

UNDER THE NAZIS' NOSES

Bold Hoax By Belgian Patriots

A FEW days ago, the BBC broadcast an account of a bold adventure carried out by Belgian patriots in Brussels last November—the printing and distribution of one issue of *Le Soir*, their own daily paper. Reception at the time was so bad that even M. Armand Nihotte, the Belgian Consul-General in New Zealand, who would have known the names of places and Quislings who were mentioned, could not follow the thread of the broadcast, but it so happened that only a few days before he had received through his own diplomatic service a photographic copy of the famous issue.

The *Listener* called on M. Nihotte and saw these two sheets, facsimiles of a paper which is worth £5 a copy in Belgium now. Belgium has about 200

so exactly that it could be thrown to "collaborateur" street-sellers from lorries without their realising that it was a patriot product, and sold by them as the German article. At all events, this was done, and on November 9 last year the German-employed sellers got their papers a little earlier than usual, cried their usual cry, and sold their copies for a while, until a second lot came, or until someone saw what a hoax had been perpetrated.

At the top left corner of the front page is an advertisement that must have seemed just the usual thing to the Belgian reader; in another position it would not seem out of the ordinary to any New Zealander:

TERRIBLE PAIN IN THE LEGS:
H.M. writes, 20.1.40: *Your preparation has done me a great service . . . I was delighted to be able to leave my bed and start work afresh . . .*

But one of the main stories, headed "Effective Strategy," with the catchline "Special Correspondent, Berlin," starts as follows:

To make this officious comment on military operations more intelligible, we must recall the principal sources to which we commonly have access—
Well-informed Berlin military circles.
Generally well-informed Berlin Military circles.
Competent circles.
Leading spheres.
The highest authorities.
The most noted personalities of the capital.
The man-in-the-street-in-ruins.
The soldier of the pierced front line.

"No one denies in Berlin, where the apparent calm veils a certain anxiety not devoid of some vague fear, that operations in the east have entered—or will enter, according to the angle from which one views the situation—a new phase which is scarcely different from the preceding phase, in spite of certain changes, marked at the time by brutal surprises."

This was obviously the product of some journalist who has "subbed" many a tiresome cable and waded through columns of non-committal phraseology, having his own shot at it, parodying and ridiculing for the amusement of his depressed but hopeful compatriots.

Undergraduate Humour

Most of the humour of this interpolated *Soir* is rough undergraduate stuff—the inverted block, producing a big black mass, purporting to be Hitler in an air raid using the Kaiser's phrase, "Dass habe ich nicht gewollt"—"It wasn't my doing"; the theatre advertisements showing new films at all the well-known theatres:

Acropolis: "Red October," or *The Corpse Factory*: cultural documentary with General Paulus and his soldiers (the few who remain).

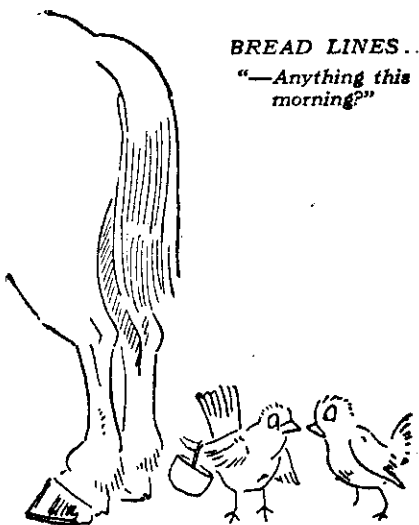
Ambassador: Olympic Games, first Part, the Marathon from El Alamein to Sidi Birrani, with Rommel in his Greatest Role.

There is the note in the minor accident column:

We reported last Saturday the unpleasant accident that occurred to an elderly woman, and said that she died through falling into a septic tank. It should have read "through walking into the Pays Reel" (office of a Quisling newspaper). Our readers will have realised what was meant.

