

20.5.41 - No. 1.

Air Ministry 3951.

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY
COMMUNIQUE.

Last night there was little enemy activity over this country.

Bombs were dropped at a point in the East Midlands where some casualties were caused and at a few points elsewhere. No extensive damage has been done anywhere.

20.5.41 No. 2.

CANADIAN BRIGADIERS AS MECHANICS

PRACTICAL LESSONS IN TRANSPORT MAINTENANCE

Changing senior-rank uniforms for greasy overalls, Brigadiers and Colonels of the Canadian Corps in Britain have been through an intensive three-day course in the practical side of maintenance and repair of mechanical transport.

The object of the course was to give them practical understanding of mechanical problems and to ensure a common policy of maintenance and inspection of motor transport. After lectures on their own responsibilities for equipment and the responsibilities of all sections down to lorry-drivers and despatch riders, the officers were given, with the aid of a stripped chassis, demonstrations in the detailed mechanism of various types of vehicles. Afterwards they performed actual maintenance jobs on lorries, station wagons, staff cars and Bren gun carriers.

"They all seemed to get a bang out of it", said Lieut. Bob Elliott, one of the Chief Instructors, "and they pitched into the work like regular garage mechanics."

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20.5.41. - No. 3.

Mr. H. J. Hutchinson, C.B.E., and Mr. G. W. Turner have been appointed Under-Secretaries in the Ministry of Supply.

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY.

20/5/41 - No.4.

AMBULANCES FOR ARMY COMMAND

The British Volunteer Ambulance Corps is posting for service a further Section of twenty-four Ambulances, with the Southern Command, manned by female volunteer personnel.

This Section will be commanded by Section-Leader Mrs. D. M. Bentley, who served with the first Section of the Anglo-French Ambulance Corps in France, and returned from Bordeaux after the capitulation of France. Since that date she has been Deputy Section-Leader of No. 2 Section of the Corps, which is operating with the Western Command.

The Adjutant General to the Forces, Lieut. General H.C.B. Wemyss, D.S.O., M.C., will inspect the Section prior to its departure for service, at 11.30.a.m., on Tuesday, 20th May, 1941, at West Serpentine Road (near the Magazine) in Hyde Park.

The Ambulances have been given by organisations, cities and towns in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, eight of the vehicles having been given by the Rotary Clubs, and two by the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and the National Pharmaceutical Union.

This makes a total of 205 Ambulances provided by the British Volunteer Ambulance Corps for service with the British and Allied Armies. Of these, two Sections are manned by female volunteer personnel, and one Section by male volunteer personnel.

There is a most urgent need for further Ambulances to serve with the Forces. For the sum of £550 the Corps will provide a War Department Ambulance carrying a plaque bearing the Coat of Arms of the organisation, city or town donating the vehicle, or any other inscription which may be required by the donors.

The Headquarters of the British Volunteer Ambulance Corps were recently destroyed by enemy action, and have now been transferred to 39, St. James's Street, London, S.W.1. (Telephone: REGent 0851) where donations to help in the continuance of this excellent work should be sent.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

" DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE, I PRESUME."

When a lucky shot from a German raider set fire to a British night fighter the pilot and the gunner parted company. Later that night they met again when, after safely landing by parachute and tramping over some fields, the pilot found his gunner making himself comfortable in a village police station and drinking a cup of tea.

The meeting was a complete surprise to both and the pilot greeted his colleague with "Doctor Livingstone, I presume?".

The gunner had got in a good burst at the enemy and badly damaged it before clouds of fumes filled his own turret. Although nearly blinded, he gave the enemy another burst, "For", he said afterwards, "I thought the hun ought to be shown that there was still some spark of life left in our aircraft.

"Immediately afterwards my pilot ordered me to bale out. I opened the doors, took off my helmet and cocked one leg over the fuselage. I sat there for several seconds, trying to decide how best to jump as I did not want to crack my head on the tail.

"Then I flung myself over the starboard side and felt a tremendous crack on the jaw. I hadn't missed the tailplane after all.

"Instinctively I pulled the rip-cord as I was hit and after a few seconds came up with a sudden jerk and found myself floating peacefully down, although I had no feeling of going downward.

"Then, looking upwards, I saw our aircraft burst into flame and it came whistling down in a large curve and finally crashed about three miles away.

"I could hear many jerries hovering round me so I spilled the air out of my chute and came down underneath a blanket of cloud.

"I finally landed near a village where I was made very comfortable at a farmhouse and given some tea. Later I went to the front room of the local police station where my pilot walked in and we consumed some more tea."

The pilot, after telling his gunner to bale out, took a header over the side and landed in a cultivated field,

he said

"After walking about a mile, I came to a farm and was taken to the police station where my gunner had thoughtfully laid out some tea for himself."

As compensation for the loss of his aircraft the pilot later learned that his squadron had shot down three raiders that night.

20.5.41. - No. 6.

