30.10.39 - No. 1.

FRENCH OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE

The following communique was issued by French G.H.Q. this morning:-

"All quiet during night. We repelled several enemy raiding parties".

-------oOo----------

30/10/39 - No.2.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The report of the Central Midwives Board for the year ended 31st March, 1939, which is published tomorrow (Tuesday) shows that 16,761 women were practising as midwives in England and Wales in 1938, compared with 17,494 in 1937. On the 31st March, 1939 the Midwives Roll contained the names of 62,905 women, a net decrease of 4,184 on the total at the end of March, 1938.

During the year covered by the report, the new training and examination rules of the Board came into operation - in the case of State-Registered Nurses as from 2nd September, 1938, and in the case of others as from 2nd May, 1938. On the 31st March the number of institutions approved for the training of pupil-midwives was 89 in respect of the first period of training and 63 in respect of the second period.

The number of candidates entering for examination during the year was the largest on record - 4,806 as against 4,420 in the previous year and 2,683 in the year ended 31st March, 1927.

A report on the examinations held during the year is included, together with notes of various decisions by the Board on midwives' training, etiquette and practice. Reference is also made to the post-certificate courses of training for midwives which were made obligatory as from the 1st January, 1939. The report also refers to preparatory arrangements made by the Board for an efficient midwifery service during a national emergency.

The publication is entitled "Report on the Work of the Central Midwives Board for the year ended 31st March, 1939" and can be obtained (price 4d net) direct from H.M. Stationery Office or through any bookseller.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

30/10/39 - No.3.

AIR MINISTRY BULLETIN.

AIR RAID WARNING IN LONDON.

The Air Ministry and Ministry of Home Security announce:

An Air Raid Warning was given in the East Kent area shortly after 9 o'clock this morning, and the All Clear was given after ten minutes.

Half an hour later a warning siren was sounded in error in the London district, but the All Clear was sounded a few minutes later.

The matter is being investigated.

30/10/39 - No.4.

EMPIRE SECTION

CANADIANS AS "DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH"

In his broadcast on Friday, Mr. McKenzie King, Canadian Prime Minister, put the cause for which the British Commonwealth is fighting on the loftiest of all planes - nothing less than the cause of Christianity. He sees the struggle as the call of mankind's highest duty - "young men enlisting in the Forces are Defenders of the Faith", and again "the time has come when it is necessary for Canadians to lay down their lives for the preservation of Christian civilization."

It is this conviction that has overcome as Mr. McKenzie King made clear, his scruples against leading Canada into the calamity of war. That finally became the inescapable course in dealing with a nation in which the pagan idea had been reborn and "only by the destruction of Nazism" he pointed out, "and resistance to ruthless aggression can the nations of the British Commonwealth hope to enjoy the liberties which are theirs under the British Crown."

ISSUED THROUGH THE PRESS BUREAU

5

FOR PRESS AND BROADCAST.

SALE OF GOVERNMENT STEEL SHELTERS.

A number of Government steel "garden" shelters being now available for sale to the public, the Ministry of Home Security has issued to local authorities instructions for receiving applications and for carrying out the necessary transactions, in which the local authorities will act as the agents of the Government.

Householders who wish to buy shelters must apply to their local authority. Purchasers will have the option of paying the full price before delivery, or of paying by instalments, that is, a credit sale.

Four sizes of shelter will be available, to accomodate either four, six, eight or ten persons respectively. The prices at which shelters will be supplied are approximately as follows:-

	Shelter for four	Shelter for six	Shelter for eight	Shelter for ten
(a) Single Payment	£6.14s.0d.	£8.0s.0d.	£9.12s.0d.	£10.18s.0d.
(b) Deposit before delivery	£1. 5s.0d.	£1.10s.0d.	£1.16s.0d.	£2. 1s.0d.
Ten further monthly payments.	12s.6d.	15s.0d.	18s.0d.	1. 0s.6d.
Total	£7.10s.0d.	£9s 0s.0d.	£10 16s.0d.	£12.6s.0d.

These prices include cost of delivery at the householders premises. The number available for purchase will be limited because of the existing requirements for free distribution. Sales will at first be confined to the following areas.

All Metropolitan Boroughs.

Barking,	East Ham,	West Ham,	Ilford,
Leyton,	Tottenham,	Walthamstow,	Birmingham,
Coventry,	Edinburgh,	Gateshead,	Hull,
Leeds,	Liverpool,	Manchester,	Glasgow,
Nottingham,	Portsmouth,	Plymouth,	Salford,
Sheffield,	Southampton,	Sunderland,	Newcastle.

