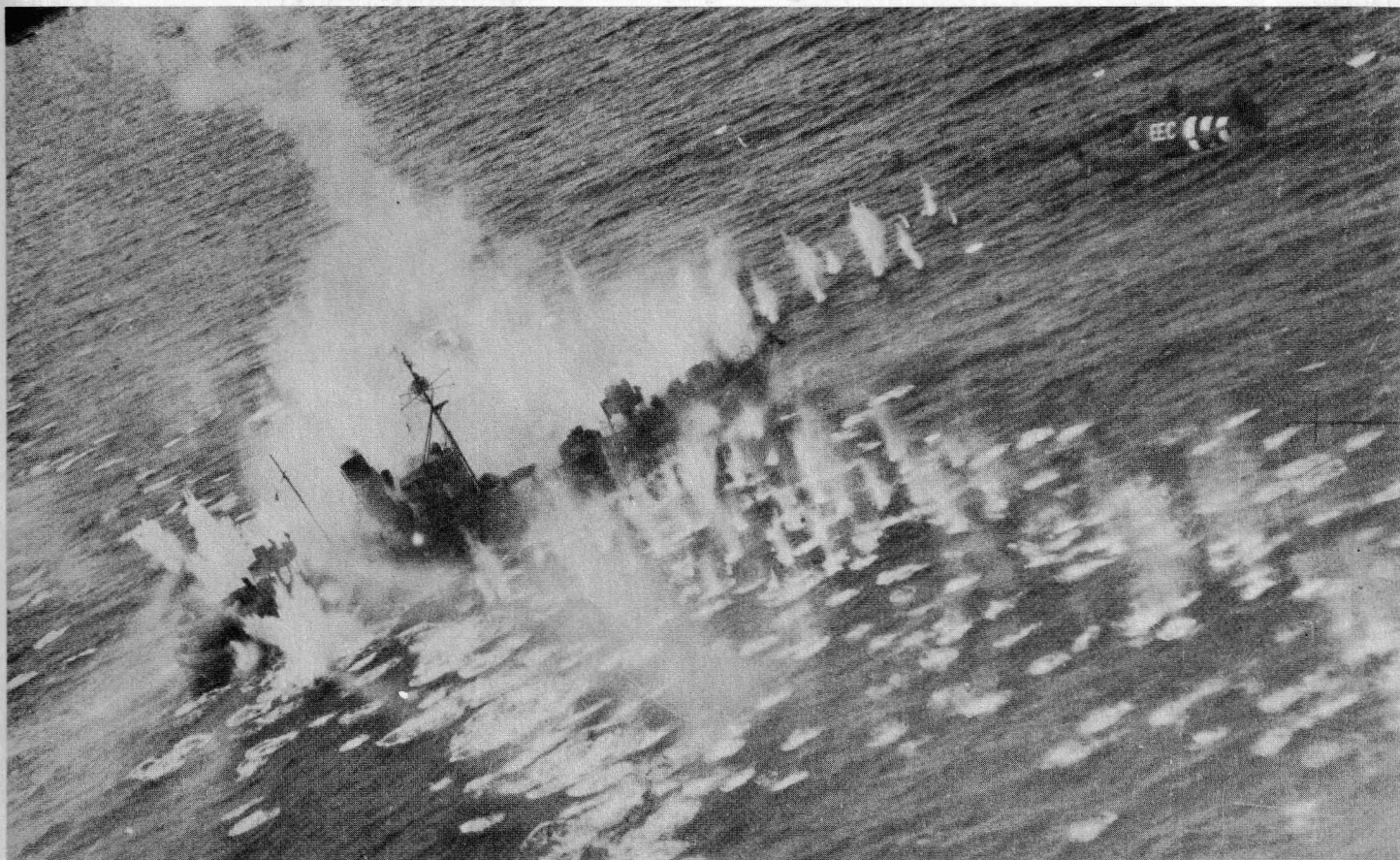
Construction of Enlisted Men's Club at Solenzara



