

HISTORY AS IT HAPPENS

Thursday, April 3

Staffs of German legations and consulates in Yugoslavia were ordered to leave at once.

Following violent fighting the Ford Motor Company and the C.I.O. agreed to a temporary truce in the dispute at the River Rouge Plant.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, commander-in-chief in the Far East, arrived in Manila, Philippine Islands, for conferences with American service chiefs.

Count Teleki, Hungarian Prime Minister, committed suicide.

Friday, April 4

German military movements were reported in full swing in the Balkans. Fast German tanks reached the Yugoslav border of Rumania, and tanks and lorries entered Hungary.

Benghazi was evacuated in the face of a determined advance by strong German and Italian forces in tanks.

The U.S. demanded the immediate recall of the Italian naval attache in Washington.

The Croat leader, Dr. Machek, joined the Yugoslav government as Vice-Premier, and called on all Croat authorities to co-operate.

HOME GUARD RANKS Command Status In Britain

The British War Office announced recently that the Home Guard command ranks will be as follows:

Area Commander — Brigadier
Zone Commander — Colonel
Group Commander — Colonel
Battalion Commander — Lt.-Colonel
Company Commander — Major
Platoon Commander — Lieutenant

Officers will be appointed to commissions in the Home Guard in the rank appropriate to the appointments for which they are selected, and any other form of commission held by officers so appointed will be regarded as being held in abeyance so long as they retain their commissions in the Home Guard.

The age limit is sixty-five, but the Selection Boards, may, in exceptional cases, recommend the appointment of an officer over that age to be a Battalion Commander or above.

The selection of commissioned officers in the Home Guard will be based solely on ability and proficiency and only men already in the Home Guard will receive commissions. Previous Army rank will not count. If a colonel is commissioned as a subaltern in the Home Guard he will wear a subaltern's badge.

In place of the Home Guard armlet, shoulder flashes will be worn bearing the words "Home Guard," similar to those worn by the Guards' regiments.

Weapons are distributed on the basis of the part that the Home Guard are expected to play. Automatic weapons have been distributed in the greatest numbers to the places where the defence needs are greatest.

Saturday and Sunday,
April 5 and 6

Germany declared war on Yugoslavia and Greece early on Sunday morning, three hours after the announcement from Moscow of a treaty of non-aggression and friendship between Russia and Yugoslavia. Goebbels in a broadcast said German troops would restore order in Yugoslavia, which was "a country of bandits and rebels."

German troops launched an attack against Thrace.

British forces captured Adowa, the scene of a crushing Italian defeat in 1936.

Monday, April 7

It was revealed that an Imperial Army including Australians and New Zealanders had been concentrated in Greece.

There were no reports from Yugoslavia, but the Greeks said the German forces left bodies piled high before the defences.

Addis Ababa, capital of Abyssinia, captured by the British forces.

Italy announced that Italian forces would participate in the war against Yugoslavia.

Tuesday, April 8

It was announced that the R.A.F. had replied to German raids on Belgrade by bombing enemy military concentrations in Sofia.

Turkey was still standing aloof from the Balkan conflict, but was expected to call up further reserves within a day or two.

The Croatian Quisling, Dr. Otto Pavelic, appealed to Mussolini for help in creating "a free Croatia."

Reports from the German frontier stated that factories in the Reich were resorting to the use of smoke screens to escape R.A.F. attacks.

Wednesday, April 9

From the Balkan front it was reported that Yugoslav forces had had considerable success in Northern Albania. The Italian bases of Fiume, Zara and Scutari were reported occupied.

German forces advancing from Bulgaria were attempting to drive a wedge between Yugoslav and Greek forces, and in western Thrace the evacuation of the civil population was proceeding methodically. Small Greek advance elements were still holding up the German advance down the Struma Valley.

