

# WAR DIARY

## EUROPEAN SCENE

### Western Front

This has been a week of inactivity on the Western Front. The official communiqués have not released anything of outstanding interest. Journalists who have visited the Maginot Line have written enthusiastically of the morale of the French troops stationed in that gigantic fortress. The line itself is out of range of German artillery. An official estimate of German prisoners is 200. On October 6 it was reported that civilians were leaving Karlsruhe, a German town of some importance on the extreme point of the French-German frontier in Alsace-Lorraine. Repeated German raids on the French gains near Saarbrücken are reported to have been repulsed. Flooding was reported in the Siegfried Line.

### Spain

The most significant news from Spain is that General Franco has ordered all Germans in key positions to leave the country. He has also dissolved two great German selling and purchasing trusts which have operated there since the end of hostilities in Spain.

### The Allied Navy

On October 9 it was officially reported from London that British forces had endeavoured to engage a German squadron in the North Sea, but without success.

The convoy system has worked successfully, and this week the loss of only one British ship is reported.

The French reported that one of their tankers had sunk a German U boat and that during the first week in October they had captured 30,000 tons of merchandise destined for Germany.

### In The Air

Bad weather has interfered with air activity. An official French broadcast stated that 30 enemy planes had been shot down. During September the French claimed 24 German planes and admitted a loss of eight of their own. British communiqués claim to have made some valuable flights over the Siegfried Line. The airmen reported that much of the line was unfinished and that they made their flight without opposition from the enemy.

### German Peace Move

On October 6 Herr Hitler delivered an address from the Reichstag, claiming that Germany had achieved a unique victory in Poland and had captured 694,000 prisoners. He offered peace on the basis of no interference with the present position of Poland.

European Governments are still discussing the proposals. Italy, on which Hitler had obviously set his hopes, has reaffirmed its neutrality. The Italian press has also changed its tone and is no longer violently pro-German.

Mr. Chamberlain stated that any German-Russian peace proposals would be received and examined, but that the damage to Poland must be repaired, and adequate assurances given that any peace would be durable.

### The Bremen

Sailors arriving in Oslo, from Murmansk, stated that the Bremen was

### AT A GLANCE

On this and following pages we summarise briefly the progress of the war. Constant repetition of official bulletins, rumours, predictions and "wishes" makes the daily news a little confusing. An outline of the central facts sifted from the general mass of news, will enable readers to follow more easily the actual progress of events.

### The United States

America's neutrality Bill is still being discussed (October 12). British, French, and German Governments have been in-



THE COOKHOUSE DOOR: A scene at the Buckle Street Cookhouse, where food is prepared for defence posts in and around Wellington.

berthed there, in company with three other German liners and 15 German freighters.

### Finland

Reports from Finland indicate that there is fear of Russian domination of that country. Anti-aircraft defences have been manned. Scandinavian countries are intensely interested.

### Russia And Turkey

No official statement regarding the Russian-Turkish negotiations had been made by October 11. Reports have been received that Russia is concentrating troops along the Turkish border. It was also reported that Russian troops were concentrating in the Caucasus, causing uneasiness in Iran and Afghanistan. Berlin reported that Russia was fortifying her whole frontier from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The Russian-Turkish negotiations have been conducted with the greatest secrecy.

Britain. (The *Iroquois* docked safely). It was announced on October 7 that America was increasing her army to the full-time peace strength of 280,000 men.

### Neutral Countries

Neutral shipping is still suffering. A Dutch steamer, 6,800 tons, was sunk by a U-boat in the English Channel. Germany has tried unsuccessfully to force all Scandinavian countries to trade only with Germany.

### Belgium

Newspaper reports from Belgium still maintain that German troops are concentrating along the frontier. These reports are denied from Berlin. Official reports from Brussels state that areas of Belgian territory are still being flooded as a precautionary measure.

Germany has re-affirmed her decision to respect the neutrality of Belgium.

### Poland

The Polish Embassy in Paris reported that official confirmation could be given of the stories that certain members of the Radziwill family, land-owners for centuries in Northern Poland, had been murdered by the Russians.

### Switzerland

Several reports have come from Switzerland that German troops are concentrating between Basle and Strasbourg. The frontier here is the River Rhine.

Strasbourg, the capital of Alsace-Lorraine, is of great strategic importance, because of its railways and canals, which give communication with the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. The city has a famous cathedral, containing many ancient wood carvings, and many notable buildings, dating from early times. Strasbourg is also famous for its *pâte de fois gras*.

### Baltic Countries

It is now certain that Latvia and Lithuania have, like Estonia, come under Russian influence. Russia is establishing submarine and air bases at strategic points along this part of the Baltic coast.

## THE NEW ZEALAND FRONT

● Regulations prohibiting strikes and lockouts were issued by the Minister of Labour, the Hon. P. C. Webb, on October 5.

● Nearly 2,000 applications for the 900 men wanted for ground positions with the Royal New Zealand Air Force were obtained by October 5.

● The Minister of Supply, the Hon. D. G. Sullivan, stated on October 6 that more petrol would be available from October 10 for cars over 14 h.p.

● On October 6 the New Zealand Government introduced legislation for taking over the Reserve Bank.

● Parliament adjourned on October 7 until February 8, 1940.

● On October 9 the first recruits for the Maori Battalion offered their services.

● On October 16 the Government began to take over all aircraft owned by Union Airways and Cook Strait Airways, with the exception of the Lockheed airliners.