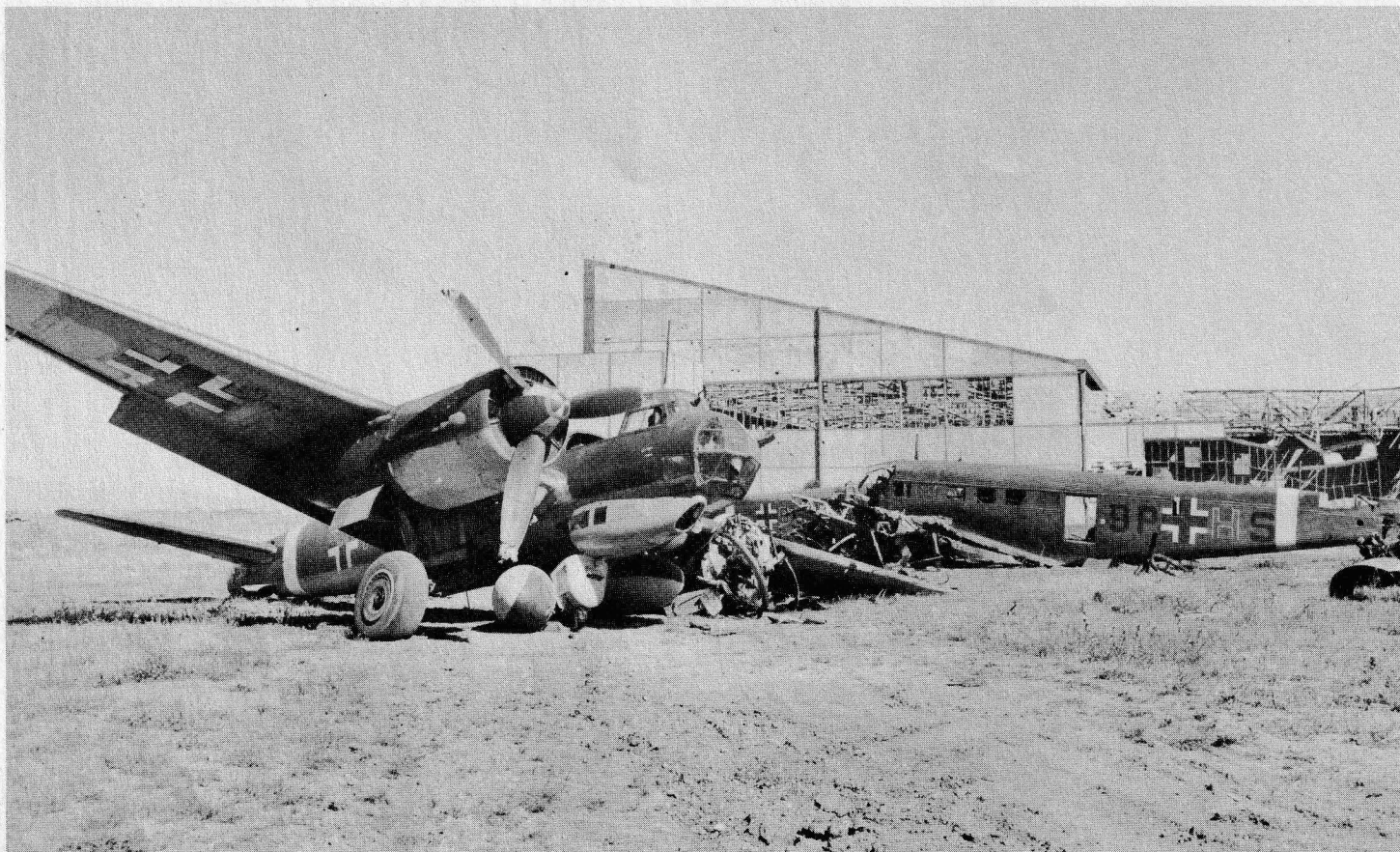


Above: As his ME-109 hurtles on without him, still flying level, a Luftwaffe pilot tumbles earthward.