The list will be extended as supplies become available.

The local authorities concerned have been asked by the Ministry to register applications for shelters in their respective areas, to complete the arrangements for sale to those registered householders whose applications have been accepted by the Department, and to transmit payments to the Ministry. Orders will be filled in strict rotation.

Local authorities have been instructed to entertain no claim for priority of supply on special grounds, such for example as that an applicants income is just above the qualifying limit for a free shelter, or that he is willing to pay in full, and not in instalments.

Supplies are to be allotted to the respective local authorities' areas in the order in which the summaries of applications are received by the Department.

Under the provisions of the Civil Defence Act, it is the duty of local authorities to advise purchasers who ask for guidance about the siting of the shelters; but it is not the duty of the local authority to undertake the erection of purchased shelters. The authority, if it erects the shelter, must recover the cost from the purchaser.

It is pointed out that the shelters, once installed, will probably become landlords' fixtures, and in that case cannot be removed at the expiration of the tenancy except with the landlord's consent. Occupiers whose tenancies are likely shortly to expire may therefore wish to make an arrangement with their landlord.

Press Officer,
Ministry of Home Security.
30th October, 1939.

6

THE WORK OF AN ARMY CHAPLAIN.

The British Army has a full complement of Chaplains with a wide experience of both Regular and Territorial Army life.

In all Training Stations and Cmaps, whenever numbers permit, Junior Chaplains work under the guidance of experienced Senior Chaplains, while local Officiating Chaplains are employed in each Command to deal with small numbers of men. These Officiating Chaplains come under the direct supervision of the Assistant Chaplain-General in the particular Command who is a very experienced Regular Chaplain and is responsible for the interests of all religious denominations, with exception of the Roman Catholic. He is assisted by a Senior Chaplain of the Territorial Army.

The Chaplain's work begins as soon as a recruit joins the Army. Recruits are paraded at the first opportunity for a general talk by the Chaplain and, thereafter, a friendly relationship is fostered by personal interviews of a voluntary nature. Sometimes the soldier makes the first approach, but, more frequently, it is the Chaplain who visits the men at the Barrack rooms, playing fields and the various institutes and clubs a friendly atmosphere is quickly created. A similar close and friendly relationship exists between the Chaplain and Officers Warrant Officers and N.C.O's.

Many facilities exist for the troops at home and overseas to satisfy their devotional needs. First, there are the Parade Services, which last for about three quarters of an hour and include a short address, then there are voluntary services, including Holy Communion and an Evening Service each Sunday. Special arrangements are made, if the need arises, for those who want to attend Holy Communion.

Bible/

Bible classes and debates are held during the week, and the Chaplain arranges for marriages and baptisms. Religious instruction for recruits is also given careful attention, confirmation classes and lectures being held.

Valuable assistance in the general work of the Chaplain is afforded by the Army Scripture Readers and Church Army Officers.

While this embraces the more formal duties of the Chaplain, he makes it his business to take a deep interest in the physical, moral and spiritual welfare of the men and to enter into their daily work and training as soldiers.

The work done by the Chaplain at home is maintained overseas as far as is possible. A complete complement of Chaplains of all denominations is with the troops wherever they go. The number of Chaplains is complete according to the establishment of all denominations. The work is also continued with the Field Force, the troops being ministered to in the Front Line, support and rest areas, in the hospitals, at the bases, and on the lines of communication.

No aspect of the soldiers life is overlooked and there is a large proportion of experienced Regular Chaplains to guide the younger Chaplains.

30.10.39 - No. 7.

FRANCO-BRITISH COMMITTEE FOR THE FRENCH RED CROSS AND OTHER WAR CHARITIES IN FRANCE.

Her Majesty Queen Mary has been graciously pleased to honour with her generosity the Franco-British Committee for the French Red Cross, which, with the apporval of His Excellency the French Ambassador, has been set up to continue the work done by it during the last war.

