

PLOESTI PRANGED.

Operating in the Middle East, the 9th United States Air Force prepares for one of the most daring raids of the war - a daylight bombing of the PLOESTI oilfields in Nazi controlled Rumania. The route followed by the bombers meant a journey out and back of some twenty four hundred miles. As soon as the Liberators crossed the Bulgarian border, their course was plotted by the enemy right up to the target. Over a hundred and seventy aircraft were sent to smash the place which produced nearly a third of Germany's petroleum supply. Backed up by months of training, 2,000 specially selected airmen undertook the mission.

Over the coast of Greece, across the rugged Balkan mountains, past the Danube, following a course which left no possibility of surprise.

When they arrived, the defences were ready for them. The low height at which the Liberators attacked largely defeated the anti-aircraft gunners, but swarms of fighters were waiting to pounce. It meant a running fight, while PLOESTI'S nineteen square miles of Oil refineries, derricks and storage tanks received 300 tons of high explosives.

Braving one of the most heavily fortified areas in Europe, they fought their way home. Losses had been heavy, they expected that. So bravely had they executed their job that some planes were lost, not by gunfire, but by the searing heat and flames AND EXPLODING BOMBS IN THE INFERNO BELOW. PLOESTI WAS WELL PRANGED.