

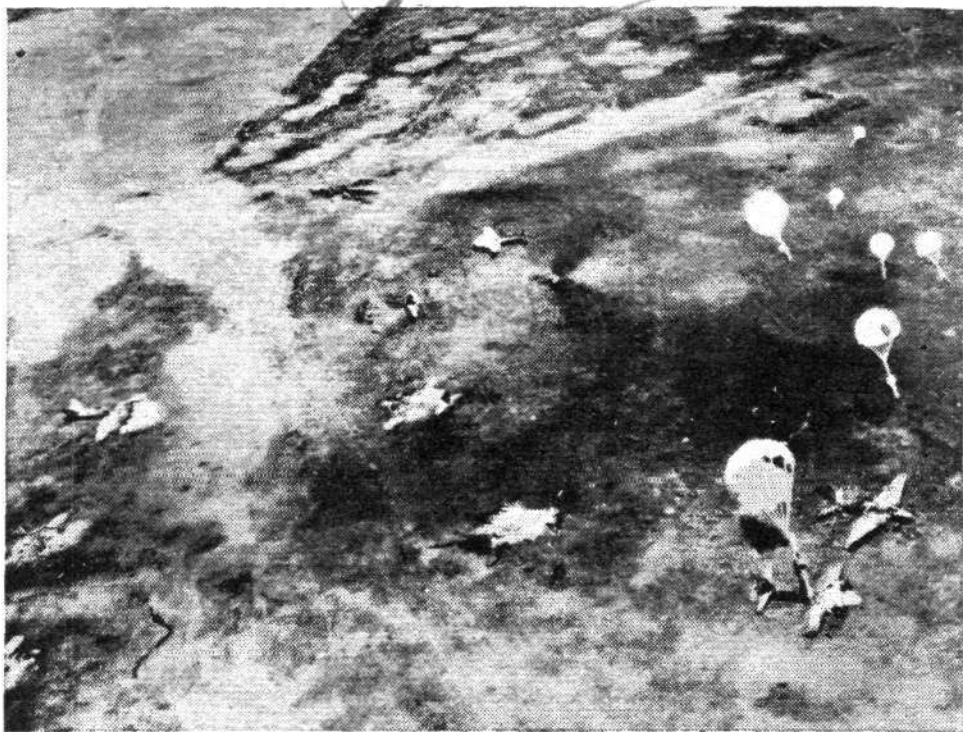
WAR IN THE AIR

of bombs on their runways, hangars and executive buildings. All the bombers returned safely but two of the fighter escort were lost in combat with intercepting German fighters, six of which were shot down in running fights.

This was the first time the U.S. aircraft returned to their Russian airfields as distinct from previous occasions when they had used them to shuttle between Britain and Russia in two-way attacks, and it is worth mentioning in passing that when their crews were on their way back, they heard, on their radio, the announcement of the Allied invasion in the West. While the Russia-based Americans were attacking Galatz, bombers of the Red Air Force went for the railway junction and other military objectives at Jassy (Rumania) and they too returned without loss. The official report of this attack did not go into details and it is not known what enemy opposition, if any, the Russian attacking force met. But during the day preceding the raid, 42 German aircraft were destroyed in the same area, a circumstance which would not exactly encourage the Hun to risk further inroads into his none too plentiful reserve of fighters.

Italian Scene

IN Italy the Tactical Air Force has been keeping up its hammering of enemy communications north and west of Rome and in Central Italy, going for motor transport, rail yards and bridges, highways and road bridges, while medium bombers and fighter