Below: RAF Beaufighter attacking German ships

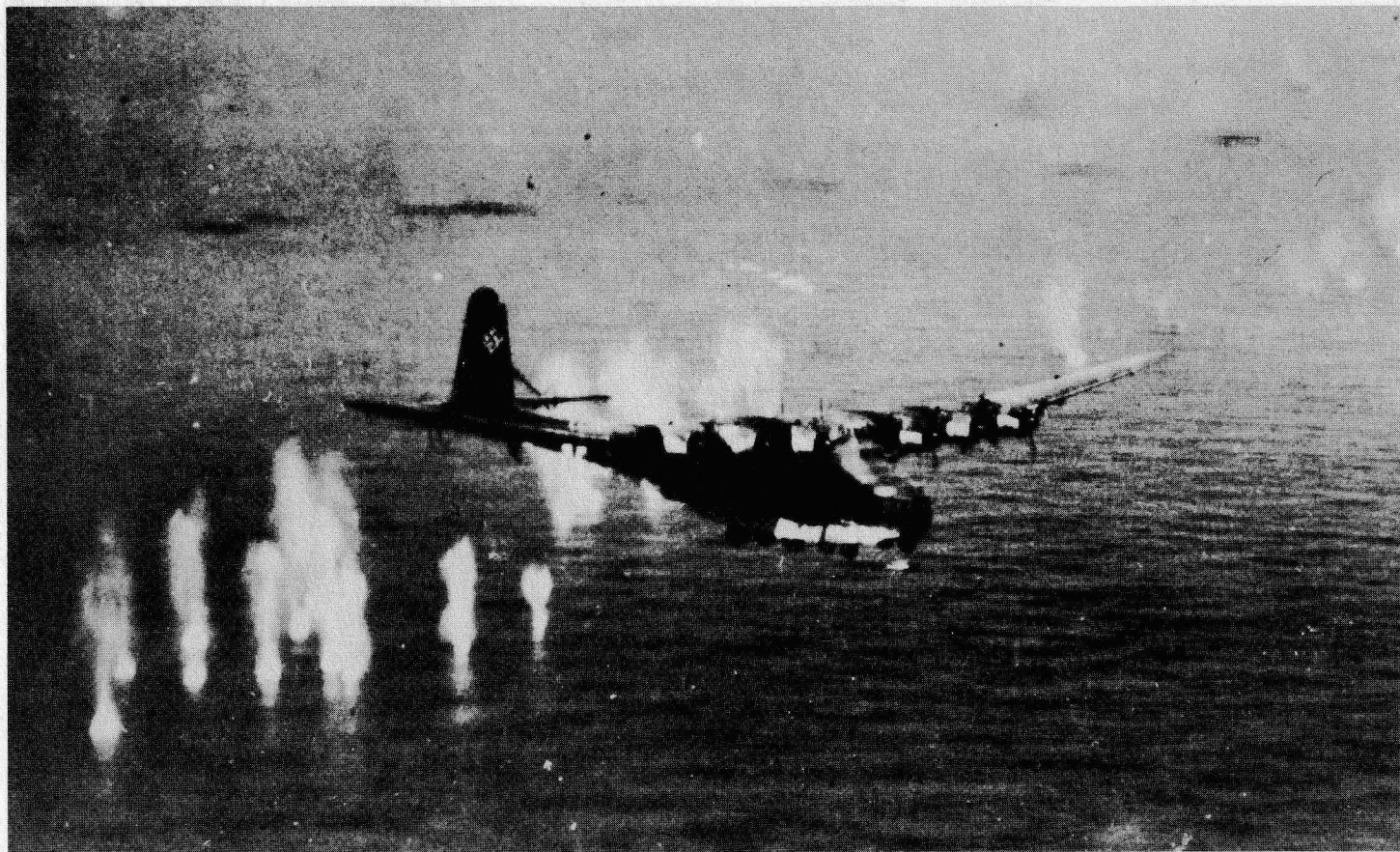




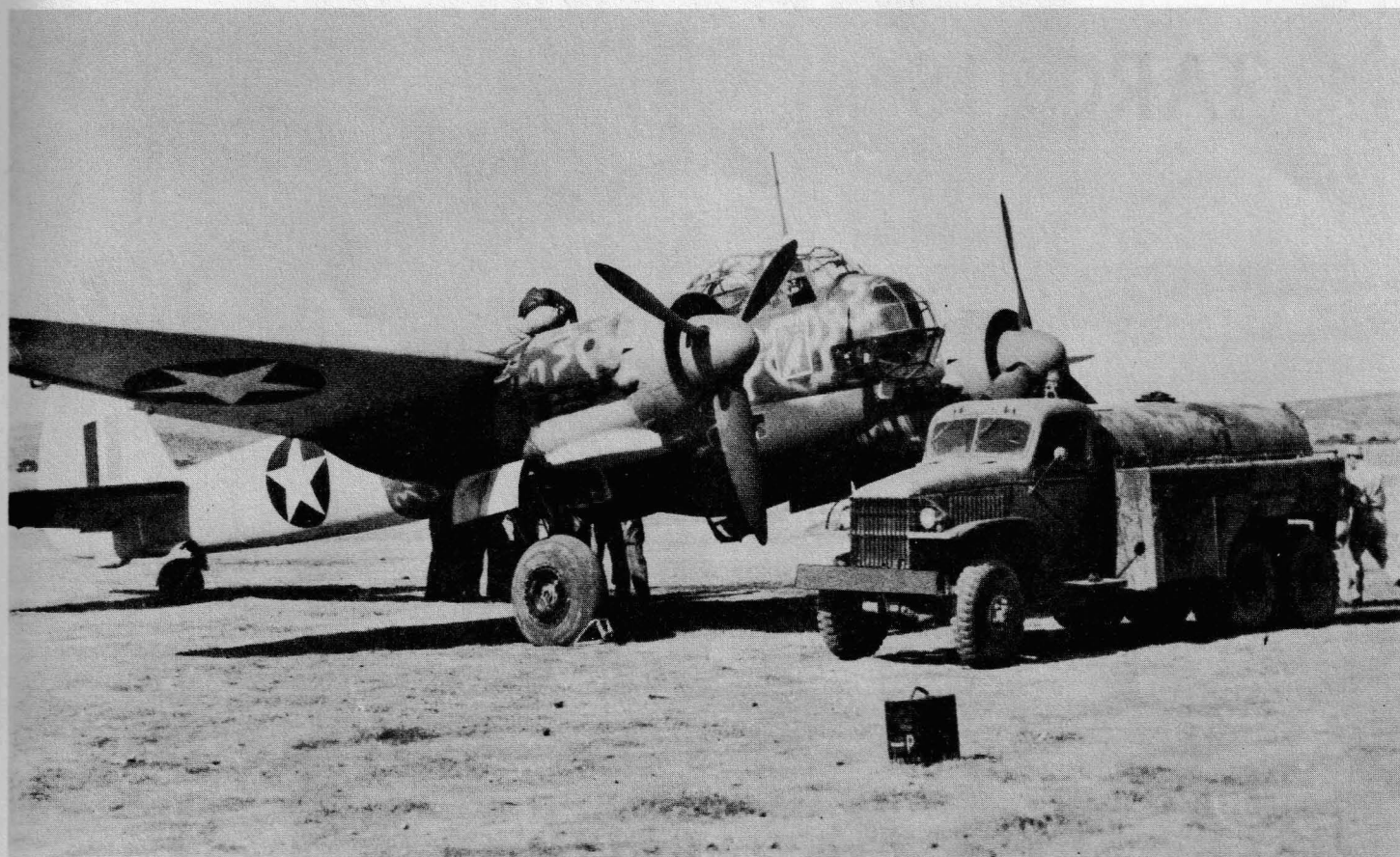


Above: Heinkel HE-111 bomber left by Nazi with some 250 other planes in their retreat from Tunisia.

Below: A heavily armed 6-engine ME-323 being shot down off Cape Corse, Corsica, by a B-26.