Under the Presidency, then as now, of the Vicomtesse de la Panouse, the Committee served as an organisation for the provision to French hospitals of medical stores; ambulances; clothing, linen and personnel; and to enable parcels containing comforts to be sent personally to relatives and friends serving in the French Forces. Its aims were and are not merely to offer material assistance to French hospitals and medical services, but to provide a channel for direct contact between supporters of the Committee in Great Britain and French soldiers. The French hospitals notify the Committee of their needs, which are met by the despatch direct to the hospitals of supplies purchased in Great Britain out of funds subscribed by supporters, or given by voluntary working parties and manufacturing firms. The Committee's address is 25, Belgrave Square, London, S.W.1.

WAR OFFICE.
30.10.39.

30/10/39 - No 8

AIR RAID WARNING IN KENT

The Air Ministry announces:

The Air Raid Warning which was given in the East Kent area this morning was due to the presence of unidentified aircraft off the Essex coast, proceeding south. British fighter aircraft went up to investigate. As announced the all clear signal was sounded ten minutes later.

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30/10/39 - No. 9.

ENEMY AIRCRAFT OVER NORTH EAST COAST.

The Air Ministry announces:-

An enemy aircraft was observed off the North East coast of England this morning.

British fighter aircraft went up to investigate, whereupon the enemy aircraft made off in an easterly direction before contact could be made.

--------oOo--------

30/10/39 - No.10.

FOR PRESS AND BROADCAST.

Recommendations regarding the action to be taken in licensed premises on the sounding of air raid warnings are contained in a memorandum which has been circulated to representatives of the wholesale and retail sections of the licensed trade by the Ministry of Home Security.

On the sounding of a warning, the memorandum states, -

(a) no more customers should be admitted;

(b) customers living or working within easy distance should be advised to leave at once for their homes or places of business;

(c) for the remaining customers, full use should be made of any suitable cellar accommodation as a shelter.

With regard to the use of cellars, it is considered undesirable that the general public should seek shelter, whether in permitted hours or at other times, in the cellars of licensed premises, unless there should be basement or other suitable accommodation not required for the storage of intoxicating liquor. If there is no suitable cellar or basement on the premises for the accommodation of customers licensees are advised to consult the local authority as to the availability of public shelters in the vicinity. In any case notices should be posted informing customers as to air raid arrangements.

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY.

For Broadcast.

No. 11.
M.A.F. 79.

30th October, 1939.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCEMENT.

Price of Home-Grown Wheat.

The Wheat (Maximum Price) Order issued to-day by the Ministry of Food is important both to farmers who grow wheat and to those who use wheat for feeding to livestock. Under the Order the price to be paid to a wheat grower for home-grown millable wheat is fixed at 31/6d. per quarter of 504 lbs. (7/- per cwt.), all transport and customary sack charges being for account of the buyer. Intermediate charges may be added if the wheat is bought by a merchant for re-sale. The new market price is an advance of 7/6d. per quarter on the price that flour millers had been authorised by the Cereals Control Board to pay during the past six weeks. This market price will be maintained at the new level for a considerable time and is not likely to be altered before next spring.

The increase of 7/6d. per quarter in the price of home-grown wheat will necessarily have the effect of raising substantially the average price of wheat for the cereal year. Therefore those farmers who sold their wheat at the lower prices of the month of August and of the past six weeks would under existing conditions receive a deficiency payment from the Wheat Commission which, with their market price, would be substantially less than the standard price under the Wheat Act. To avoid hardship as the result of these conditions it has been decided to seek authority to amend the Wheat Acts so that the deficiency payment will be based, not as at present on the average price of wheat over the whole cereal year, but upon the average price realised during shorter periods in the cereal year. These shorter periods would coincide as nearly as possible with the periods during which there is no substantial change in the market price of home-grown wheat, and deficiency payments will be calculated at a separate rate for the growers who dispose of wheat in each period. For example, the price payable by flour millers was fixed at 24/- per quarter on 8th September. The first short period would run from 1st August to 7th September; the second period from 8th September to 19th October, i.e. the date upon which the new price of 31/6d. per quarter was announced. The third period would start on 20th October. A separate deficiency payment would be determined for each of these periods so that the total which the seller in each period would receive in market price plus deficiency payment would be approximately the same for each period. No seller in one period would be at an advantage or a disadvantage as compared with a seller in another period. The Agricultural Ministers might, of course, find it desirable to close a period at any time and start another one, even though there might not be a substantial change in wheat prices.

The circumstances under which in the first week of the war farmers were asked to hold their wheat in stack no longer apply and farmers should now regard themselves as at liberty to market their wheat. They will do so in the knowledge that they will not be placed in a less favourable financial position than

they would be if they sold their wheat later in the cereal year. In the changed circumstances it would indeed be in the public interest for farmers to thresh and market their wheat freely during the present autumn.