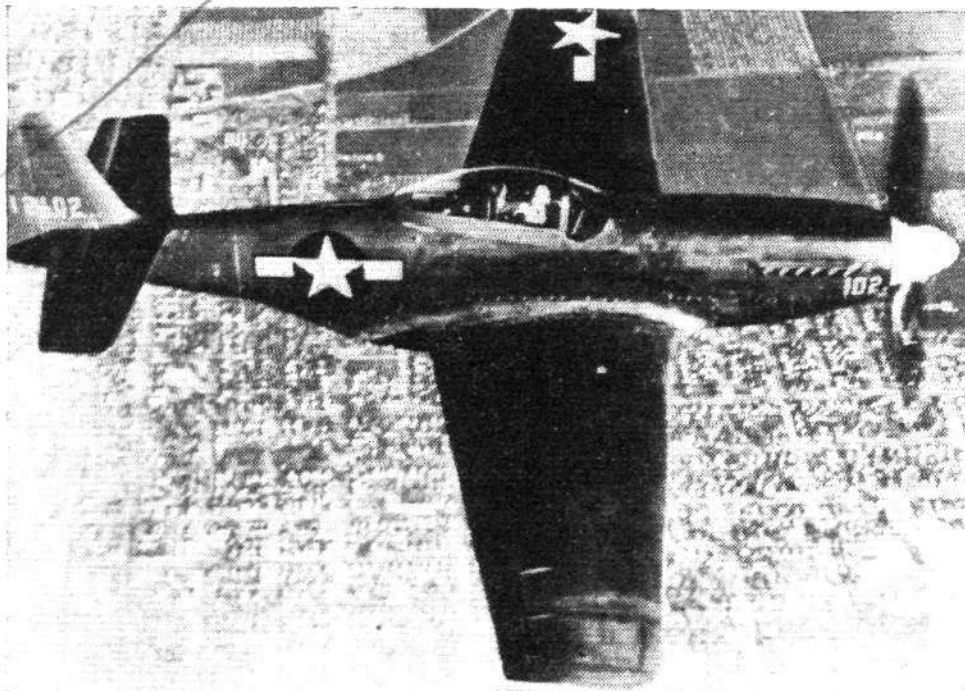


THE WAR IN THE PACIFIC : American aircraft drop parachute bombs on an airfield in Hollandia. In three days some 280 Japanese aircraft were destroyed or put out of commission.

bombers as well as fighters also attacked rail and other military targets and shipping in Yugoslavia, thus giving useful help to Marshal Tito and his gallant partisan army. Simultaneously, rail yards in Northern Italy and important communication lines along the French-Italian border were attacked by strong forces of escorted heavy bombers. All these operations were carried out at the cost of 11 Allied aircraft; two of the very small number of enemy aircraft encountered being shot down.

On the Burmese front, Air Marshal Baldwin's Tactical Air Force commands such superiority that, generally speaking, the Japanese carefully avoid combat with the Spitfires. Having lost some 360 or more aircraft, destroyed either in combat or on the ground, since November last, the Japs now operate from airfields out of reach of the Tactical Air Force's long-range fighters and only make an occasional sortie over their own troops in the Kohima and Imphal areas. As these cautious excursions seldom include bombing or machine-gun attacks over the Allied lines, they are apparently indulged in primarily to "save face." The chief enemy of Baldwin's men, in fact, will now be the weather with the advent of the monsoon season.

Thanks very largely to this almost undisputed command of the air in these regions, the Troop-carrier Command has been able to deliver supplies to the forward units of the 14th Army as well as to transport whole divisions of Allied troops to their advanced positions. During the first four months of this year, it has been disclosed, the transport aircraft of this Command have flown approximately 60,000 tons of supplies and equipment to units which, either because of enemy dispositions or the impossible character of the country, could not be reached in any other way. This, in fact, has been the regular job of Brig. Gen. Old's transport aircraft, and with the onset of the monsoon at this time of the year the work of the British and American aircrews will be rendered more difficult and dangerous, especially among the mountains; it will greatly intensify the amount of flying to be done on those days when flying



SITTING IN A BUBBLE : The P-51 Mustang has now appeared in America with a clear-view one-piece cover over the cockpit. The armament comprises six 0.5in. machine guns. Mustangs are doing good work over France just now,