Above: Captured virtually undamaged on an Italian airfield, this JU-88 is being refueled for flight to U.S.

Below: An RAF B-26 shoots down this giant JU-290 off Corsica.





# TARGETS



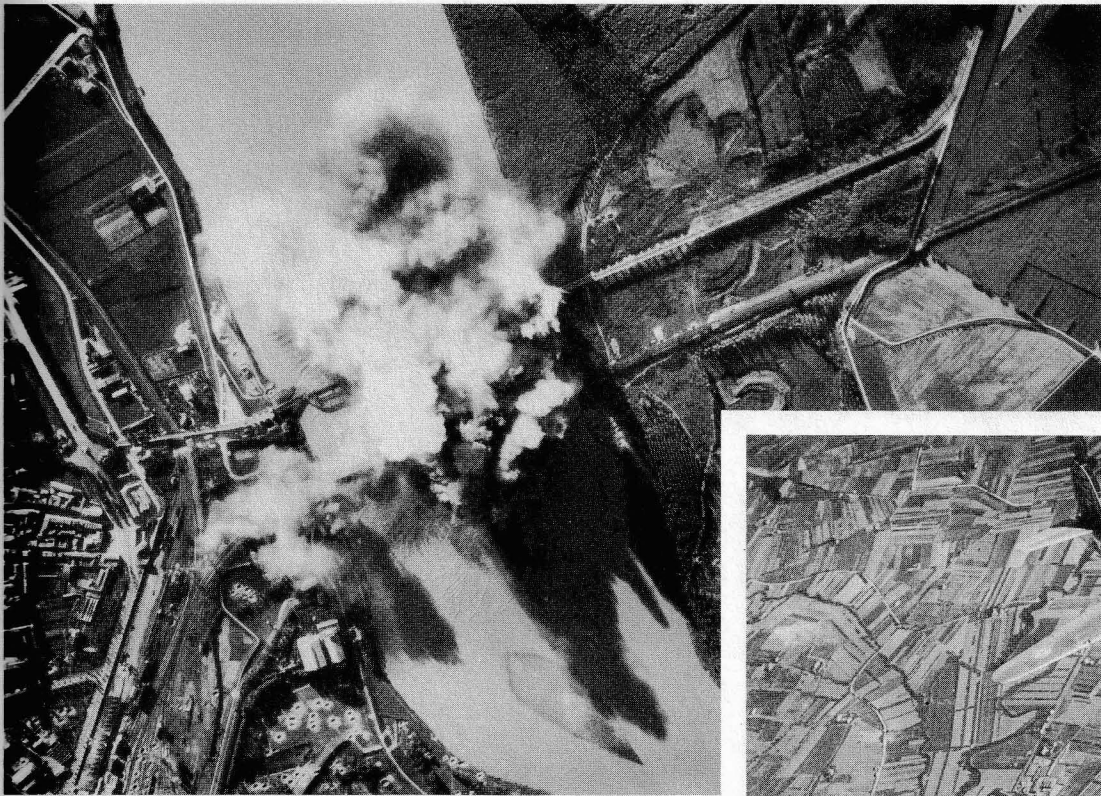
Above: Railroad yards at Terni, north of Rome