The general provisions of the Wheat Acts are in no way affected by the modifications now announced, and it will still be necessary, for example, for farmers to get their wheat certified by authorised merchants, who include most flour millers, in order to secure deficiency payments.

ISSUED THROUGH THE PRESS BUREAU.

30/10/39. - NO. 12.

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED OR BROADCAST BEFORE TUESDAY, 31st OCTOBER, 1939.

PRESS NOTICE.

The Home Secretary has, after consultation with the Secretary of State for Scotland, appointed the following to be an advisory committee to examine the cases of persons who have been interned in Scotland with a view to preventing them acting in a manner prejudicial to the public safety or the defence of the realm:-

The Right Honourable The Lord Alness
(Chairman)

Sir Louis Stewart Gumley.

Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Bt., K.T., T.D.

The Secretary of the Committee is Mr. J. Anderson of the Scottish Home Department.

,The appointment of the Advisory Committee for England and Wales has already been announced.

HOME OFFICE,

30th October, 1939.

30.10.39 - No.13.

PRESS AND BROADCAST NOTICE.

Under Section 7 of the Trading with the Enemy Act, 1939, power was given to the Board of Trade to appoint Custodians of Enemy Property with a view to preventing the payment of moneys to enemies and of preserving enemy property in contemplation of arrangements to be made at the conclusion of peace, and by the same Section the Board were empowered to require payment to the Custodian of moneys owing to or held for enemies and to vest in him such enemy property as might be prescribed, giving him such rights, powers, duties and liabilities in respect of vested property as they might think proper and to require returns to be made to the Custodian giving such information as he thought necessary for the discharge of his functions.

An Order under this Section was made on the 16th of September requiring payments to the Custodian of moneys payable to an enemy and requiring anybody holding or managing property on behalf of an enemy to give notice thereof to the Custodian.

Under this Order, debts due to enemies and moneys payable to them by persons in this country are being collected by the Custodian and paid by him into a separate account in his name at the Bank of England, to await, in the words of the Section "arrangements to be made at the conclusion of peace".

The Board of Trade have made no general Order vesting in the Custodian all property held in this country for enemies, and their policy generally is to refrain from making Vesting Orders except in two classes of cases -

(1) enemy shares in British companies (a) controlled by enemies where vesting is necessary in order to preserve the property, or (b) in cases where such action is necessary to enable the company concerned to fulfil the requirements of the Companies Act in regard to the carrying on of its business which would otherwise be impossible owing to the fact that the company and the enemy shareholders cannot maintain contact.

(2) other property where its preservation pending "arrangements to be made at the conclusion of peace" cannot be effectively secured unless it is vested in the Custodian.

BOARD OF TRADE.

For Tuesday morning's papers.

BOARD OF TRADE ANNOUNCEMENT.

TRADING WITH THE ENEMY ACT, 1939.

Transfer of Securities to Enemy Subjects.

The Board of Trade announce that they have made an Order sanctioning the allotment or transfer to, or for the benefit of, enemy subjects resident in the United Kingdom or France of securities issued by a company within the meaning of the Companies Act, 1929, or any corresponding enactment in force in Northern Ireland.

Board of Trade.

30th October, 1939.

30/10/39 - No.15.

EMPIRE SECTION.

CANADA'S FULL CO-OPERATION

THE HON.T.A.CRERAR ON "BRITAIN'S COLOSSAL EFFORT"

The following statement has been issued by the Hon.T.A.Crerar, who is heading the Canadian Delegation to the Commonwealth talks in London.

"The Canadian people realize clearly the tremendous importance of the issues involved in the present struggle. They cherish freedom and their spirit revolts against the conception of a world where international relations are dominated by brute force.

"We have come to London with only one objective in view - to ensure as far as we can that Canada's full co-operation with Britain and France and the other Dominions shall be forthcoming to bring the war to a successful conclusion in the shortest possible time.

"The magnitude of the war operations naturally brings a host of problems to the Allies engaged in it. The Canadian delegation has in its personnel those who are competent to assist in discussing these problems, so far as they touch, or are affected by, Canada's participation.

"It is impossible, of course, to anticipate these discussions in either their form or their result: but this may be said - that they will be in the main a continuation of the fruitful collaboration that has taken place during the past few months. In addition they have added value, in that they are conducted through the medium of personal contact.