The humour, as we say, is crude stuff. But if it is true, as many believe, that a single laugh is worth a whole sea of indignation, it probably didn't matter to the most sensitive Belgian how the laugh was provoked. For one day, the citizen of Brussels was able to feel he had his own daily paper back again.

BREAD LINES—
"—Anything this morning?"



This drawing is taken from a booklet "Belgian Humour Under the German Heel," published in New York and containing jokes and cartoons drawn and circulated inside Belgium.

patriotic papers which are produced in secret, he told us, most of them quite regularly, and some very well produced and supplied with news. But the thing that distinguishes this one issue of *Le Soir* is the extraordinary way in which it was circulated—through the very hands of the sellers of the German paper of the same name.

When Belgium was overpowered, *Le Soir* refused, with other papers, to continue under German censorship. It was seized, and continued to be published from the same office, with the same paper, and the same plant, but not quite the same outlook. The Belgians called the ersatz paper "Emboché"—Bocheified.

Bogus-Ersatz-Soir

Last year Brussels patriots decided that they would celebrate the anniversary of Armistice Day by bringing out a bogus-ersatz-*Soir*. Anyone who knows the organisation necessary to produce one copy of a big daily under ordinary circumstances will appreciate the enormous skill and organisation that must have been necessary to do it in secret—to reproduce the format, type, and paper

MORE TIKI BOOKS

NEW READING

Serious and not so serious!

GUILTY OF MANSLAUGHTER, by Dr. W. B. Sutch.

Are YOU guilty of manslaughter? And YOU? And YOU? How many New Zealanders to-day are failing to back up the men behind the guns? Are civilians prolonging the war by slacking on the job . . . failing to produce the utmost . . . business as usual . . . politics as usual . . . staying away from work . . . holding materials for civilian use after the war . . . wasteful methods . . . repeating Nazi propaganda? This book discloses startling stimulating facts, sparing nobody. Employers and workers alike must read this outstanding contribution to New Zealand's war effort. You can't turn your back on "Guilty of Manslaughter." It's brilliant. It's merciless. But it will help everybody who wants to win the war . . . QUICKLY.

4/6.

WORKERS AND THE WAR EFFORT, by Dr. W. B. Sutch.

Brought up-to-date in the first cheap edition. Lucidly sets out the performance and problems of New Zealand's industrial employees. If anyone lends you this small, impressive book, he will insist on having it back, so you might as well get it for yourself.

9d.

THE TRUTH ABOUT INTERNAL MARKETING, by Idris Mostyn.

An eagerly-awaited authoritative, factual account of the widely discussed INTERNAL MARKETING DIVISION. Pungently written by a well-known journalist, it reveals many facts for the first time, and throws a dramatically-revealing light on problems of food production and distribution that vitally concern all New Zealanders. The author impartially reviews plain history, plain complaint, and offers a provocative diagnosis and prophecy. Here's a "MUST READ" book! BUY IT!

2/-.

WE NEW ZEALANDERS, by A. R. D. Fairburn.

A pithy criticism of our morals, mediocrity and manners, by a fourth generation New Zealander, whose penetrating analysis of New Zealand culture covers every phase of our commercial, intellectual and religious life. A panoramic reflection of our passive complacency—a cheerful challenge to all of us. This crisp summary of ourselves—"We New Zealanders"—will give a good florin's worth of entertainment.

2/-.

WOMEN ON THE HOME FRONT, by C. K. Guy. Mrs. Guy wants all mothers to have nursing and domestic assistance in the home.

2/-.

A NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, by eight prominent New Zealand doctors. Planned health service for all, giving complete specialist service without charge.

2/8.

SOVIET STRENGTH, its Source and Challenge, by the Dean of Canterbury. Here is the secret of our Ally's remarkable achievements against the Nazi armies.

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3/-.

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2/6.

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3/6.

SAILING OR DROWNING, by Allen Curnow. Poems by New Zealand's outstanding poet, including the famous Tasman Tercentennial Poem.

6/6.

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5/-.

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THE PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING SOCIETY, Box 956, WELLINGTON

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for Reference.