Left: Railroad bridge across Taro River near Solignana,  
June 22, 1944

Below: 200 tons of bombs were dropped on Eleusis airfield  
at Athens, Greece, on November 16, 17, and 18, 1943

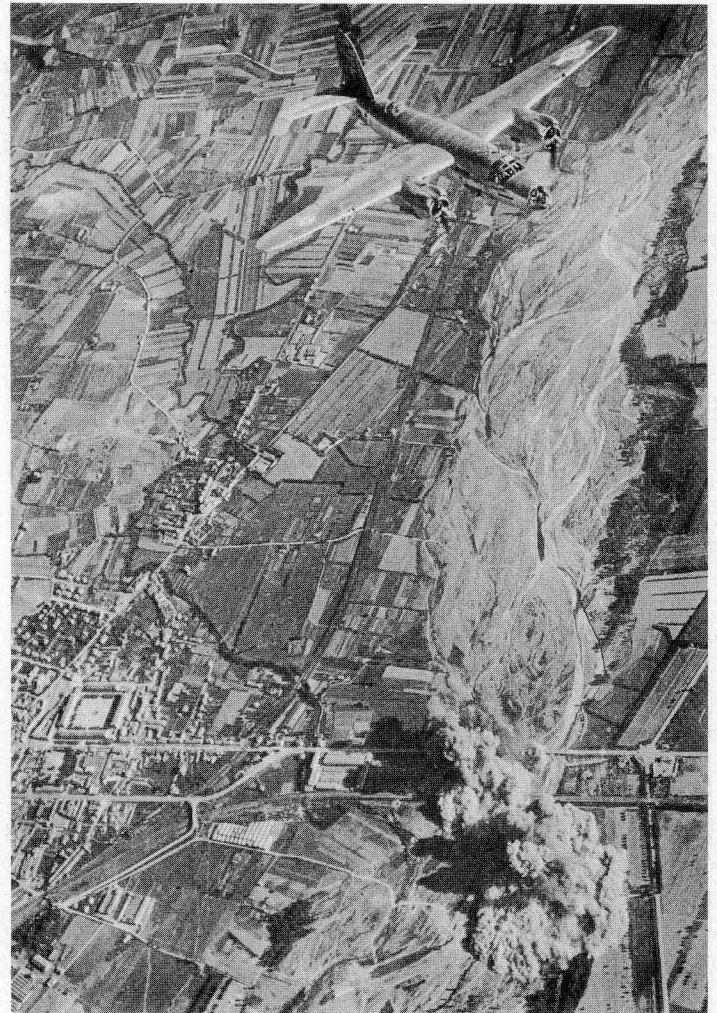




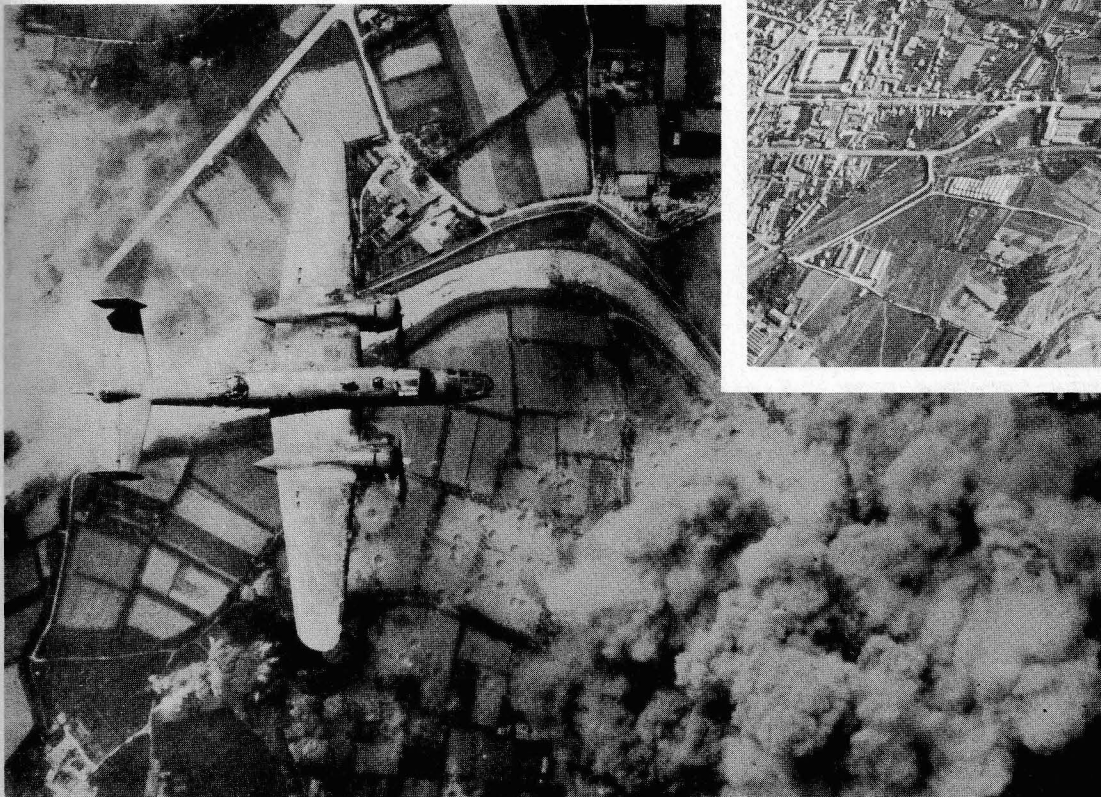


Above: Piacenza railroad bridge in northern Italy.  
July 12, 1944

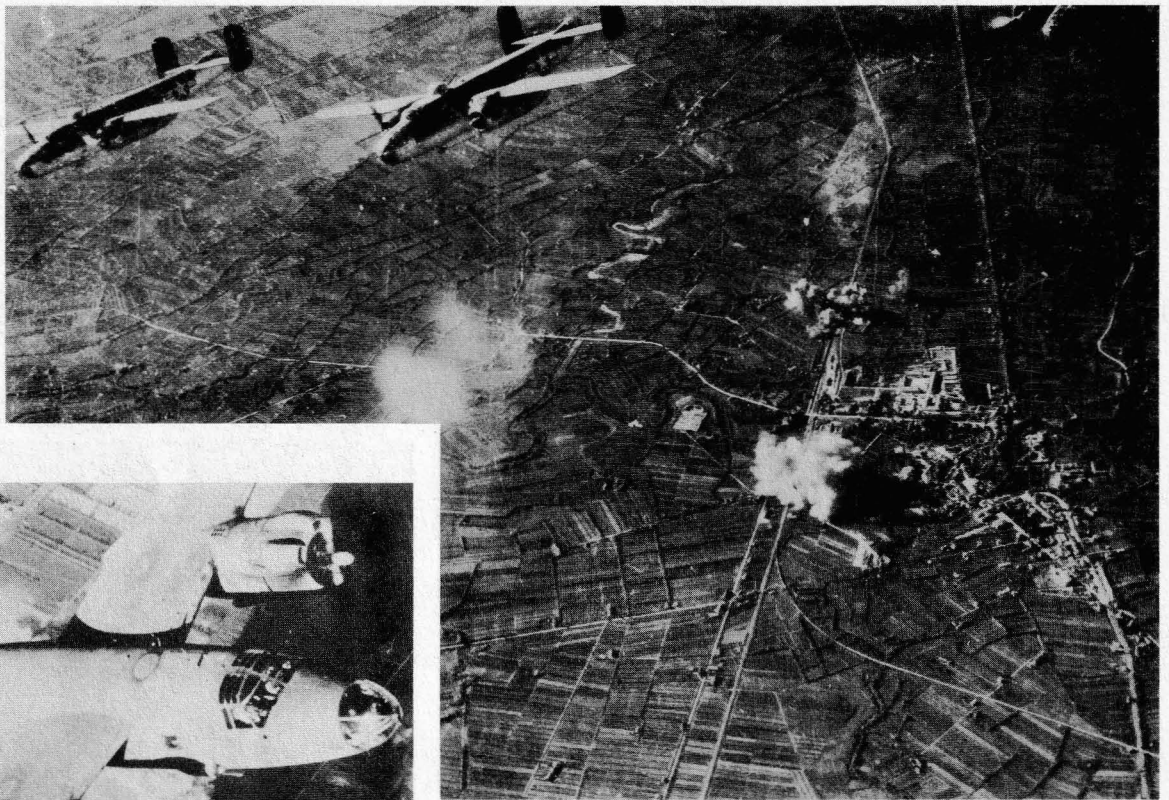
Right: Railroad bridge at Arles, Southern France



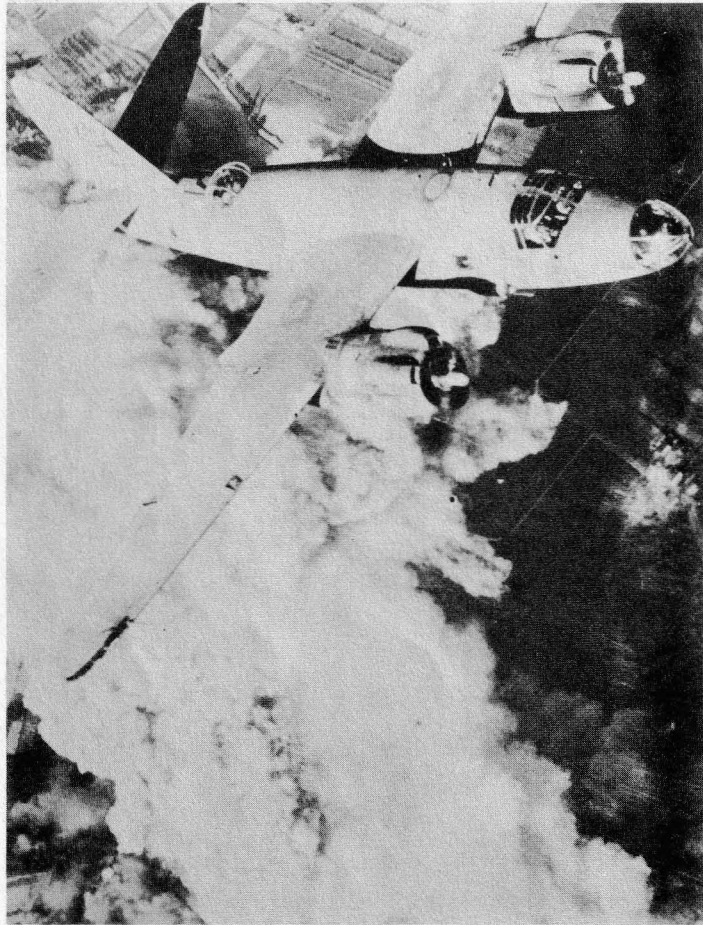
Below: Railroad and highway bridge at Pietrasanta, 20  
miles north of Pisa







Above: Precision bombing knocks out Sacils railroad bridge.  
About 50 miles north of Venice.