"The representatives from the Dominions also will have an opportunity of learning at first-hand the really colossal effort the Mother Country is making in every phase of her war activity and her invincible determination to maintain freedom and international decency."

ISSUED THROUGH THE PRESS BUREAU

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FROM FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION. 30.10.39 - No.17.

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED OR BROADCAST BEFORE THE MORNING PAPERS OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31ST.

The Sinking of the S.S.ATHENIA.

On the instructions of His Majesty's Government, His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington has conveyed to the Government of the United States the following assurances in regard to the skinking of the S.S. ATHENIA.

1. The S.S. ATHENIA carried no bullion or securities, and no guns, munitions of war or explosives, either as cargo or stores.

2. She was not sunk either by contact with a British mine, by a British submarine, by gun fire by British destroyers, or by an internal explosion, but in accordance with the evidence in the possession of His Majesty's Government, by a submarine.

3. She was neither armed nor stiffened to receive armament of any kind.

4. It was not intended to use the vessel as an armed raider, armed merchant cruiser or in any other offensive capacity at the end of the voyage on which she was sunk.

5. The Chief Officer (B.M. Copland) of the S.S. ATHENIA has sworn in an affidavit that he never discussed with Mr. Gustav Anderson the question of whether or not there were guns on board the ship, and that there were in point of fact no guns or other munitions carried as cargo in the ship on that voyage.

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18 may

EMPIRE SECTION. 30/10/39 - No. 19.

AIDING THE COLONIES

COLONIAL OFFICE ADVISER TO VISIT WEST AFRICA

Following his recent investigation of the West Indies, it has been arranged that Major G. St. J. Orde-Browne, Labour Adviser to the Secretary for the Colonies, should now visit the British Dependencies in West Africa.

Major Orde-Browne is leaving very shortly, and it is expected that he will remain in West Africa for two or three months. It is proposed that he should then visit in turn the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia, and come back to England in the Spring.

Thus the war, as Mr. Malcolm MacDonald promised, is not being allowed to hamper Britain's careful stewardship of her Colonial Empire. Major Orde-Browne's work, as has already been seen in East Africa and the West Indies, is largely concerned with guiding the native peoples in developing Trade Unionism on the right lines. While he is in the Gambia, he will doubtless investigate housing conditions which are closely allied to wage and labour problems everywhere. In his Report on the West Indies, Major Orde-Browne, it may be remembered, had frank comments to make on the need for better housing there.

Labour in the Colonies is not yet as articulate as at home, but the Governement and the Colonial Office are incessantly reviewing the conditions under which the native peoples live and work. This self-imposed task by a good trustee will not be interrupted even in war time; and perhaps the best comment on Germany's claim to control the seas is that the British Government can, without let or hindrance, send its officers to carry on for the benefit of the Colonies the work for which these experienced men were appointed in peace time.

ISSUED THROUGH THE PRESS BUREAU

THE CONVOY SYSTEM.

It is obvious that details of the present Convoy System and of the methods employed for the protection of trade cannot be given. In principle, however, they differ little from those of 1917/18, with the exception that measures have now to be taken to counter air attack in home waters.

The coasts of these islands and of our overseas possessions are divided into sectors, with a Senior Naval Officer or Commander-in-Chief in charge of each. He has to provide escorts for each convoy in his area from the destroyers, escort vessels and other naval craft allocated to his command.

At selected commercial ports at home and abroad is a Port Convoy Officer, who is responsible to his Senior Naval Officer for collecting merchant ships as they complete their cargoes, and organizing them into convoys. Similarly, on the arrival of a convoy at his port, he is responsible for the rapid berthing of each ship where she can discharge her cargo and take in a new one as quickly as possible. The Port Convoy Officer must therefore collaborate closely with the port authorities and shipping agents concerned.

At the head of the organization is the Convoy Section of the Admiralty which, keeping in close touch with the Board of Trade and Ministry of Shipping, co-ordinates and controls the system as a whole.

For convoy to be successful, not only must protection against all probable forms of attack be adequate; but ships must berth, unload, take in fresh cargoes, and sail again as rapidly as possible. In peace, each ship sails as soon as she is loaded. In war she must wait until sufficient ships to make up a convoy are ready for sailing. In peace, too, each ship steams at her normal full speed. The speed of a convoy, however, is limited to that of the slowest ship.