KING'S MESSAGE TO NYASALAND

The King has sent the following message to the Nyasaland Legislative Council through Lord Moyne, Secretary of State for the Colonies:

"I have learnt with deep appreciation of the resolution of loyalty and devotion passed by the Legislative Council of Nyasaland on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Proclamation whereby the territories now comprising Nyasaland were formally brought under the protection of Great Britain. I am fortified by the knowledge that the people of Nyasaland in common with all people throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations are united in their determination to ensure the triumph of the cause for which we have taken up arms, and I look forward with confidence to the victory which we shall share with you".
Signed George R. I.

COLONIAL OFFICE PRESS SECTION

"FROM THE FRONT BENCH"

The following is the text of the broadcast in this series by the Rt. Hon. H. B. Lees-Smith, M.P. to be given in the Home Service at 9.20.P.M. Please check against delivery.

Mr. Lees-Smith said:-

Perspective. A sense of proportion. That is what is wanted at this stage of the war.

This talk is intended to survey the different theatres of war in the order of their importance, and to show that we have good reasons to look forward with more sober confidence than at any previous stage of the war.

There are two main theatres of war, the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, and of these the vital one is the Atlantic Ocean. If Hitler can sink enough of our shipping as it crosses the Atlantic, he will cut out life-line and he will win the war. On the other hand, if he fails to do this he will in a few months have to stand face to face with the consequences of the passage of the Lease and Lend Act which the United States passed two months ago. This Act was the most important event that has happened in this war since the Battle of Britain. By it, the United States declared its intention of putting at our disposal the aeroplanes, the tanks, the guns and the equipment which will make the greatest manufacturing nation of the world the arsenal of Democracy.

Hitler must prevent these munitions from crossing the Atlantic, or finally perish, for if he does not, the superiority in all the machines of war will pass into our hands. It is estimated that this will happen somewhere in the first half of next year, and then we shall be able to take the initiative and the whole face of the war will change. This is now the dominating fact of the war - it is why both for him and for us the Atlantic Ocean overshadows every other theatre.

The other main theatre of war, not comparable to the Atlantic, but all the same a major theatre is the Mediterranean and the countries on its shores, Libya, Egypt, Syria and Turkey. Hitler's object in this Mediterranean campaign is to protect himself against the British blockade, which is our secondary method of warfare. Europe does not provide Germany with the rubber, the copper, the alloys or the oil for a long war. They come from overseas, but as the British navy commands the seas, Hitler cannot obtain them; but some, in particular oil, he can obtain from Asia. The importance of Egypt is that if Hitler were to conquer it he would clear his way to reach the oil-wells of Mesopotamia and of Persia and so in this essential commodity get behind the British blockade. This thirst for oil dominates all his other possible moves in the Near East. He may attack Turkey. Why? Because if we prevent him from getting to the oilfields of Mesopotamia and Persia through Egypt, another road to them lies through Turkey. If he finds that he cannot conquer Egypt which I am confident that he will not do, and cannot conquer Turkey, he has a third alternative, to attack Russia, and to take the oil-wells at Baku and at the same time the wheat fields of the Ukraine. If he were to succeed in an attack upon Russia, he would certainly free himself from his shortage of oil, but not from a shortage of other war essentials which the British blockade will still deny him. But the gains would not all be on his side. He would have to hold down more conquered territory, to further dissipate his army and air force and to extend his lines of communication, and pay the price for this when he has eventually to meet our primary method of defeating him, attack by our armed forces.

This brings me back to the theatre where the war will in the end be won or lost, the Atlantic Ocean. Daily we watch, as the people of the United States draw nearer hour by hour to the supreme question which they must answer in the end. Will they be willing to build their merchant ships and to produce highly finished implements of war, not in order to assist us, but in order that Hitler may have more to send to the bed of the ocean.

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This decision will determine the rest of the war. The vital battles that are at present being fought are the battles of public opinion in the United States. These battles we are winning one after the other, not merely week by week, but day by day. The decision to patrol. The speech of Mr. Simpson. The speech of Mr. Wendell Willkie. The speech last week by Mr. Winant, the United States Ambassador to Great Britain. Each is a victory for us and a victory in the decisive theatre which will in the end determine all the battles for the rest of the war.

I have been speaking of the military side of the war. But this is equally a civilian war - a war of civilian staying power and staying power depends upon national unity. This reminds me of an incident that happened to me a few years ago. Soon after Hitler came into power a German Diplomatist came to this country who was in Hitler's confidence to have private talks with a number of British Public men to find out what they thought. I had a talk with him and he asked me the question if the present National Government goes to war with Hitler what will Labour do? I replied "Labour and the National Government will stand side by side, and the country will be united 100%." I remember the gesture with which he threw up his hands and said: "The unity which you possess in this country, the Fuehrer has created for us in Germany." The benighted man did not see the difference between the two kinds of unity, between our unity which is based upon free discussion, a common view of God and man and the right to call our souls our own, and Hitler's unity based upon the Blood Purge, the Concentration Camp, the Torture House and the Executioners Block.