THE EVZONOI Greek Shock Troops

The *Evzonoi* (pronounced Evzonee)—the skirted Greek mountain warriors who have wrought such havoc among Mussolini's blackshirts—have a tradition of military glory that stretches back to Greece's War of Independence in 1821. Under Theodore Kolocontroni, Greece's George Washington, they played a memorable part in wresting the freedom of Hellas from the Turk. In the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, *Evzonoi* soundly trounced the Bulgarians when they treacherously sought to seize the province of Macedonia from the Greeks, their own allies. And further laurels for gallantry were won by these hardy mountaineers in the First World War.

Evzonoi in Greek means "He who has a slim, beautiful waist." It stands for strength, courage, and sureness of foot—the qualities most respected by a tough mountain people. In battle, the *Evzonoi* wear over their frilled skirts knee-length khaki overcoats, and khaki caps replace the red tasseled fez. Otherwise their picture postcard uniform remains unchanged; white cotton shirt, white woollen stockings held up by black tasseled garters, and red slipper-like shoes adorned with puffs of black wool. This costume—an outgrowth of the uniform of the soldiers of Ancient Greece—was, until 50 years ago, the national dress of the peasants of Epirus, Thessaly, and the Peloponnesus. It was abandoned largely for reasons of economy: the frilled skirt alone requires 45 yards of material.

The *Evzonoi* actually constitute only a small fraction of Greece's fighting forces. There are no more than three brigades of them—15,000 men in all. Their duties are those of "shock" troops—scouting, surprise raids, harassing tactics, bayonet charges, and mopping-up operations.

Their armament consists of a rifle and bayonet, with hand grenades, and light machine-guns for special occasions. They carry no tents, field kitchens or other equipment that would impede lightning action. They sleep wherever they happen to be fighting—behind a rock, on a dried-up river bed, in a forest. Their specialty is the bayonet charge; it has won their most spectacular victories against the Italians.

They have no standard battle-cry, but give vent to a chorus of blood-curdling yells as they bear down upon the enemy.

IN THE AIR How Strong Is Germany

You have probably seen German air strength estimated at anything from 3,000 airplanes up to about 50,000. The reason for this enormous discrepancy is that different people makes their estimates in different ways, says Major Oliver Stewart in "London Calling." An air force consists of a first-line strength or, as some people like to call it, an operational strength; and a reserve strength made up of immediate and of stored reserves. Some of those who have given us their views as to Germany's air strength have undoubtedly confused first-line strength with total strength.

First-line strength is the strength that can be put into battle at any moment. It is reached by adding up all the aircraft in the operational squadrons which have their crews and equipment and stand ready to go into the air. But that does not mean that all the aircraft in the operational squadrons must be included. There are also the immediate reserves. They are aircraft which are also ready in all respects, but which are not used by the squadrons except as replacements for aircraft lost in action or by accidents.

Between these immediate reserves and the stored reserves the division is a little blurred. But, generally speaking, one may say that the stored reserves consist of complete aircraft on which a certain amount of work would have to be done to fit them to take the air. The work might be nothing more than fitting two or three instruments, but it serves to give some sort of dividing line between immediate and stored reserves. So on the operational side of the air force there are these three divisions. But that does not mean that they include all the aircraft in the force. There are also the enormous numbers of training aeroplanes.

It is the first line strength which can go into battle at any given moment, but it will be clear from what I have said that first-line strength, when correctly understood, must be a very small proportion of the total strength, including training aircraft, of an air force.

The person who says that Germany's air strength is 3,000 airplanes is obviously thinking of first-line strength in the narrowest interpretation, whereas the one who says it is 50,000 machines is obviously thinking of total strength. The sort of proportions I would expect would be a total of 30,000 airplanes for a first-line strength of about 5,000.

And now for a guess at German air strength. I would not like to try and give a precise figure, but I would say that the total is below 35,000 and that the first-line strength is slightly above 5,000. I think it doubtful if the German first-line strength is above 6,000. You will appreciate that I am basing my guess on very incomplete information. I am going on the strength the Germans deployed in August and September, and before that, in France. And I am assuming that some German units are held always somewhere within easy reach of the Russian frontier.

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