Convoy.....

Convoy thus inevitably entails delay in the arrival of our supplies, though this is minimized by close co-operation between the Port Convoy Officer and port authorities, and by efficient organization of convoys. Eight or ten-knot freighters are not, for example, included in the same convoy as ships with a speed of, say, 15 knots or more, while whenever possible really fast vessels are provided with a special escort.

The number of naval craft available for escort is limited, and it is thus essential that each convoy should present as small a target as possible. Ships in convoy are therefore organized in several columns which stream abreast of one another. A convoy of fifteen ships, for example, might be organized in three columns of 5 ships, for which an escort of perhaps only four naval vessels would suffice -- one on each bow and beam of the convoy.

Further to shorten the target, each ship must keep as close as possible to the one next ahead of her. Such station-keeping -- with ships little more than their own length apart -- is normal practice in the Royal Navy, but for Merchant Navy officers it is a different matter. They have neither experience in station-keeping, nor are their ships fitted with the revolution telegraphs by which fine adjustments of speed are signalled to the engine-room. That the Merchant Navy soon picks up this art speaks well for the seamanlike qualities of its officers.

To attack a convoy successfully, a submarine must approach from well ahead on either bow. She must then close on the convoy, without being sighted by the escort, raising her periscope intermittently to ensure steering the correct relative course. In order to frustrate any such attack, the convoy steers a zigzag course with alteration every few minutes. This is no easy manoeuvre -- all ships must alter course together at the same moment and through the same number of degrees, or .....

collision

collision will occur.

Before sailing, the Convoy Commodore - usually a retired Naval Officer - embarks in a selected ship with a staff of Naval signalmen. By means of flag signals he gives his orders to the convoy, including those for alteration of course.

While conforming generally to the course of the convoy, the escorting warships zigzag at high speed ahead and on either flank of the convoy, in order continuously to search as large an area as possible. On sighting a submarine, those nearest attack her at once - by ramming if possible, or with depth charges, and gunfire if she breaks surface.

One escort vessel, usually detailed beforehand, stands by any ship torpedoed or mined. It is essential that the remainder of the convoy and escort should steam on as fast as possible, as submarines often hunt in pairs.

Throughout the voyage, the Convoy Commodore and Escort Commander are in constant wireless touch with the Admiralty, and each Senior Naval Officer through whose area they are passing. The presence of any reported enemy submarine, surface raider, aircraft or minefield, is thus wirelessed immediately to them so that the necessary avoiding action may be taken.

FROM MINISTRY OF INFORMATION.

30/10/39 - No. 21.

MINISTRY OF SHIPING ADVISORY COUNCIL.

The following gentlemen have accepted the invitation of Sir John Gilmour, the Minister of Shipping, to serve as members of the Ministry of Shipping Advisory Council:-

Sir Percy E. Bates E.B.E. (Cunard White Star etc.)

Mr. S.C. Bradley - (Amalgamated Engineering Union)

Mr. D. Bramah C.B.E. - (Marine Engineers Association)

Captain W.H. Coombs - (Officers (Merchant Navy) Federation)

Sir William C. Currie - (P. & O., etc.)

Lord Essendon - (Furness Withy & Co., Royal Mail Lines, etc.)

Sir Philip Haldin - (Court Line, Lamport & Holt)

Mr. H.S. Holden - (Ellerman Group Steamship Cos)

Mr. S. James - (National Union of Seamen)

The Hon. J.P. Maclay, M.P. (Maclay & McIntyre)

Mr. D.W. Milford - (Transport & General Workers Union)

Mr. H.J.Perkins - (Radio Officers Union)

Sir Alfred Read - (Coast Lines, etc).

Mr. Geo. Reed - (National Union of Seamen)

Sir G.Leighton Seager, C.B.E., J.P.-(W.H. Seager & Co.)

Mr. W.R. Spence C.B.E. - (National Union of Seamen)

Sir Arthur M. Sutherland Bt., K.B.E. -(B.J. Sutherland & Co.etc)

Mr. A. Wilson - (Mercantile Marine Service Assn.)

30/10/39. - NO. 22.

APPOINTMENT OF SIR AMOS L. AYRE AS DIRECTOR OF SHIPBUILDING AND REPAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING.

