R.A.F. and Navy in Attack; Egyptian Warship Is Sunk
By LEONARD INGALLS Special to The New York Times.
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Frigate Fails to Answer Cruiser's Orders —Cairo Reports Bombing of 4 Cities, but London Denies Hitting Capital

By LEONARD INGALLS
Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, Oct. 31 — British bombers attacked military targets in Egypt today.

A frigate of the Egyptian Navy was sunk by the British cruiser Newfoundland when it failed to answer a challenge in the Gulf of Suez. The Newfoundland, on shipping protection duty, took aboard survivors from the frigate.

The air raids were carried out to force compliance with the British and French ultimatum to Egypt to withdraw her forces from the Suez Canal area.

The Cairo radio quoted an Egyptian headquarters communiqué as saying that British aircraft bombed Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said and Ismailia. The Egyptians said there were seven casualties in Cairo and that light material damage had been done.

Selwyn Lloyd, British Foreign Secretary, told the House of Commons tonight that "it is quite untrue that Cairo has been bombed."

Mr. Lloyd insisted that the air operations were being "strictly limited to military targets, particularly airfields." He said their extent and object had been limited to achieving Egyptian compliance with the British-French demand that Egypt withdraw from the Suez Canal "with the minimum loss of life and the minimum destruction." He said he hoped the request might be met without prolonged military action.

The British and French armed moves against Egypt were placed under the command of Gen. Sir Charles Keightley, former Commander in Chief of the British Middle East Land Forces. Vice Admiral Pierre Barjot, Commander in Chief of the French Mediterranean Fleet, was appointed deputy Commander in Chief of the operation. An allied forces headquarters was established in Cyprus.

A dispatch from Cyprus said

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BRITISH BOMBERS ATTACK AIRFIELDS

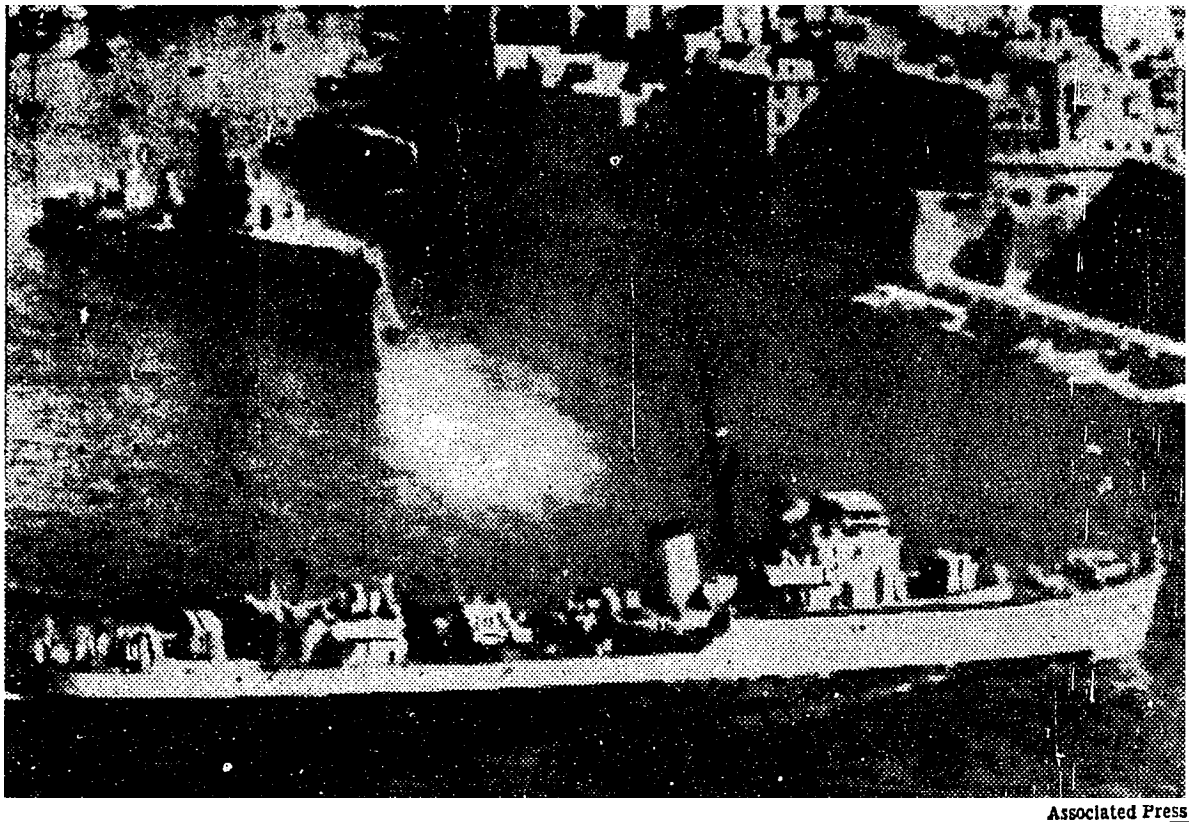
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that concentrated attacks had been made on four Egyptian Air Force fields. It identified them as Almaza and Inchass near Cairo and Abu Suweir and Kabrit, former Royal Air Force stations in the Suez Canal zone. Opposition was encountered from anti-aircraft guns, but not from fighters, the dispatch said.

