

LIBYA

Dark clouds are over Libya today... heavy clouds which emerge from the tank battles of the desert. We've taken another heavy rap in the Middle East. The temptation to enter into a diatribe on the failure to do this that or the other is easy; but this commentator does not possess the brain of an armchair strategist. These pictures are too full of the calm fortitude and heroism of the fighting men out there to lapse into criticism. No fighting man deserves it, no civilian should make it. This is no attempt to water down the fact that we've suffered big reverses. There's another hue and cry for more and better war material for our men in the desert; Sure, that's an ever present necessity, but don't let's suggest that is the sole excuse for set back. We've missed out on another big battle. We've got to look deep for the reason because it's not here with the men who day and night are on the job, and putting their trust in you and me to help 'em out.

If we took our initial successes complacently, don't let's take our bad news with despondency. Right now our men would like to think we're proud of what damage they're done to Rommel's men and material. A Briton never recognises defeat - he goes on fighting. If we had gone down with the first blow we sustained, we wouldn't be setting about a second front now. Yes, we've had more than our share of cloudy days, but Tommy Atkins and Company have frequently painted a silver lining.

Remember General Cruwell, Rommel's number one man? That's him, not much of a swap for our losses, but we wish his name had been Rommel.