The Minister of Shipping, Sir John Gilmour, has appointed Sir Amos L. Ayre, Chairman of the Shipbuilding Conference, to be Director of Shipbuilding and Repairs in the Ministry of Shipping, his services having been placed at the Minister's disposal by the Shipbuilding Conference.

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EMPIRE AFFAIRS. 30.10.39 - No.23.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REPRESENTATIVE ARRIVES.

Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan who has been invited here by His Majesty's Government as the representative of the Government of India in connection with the forthcoming discussions with Dominion Ministers in London arrived in London this evening. He was welcomed by Sir Hugh O'Neill Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India.

ISSUED THROUGH THE PRESS BUREAU.

30/10/39 - No.24

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY ANNOUNCEMENT.

The following statement is issued from the Ministry of Home Security:-

"An official enquiry has been made into the sounding of an air raid warning siren in Central London at 9.57 this morning. It appears that at one police barracks a message was wrongly interpreted and the siren accordingly sounded. Unfortunately three cars equipped with sirens for the purpose of supplementing where necessary the warnings given by fixed sirens also sounded the warning. The "raiders passed" signal was given within a few minutes.

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30/10/39. - NO. 25.

PRESS NOTICE.

The Duke of Kent this morning visited the Valleyfield pit of the Fife Colliery Co. and spoke to the officials and members of the rescue parties and some of the miners who had been in the pit at the time of the explosion on Saturday.

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ISSUED THROUGH THE PRESS BUREAU.

30.10.39 - No.26.

ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE.

This morning, South of the Dogger Bank, one of our destroyer flotillas came into action with two German bombers. There were no casualties in or damage to the destroyers, and it is not known whether the enemy suffered damage.

30.10.39 - No.27.

(Not to be quoted as an Air Ministry Announcement).

These Men Floodlight the Clouds.

To those of us who have to hide every chink from our windows, every flash from our torches, every blink from our headlights, the men who work the searchlights are men of power and authority.

While we fumble and grope, they, at a touch, can paint the sky with light. A corporal in charge of a searchlight section several miles from the nearest village is one of the most responsible N.C.O.'s in England. He controls thousands of pounds worth of light-giving plant. He commands this war's most isolated post. His section commander, a subaltern, may have to make a round of forty miles to visit him.

There are unimaginative people who think that looking after a searchlight is a soft and sedentary job. A visit to a searchlight company headquarters and to a searchlight post, if they were allowed near one, would disillusion them.

The major in charge of company headquarters is an officer whose command covers hundreds of square miles. And he is a man with a tradition. Searchlights are not just a 1914 war novelty. One Sapper company began to trundle its plant (acetylene then) on horse drawn wagons in 1897. Later, it went to South Africa, where searchlights were used during the Boer War to detect enemy patrols in the bush at night.

The Sapper company are proud of themselves. Not long ago, like other territorial searchlight companies, they took over a country house in the middle of England. The owner was glad to have someone occupying the house. He had given it up as a bad job. The windows were broken, decay had begun.

Now, thanks to the Sappers, its value has mounted. The old hayloft is a neat repair shop, with a new set of wooden stairs built up to it. A new gravel path has been laid. The company's brass band instruments are stacked on the best bedroom floor. The orderly room work is done (while the sergeant-majoy grins and bears it) under the nursery frieze of farmyard animals.

The old kitchen was not quite big enough for the company cooks. They built an oven in the yard outside, just a brick funnel having a rounded clay roof with holes big enough to take three dixies. In them the autumn plums and apples boil.

"Whenever any neighbours have a windfall" says the major, "they tell us to come and collect them."

Provisioning for the rest of his company is not so simple. The cookhouse lorry travels hundreds of miles every day. It bumps its way along derelict drives and over cart ruts to searchlight posts on remote fields.

At company headquarters, and at some country posts, officers and men carrying gas mask haversacks looking like game bags, do some rough shooting for the pot. Farmers are glad to have the rabbits kept down. Landlords are not able to do their normal amount of autumn shooting.

Huts are being built, but most searchlight sections are still under canvas. Cooking is done in the open. As elsewhere in our defence system men of all classes and types are to be found in the ranks, all are equally keen on the job.

For the duty watch in their tents close by the lights, manning is a matter of second after the alarm is given. Each man is trying to cut down the section record.

The duty hours are growing longer as winter approaches; but from dusk to dawn, in hundreds of high, bare fields, men are ready to floodlight the clouds and dim the stars at a moment's notice.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY BRANCH.
AIR MINISTRY ,
WHITEHALL, S.W. 1.