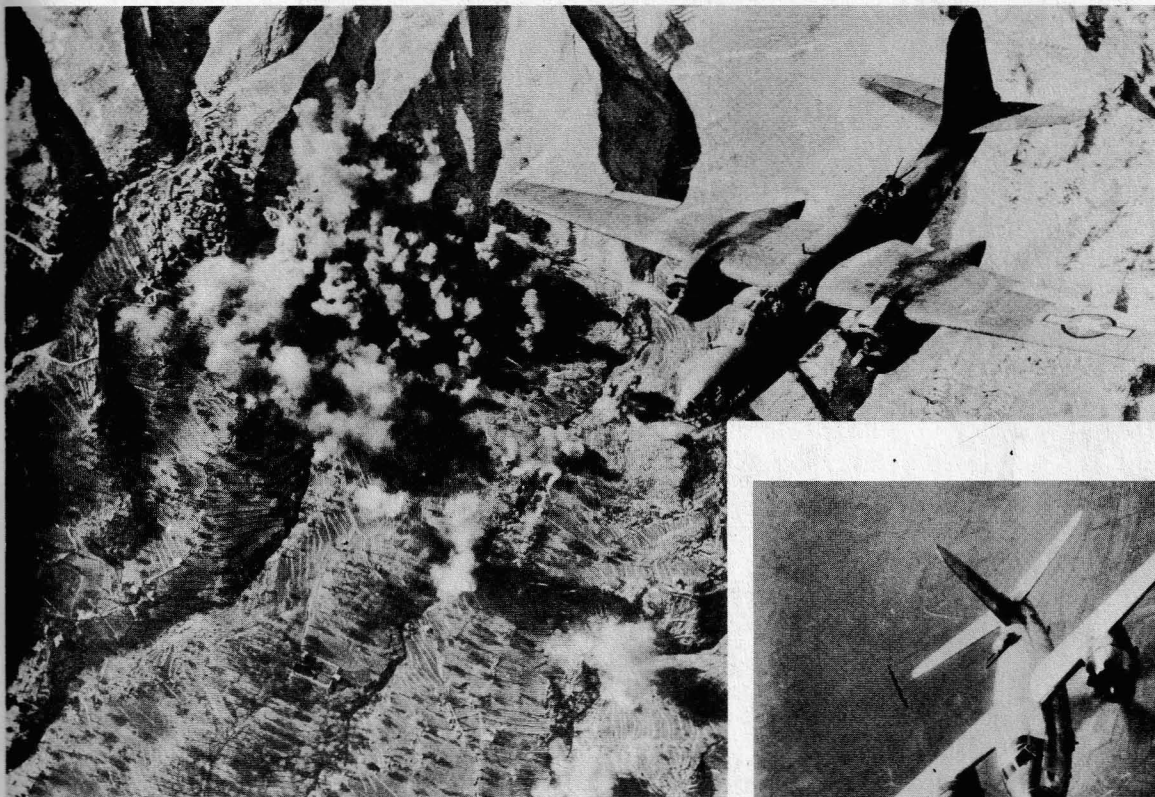


Left: Towering column of smoke, 8000 feet high, after  
blasting Nazi fuel dump at Collecchio, Italy.

Below: July 29th, 1944, attack on railroad bridges near  
Ponte Di Piave, Italy

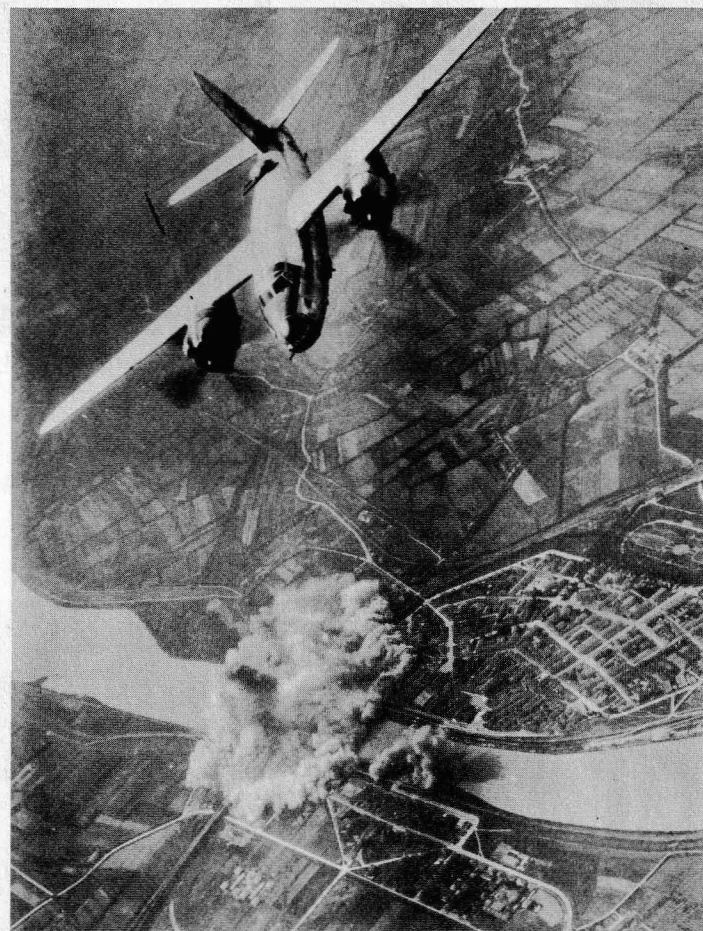




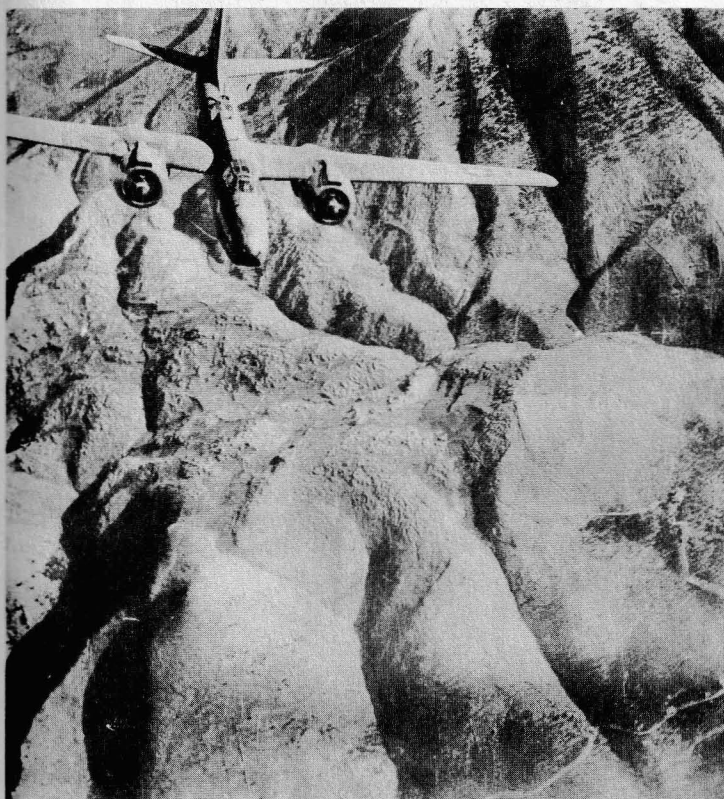


Above: A-20s attack another road to Rome on outskirts of Frosinone, Italy. January 22, 1944

