

# WAR DIARY

## EUROPEAN SCENE

### Western Front

Germany's first assault against the French was reported on October 17, when an attack was made on a four-mile front in the Moselle area. The French retired, but later occupied their former positions. An official communiqué stated that Germany lost 50 tanks and had between 500 and 1,000 casualties.

It was also reported officially on October 17 that the French were expecting an attack on a 60-mile front. All preparations had been made to meet it.

Over two million Germans have been evacuated from the Rhineland and Saar regions. Prisoners taken by the French stated that they had been told that there was no war between Germany and the Allies and that the German army was holding manoeuvres.

British communiqués state that British troops are now holding part of the line on the Western Front. Polish troops have also been given a small sector.

### German Air Raid

German airplanes raided ships of the British Navy in the Firth of Forth, Scotland, on October 16. Two naval officers and 13 men were killed and 12 injured. This was the first time since war began that German planes had crossed British territory. Between 12 and 14 enemy planes took part in the attack. Four were destroyed. An attempt was made also to bomb the Firth of Forth Bridge, but the bombs fell in the water.

One British ship, the Southampton, was struck a glancing blow; splinters from bombs struck two other ships, but no serious damage was done. This is the first time a British naval vessel has been hit by enemy bombs.

### The War At Sea

An official communiqué from Paris on October 17 stated that 22 German submarines had been captured or sunk since hostilities began. During the second week in October the French held up 25,000 tons of goods destined for Germany.

Since the convoy system began, 1,275 British and 47 Allied ships have been safely convoyed (up to October 10).

The Lochavon, 9,205 tons, a British ship, was sunk in the Atlantic by German raiders. Two French boats, the Bretagne and the Louisiane, were also sunk in the Atlantic, whether by raider or submarine was not stated.

An official British message stated that Friday, October 13, was an unlucky day for Germany, as three U-boats had been sunk that day. The German steamer, Cap Norte, 13,615 tons, filled with foodstuffs and petroleum, was captured in the Atlantic.

The German raider, Admiral Scheer, was reported to be active in the South

Atlantic. Several German merchant ships, it has also been announced, have been captured by British naval boats and taken to Falkland Island, where they have been dismantled and the crews interned.

### Air Force Scheme

The Empire Air Training scheme to be established in Canada for English, Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand airmen will cost 700,000,000 dollars for the first year. The peak output will be 25,000 to 30,000 pilots, observers, air-gunners and radiomen each year. Lord Riverdale will control the scheme.

### Air Activity in Europe

Bad weather has again hampered air operations along the Western Front and little work has been reported officially. The R.A.F. reported that reconnaissance flights had been made over large parts of Germany. Berlin reported that one British and one French plane had been brought down over German territory.

## 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 former Polish territory to Lithuania. Rome reported that the Russian forces to be stationed in Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia would number 70,000.

### Royal Navy's Loss

The second heavy loss in the Royal Navy was reported on October 15 when the Royal Oak, with a total complement of 1,200 officers and men, was sunk by a German submarine while lying at anchor in Scapa Flow. The survivors

numbered 463. The Royal Oak was 23 years old, but had recently been re-conditioned.

### Poland

Reports from neutral countries stated this week that bands of regular Polish soldiers were still holding out in the Carpathian Mountains, the Pripet Marshes, the Bielowiez Forest and at Suwalki.

A Swiss newspaper estimated the German losses during the Polish campaign as follows: Killed, 91,278; wounded, 153,000. They lost 190 tanks, 89 fighting planes, 261 light fighters, 107 heavy bombers and 9 observation machines.

### Germany

Herr Goebbels stated that 2,500,000,000 marks had been subscribed by the German people for the winter relief fund for 1939-40. It was reported also that Germany was preparing to transfer 750,000 Germans from Rumania, 600,000 from Yugoslavia and 480,000 from Hungary. They would be settled in the conquered Polish territory.

### United States

President Roosevelt will not intervene in support of the unofficial Nazi peace plan. The American "Cash and Carry" plan has been restored to the Neutrality Bill, which is still being considered.

### Turkey

The Russian-Turkish talks had ceased temporarily by October 17, and fresh instructions had been sent by the Turkish Government to their Minister in Moscow. It was reported that Russia had demanded the right to use the Dardanelle and Black Sea and that she had guaranteed not to supply military aid to Germany. This report has not been confirmed.

### Neutral Countries

The Scandinavian countries have sent a strong protest to Berlin against the sinking of neutral ships. Trade between Denmark and England was practically at a standstill because so many Danish boats had been either sunk or held up.

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE



A cartoon of the 1914-1918 period which is still distinctly topical

### Russia

Reports from several sources state that the Russian-German trade talks are not going well and that Germany is irritated by the Russian reluctance to negotiate. On October 11 Russia and England signed a trade pact for the exchange of timber for tin and rubber. It was reported that this pact would have political as well as trade reactions.

### Finland

The situation for Finland had not been clarified as we go to press. It was reported that Russia was demanding cession of certain islands in the Gulf of Finland. Helsinki, the Finnish capital, had been evacuated.

### Lithuania

Since the signing of the pact with Russia, Vilna has been transferred from

## THE NEW ZEALAND FRONT

● Oct. 10: An official denial was given to the rumour that men of the Public Works could not enlist. They were free to do so.

● Oct. 11: The fishing boat Dolphin was sunk by gunfire from the coastal battery at Lyttelton Heads. The owner and master, Mr. James Brassel, was killed. When, the official report says, the boat did not answer signals a warning shot was fired and unfortunately struck the boat. An inquiry was ordered.

● Oct. 12: The Governor-General, Lord Galway, visited Trentham Camp and addressed the soldiers.

● Oct. 14: Regulations were gazetted governing the return to civil life of all men who join the New Zealand forces. All men must be taken back to the occupations they left when they joined up.

● The Minister of Supply, the Hon. D. Sullivan, stated that all sugar requirements for a year ahead had been arranged with the Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Ltd. There would be no increase in price.

● All Homeward freights on steamers were increased by 50 per cent. instead of 25 per cent.

● The Minister of Marketing, the Hon. W. Nash, announced that an average price of 12½d a lb. would be paid for wool. This was equal to 9.8d sterling.

● Oct. 17: The Minister of Defence, the Hon. F. Jones, stated that officers were being selected for the second echelon. He also stated that enrolments for the National Military Reserve would cease on October 21. To date 35,407 men had joined the reserve.