30/10/39.

30/10/39. - NO. 28.

(Not to be quoted as an Air Ministry Announcement).

A.A. GUNNERS WANT A TARGET.

Royal Air Force pilots are popular with our anti-aircraft gunners. They are almost as popular as the enemy would be if he allowed the gunners to have a little practice.

Above everything else, a gunner wants something to shoot at. Nothing will convince him that a cold, quiet gun is preferable to a hot, noisy one. At anti-aircraft gun sites up and down this island, the gunners gaze wistfully at the sky. They are like darts players without a dart board.

They cannot fire their guns, but they can aim. Whenever they have something to aim at, they are as happy as the absence of the enemy will allow them to be. That is where the R.A.F. comes in. Every R.A.F. bomber and fighter, and every civil aircraft on official business, that has flown over this country since the war began, has been (theoretically) shot down.

The gunners say, "Why drag in theory?". They claim that every British aircraft seen flying has been brought down. Our Air Force has been shattered. What if no shells have been fired and no aircraft have been seen to crumple up? The point is, say the gunners, that if the shells had been fired, the aircraft would have crumpled up. They have gone through every motion except the actual firing, and that is all there is to be said about it.

What is more, every aircraft seen in the sky has not only been shot down; it has been shot down several times. As it passed into the range of battery after battery on its flight, each battery has dealt with it. There are pilots who, although they do not know it, have had many more than the cat's nine lives.

Anyone who happened to see, in the distance, gun crews jumping to their positions, gun muzzles swinging, might stop his ears for fear of the bang, and take his fingers away again a little later, surprised to find that no bang came. The exercise, carried out day after day by hundreds of batteries, is so accurate that no one standing a little distance away would suspect a pantomime.

Sometimes, the R.A.F. deliberately make targets of themselves to please the gunners.

/The

The friendly, power-driving bomber is the delight of certain tree-screened batteries "somewhere in England". His first far away drone and the growing whine of his dive mingle with the snapped commands of N.C.O.'s. His dive is the day's big moment for men who, a few weeks ago, were working in offices. He gives an absorbing, high speed mind test to a Cambridge mathematics don turned gunner, and a great deal of quick, trained body movement to the don's battery companion, a distinguished Rugby three-quarter. The bomber is also a source of great local pride to one clerk who, called up for service with his Territorial battery, said goodbye to his wife and went to war, only to find himself stationed within walking distance of his home.

Between bouts of pretending to destroy the British Air Force, life, for the anti-aircraft gunner, is divided into three periods, manning, duty, resting. Like the searchlights and the observer posts, guns are manned night and day. Manning, for the mathematician and the Rugby footballer and the clerk, may mean the day, with its possible targets, or the night, with its hot cups of cocoa brought from the marquee canteen at the edge of the field.

For the battery commander, the war means telephone ringing, typewriters rattling, orderlies opening and shutting doors, forms piling up, in a suburban house just down the road where the town stopped growing when the war began.

The clerk's wife thinks that so far war might be worse. It may not be good for the carpets, but it is cheerful when her husband brings so many friends about the place.

The only flaw is that they will talk about moving. Hardly a day passes but one of them says, "Have you heard?. They're shipping us off to North Borneo" - or Little Slughington, or Auchtermuchty. Why, she thinks, can't they stay where they are, now that they have made their guns so comfortable?.

Perhaps they will.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY BRANCH,
AIR MINISTRY,

WHITEHALL
S.W. 1.

No. 29 - 30/10/39

French Official Communique

The following communique was issued this evening by French G.H.Q.,

Activity of the contact units on the whole of the front. Local artillery activity. Our chasers and reconnoitering aircraft have been intensely active. In the course of the two first months of war, 6 French merchantmen of a total tonnage of 41,000 tons have been lost. During the same period we have captured 4 ships, one of which, the German cargo "Halle" was sunk by her crew. The three others, of a total of 19,000 tons are being made use of by us. Since hostilities began our merchant fleet have therefore been reduced by 22,000 tons, or about one per cent of the total French sea-going tonnage.

30/10/39 No 30

ROYAL AIR FORCE OVER NORTHERN GERMANY

The Air Ministry announce:-

The Royal Air Force made extensive reconnaissances on aerodromes in Northern Germany to-day.

In spite of opposition much valuable information was obtained and many photographs were taken.

FROM AIR AFFAIRS