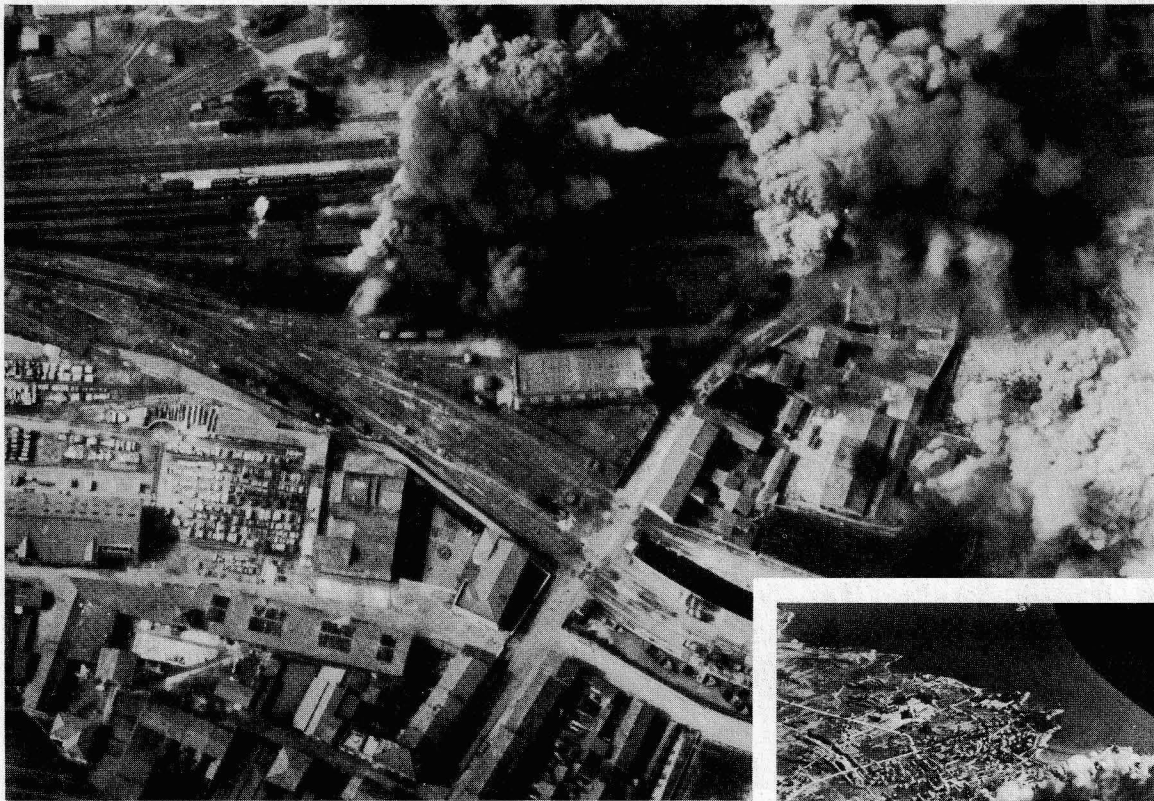
Right: Direct hits on rail and road bridges at Legnano in northern Italy