A warning was broadcast by the British early in the day to all civilians in Egypt to keep away from airfields.

The aim appeared to be to cripple the Egyptian Air Force and gain air superiority in preparation for the landing of a seaborne invasion force.

One of Egypt's principal airfields is the vast Cairo International Airport, which is in open country about ten miles from the heavily settled areas of the city.



Associated Press

EGYPTIAN WARSHIP CAPTURED BY ISRAELIS: The Ibrahim Awal, foreground, surrendered early yesterday after battle off Haifa. She is shown as she visited Malta last August. Ship, formerly the Cottesmore, was obtained by Egypt from Britain in 1950.

Cairo Reported Alit

There was at least one indication that the bombers had done their work in the vicinity of Cairo. A report from Cyprus quoted the pilot of one of the attacking aircraft as having observed that 'the lights were on in Cairo."

Crews of bombers returning to Cyprus described their missions over Egypt as successful. They said they had attacked an airfield east of the Nile delta and had caught the Egyptians "completely by surprise."

The attacks on Egypt began at dusk. As the first planes returned to Cyprus from their bombing runs others were said to be taking off in the darkness.

The pilot of one bomber said his mission had been carried out at high level in clear weather. The bomber made one run lasting ten seconds. There was no fighter opposition, the pilot said, although there was light anti-aircraft fire in the vicinity of the airfield.

In reports reaching here, the same pilot said that he had found the airfield he was attacking was illuminated. There was a plane on the field but no people there, he said.

The Cairo radio stated that the United Nations had been notified that two raids had been made on the city tonight. Firing from anti-aircraft guns and the sounding of air-raid alarms in the city was reported at least twice during the day. The Egyptians said that incendiaries and high explosive bombs had been dropped on their capital.

The British Air Ministry denied that incendiary bombs had been used. Flares were dropped by the bombers to light their targets and it was believed that these had been confused by the Egyptians with fire bombs.

Meanwhile, the build-up of British and French land forces in the Eastern Mediterranean continued. From Algiers it was reported that French naval commandos and shock troops of thte Foreign Legion's First Parachute Regiment sailed tonight aboard the battleship Jean Bart for the Middle East. The troops carried full battle kit.

Britain is estimated to have three divisions in the Middle East. Troop movements in eastern and southern England have been reported to have been going on during the last two days. It is expected that additional troops will be leaving for the Mediterranean within the next ten days.

The British have three military airfields on Cyprus, three on Malta and one in Aden. Royal Air Force Hunter fighters and Canberra twin-jet bombers are known to be in the Middle East. It is believed that Valiant V bombers are also in the area. When the R. A. F. evacuated the Suez Canal zone it had six airfields there.

Hostilities in the Middle East have brought shipping through the Suez Canal virtually to a standstill. Of twenty ships that reached the northern end of the canal yesterday eight were reported to have turned back. Six that reached the southern end of the canal also were reported to have turned around.

More than a score of vessels are within two or three days' steaming distance of the canal. They have been instructed by their owners to delay until more information about the situation becomes available.

The Institute of London Insurance Underwriters announced tonight that the War Risks Rating Committee had approved an increase of one-half of 1 per cent in rates on cargoes for Suez, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

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