Below: Strike at road junction at Cori, 20 miles northeast of Anzio





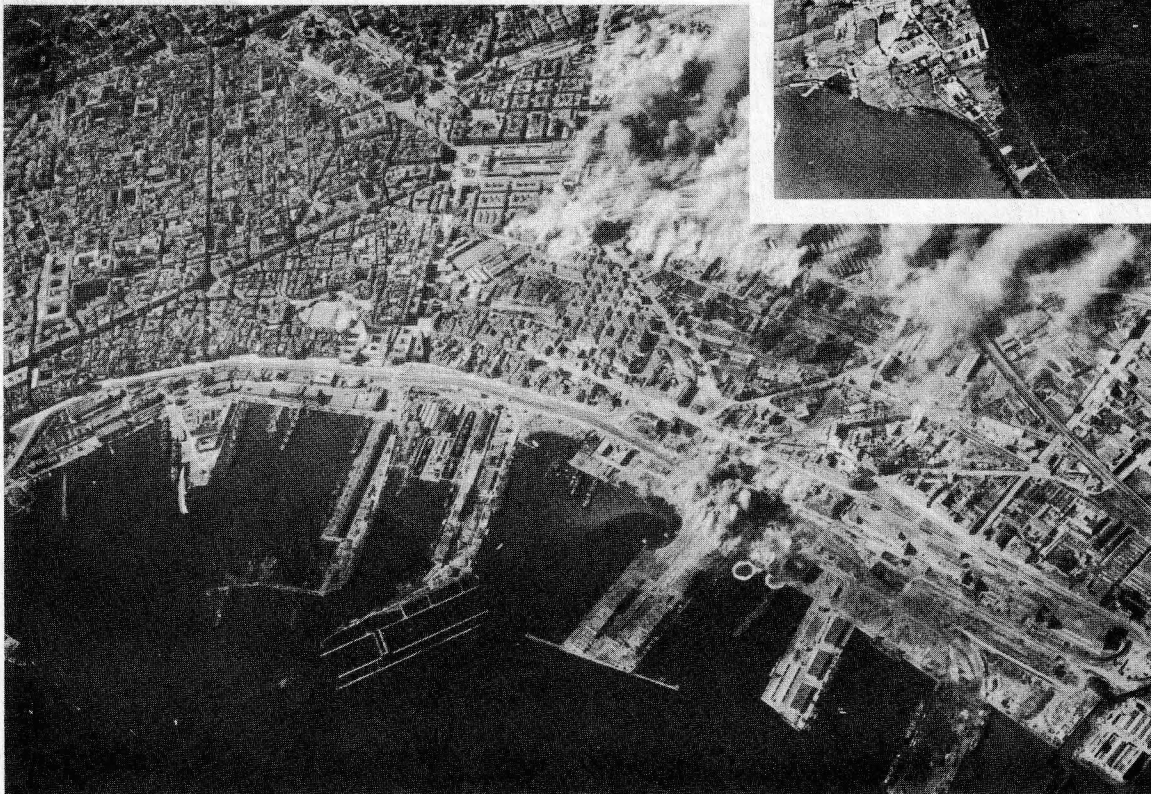


Above: B-25s bomb marshalling yards at Viareggio, Italy, during March 13, 1944 attack.

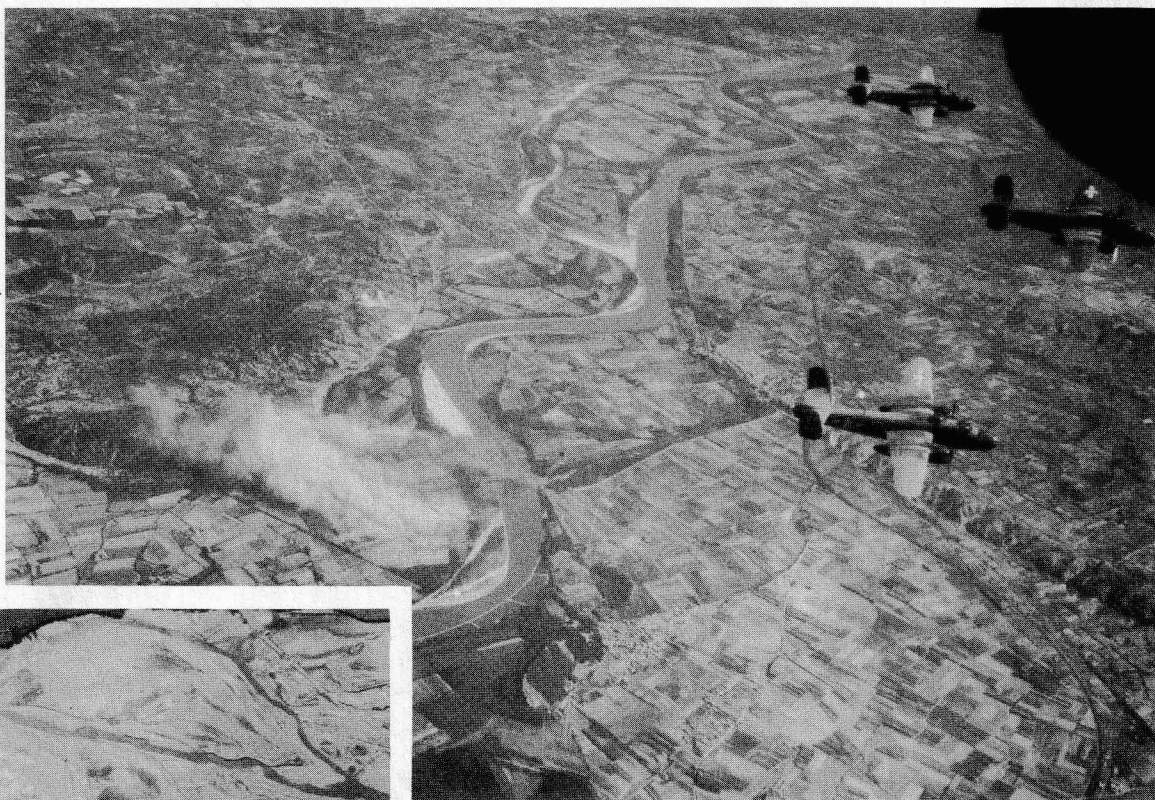


Right: Bombing of Nazi supply port of Split, Yugoslavic

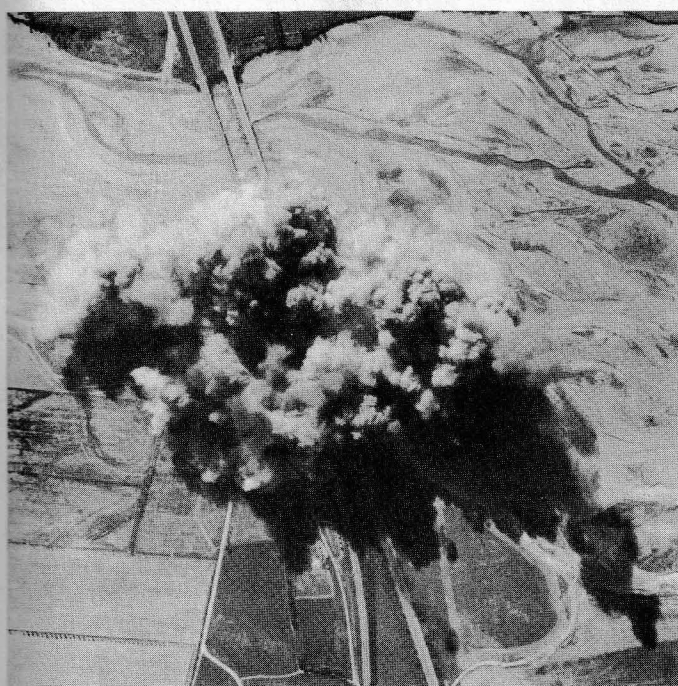
Below: Bombing of Naples, July 17, 1943







Above: Bombing a railroad bridge somewhere in southern France, August 15, 1944



Left: July 6th, 1944 raid on road and rail bridge across Trebbia River in Italy

Below: Rail and road bridges across Rhone River at Tarascon, northwest of Marseilles.







Flight of 12th AAF Republic P-47 Thunderbolts







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