The challenge which we have issued to Hitler in this war is that our unity will out-last his. We have justified that challenge in the last few months. Our unity has stood the test of aerial bombardment, the loss of our homes, the loss of our businesses, the defeat of our Allies, and the desertion of France, and we have not yet touched the fringe of the resolution of the people of this country. But German unity. Before we have the superiority in armaments, before the active entry of the United States into the war, before the Germans have endured the terrible punishment that is waiting for them from the R.A.F., Hess the deputy Fuehrer whom Hitler has always presented to Germany as the very symbol of German unity and faithfulness to himself has fled to this country and painted in letters that the whole world can see the "Writing upon the Wall."

On the day that Hess flew to this country, Hitler destroyed the House of Commons, the bone and the heart of the unity of Britain. He understands us so little that he thinks that by destroying a building he can destroy the spirit that it contains. He has always derided what is described as our decadent Parliamentary system, but now Parliament can give him it's reply. The Nazi system has lasted for about eight years and when, like the British Parliament, it has weathered the storms of about 800 years, we can begin to discuss which of the two will, in the end, show the greater staying power.

Thank God for Parliament and the free discussion for which it stands. It will be a main factor in winning the war. Take one example - why is the United States drawing nearer and nearer every day to our side? Not merely on account of careful calculation of her own eventual safety, but because they have come to see that our system of Government in open Parliament represents the way of life of all free men, and they cannot continue to stand by without lifting a finger and watch us alone in the world protecting for them their liberty as well as our own.

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And there has undoubtedly been another reason. The spectacle of the British people under fire. A long line of observers, Mr. Wendel Willkie, Mr. Harry Hopkins, and the correspondents to the American newspapers, have sent descriptions of the conduct under aerial bombardment of ordinary men and women and children which has led to a great surge of opinion in the United States saying that we cannot allow such a people to be wiped from the earth, and we demand to stand by their side. If you have been bombed out of your home or experienced any of the trials and sufferings of these anxious but heroic days, and have carried on, rest assured you are playing your part in winning this war as much as if you were on the battlefield.

These are the reasons for saying that we can look forward to the future with sober confidence, but on one condition, that we hold on until the reinforcements from the United States arrive. Until then we must rely upon our production from our factories. Production for the next few months is the key to the war. The United States will not swing over fully from Peace Production to War Production for some months to come - and remember how long it has taken us. Between now and then we have to hold the fort ourselves. Every ounce of toil and sweat and energy in our factories will be needed to do this, and if there are any men or women who at this moment are capable of employment and are not employed, or not fully employed and who have, without good reason, failed to ascertain whether they can be of any use in any form of work, they are the best friends that Hitler now possesses in this country.

The war can now be summed up in a sentence. The people of this country are fighting a great delaying action. It began with the fall of France over a year ago and it will continue into next year. But delaying action - why, our soldiers have been famous for them throughout history - and the traditional characteristics of the British people are endurance, good humour, toughness, and staying power. These are the very qualities needed now. We still have these qualities today. The people have shown them. Shew them for a few months more. Hold on. And the end is sure.

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

20.5.41. - No. 8.

REGISTRATION WITH RETAILERS.

Before the new Ration Books come into use, it will be necessary for the public to register with the shop-keepers, whether they wish to make a change or not.

There is no need to do anything yet. Full instructions will be issued when the time comes.

In January, when the present Ration Book was issued, the public were told that there was no need to register with retailers unless they wanted a change. Since then a great many people have moved from one district to another, sometimes in large numbers. Although the Ministry tries to keep in touch with everybody who moves about, it is not always easy when shops and Food Offices are damaged and essential records destroyed.

In order to prevent waste and to distribute the food to the places where it is wanted, it is most important that the Ministry should have complete and accurate records showing exactly where everybody shops for all rationed foods.

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MINISTRY OF FOOD.

20/5/41 - No.9.

APPOINTMENT OF VOLUNTARY FOOD ORGANISERS

As a part of the preparations against the risk of invasion, the Ministry of Food has already appointed, in certain parts of the country, Voluntary Food Organisers to look after local food supplies should the communities in which they live be isolated by the enemy. Under such conditions the Voluntary Food Organiser would be responsible for conserving and fairly distributing the food within his area until communication with the permanent Ministry of Food organisation had been restored.

A heavy responsibility will rest upon these Voluntary Food Organisers in the event of their services being required and great care is accordingly being taken in their selection. The guiding principle has been to find the best man for the job regardless of politics, class or occupation. Over 500 volunteers have already been appointed and further appointments are being made as the scheme is extended.

The Voluntary Food Organisers have been given detailed instructions as to the steps which they should take in emergency and are now actively engaged in the necessary preparatory work.

MINISTRY OF FOOD

20.5.41 - No.11.

FLASH

It is learned in London that in Iraq a combined land and air attack began early yesterday; pamphlets demanding surrender had been dropped. Our ground troops entered Fallujah at 14.00 hours, and no casualties were sustained either by them or by the R.A.F.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

CONTROL OF SHIPPING

The Minister of War Transport yesterday made an order under the Defence Regulations entitled The Use and Hire of Ships (Control) Order 1941 which comes into force on May 22.

The provisions contained in the order are as follows:-

No person shall, except with the authority in writing of the Minister, or a person authorised in that behalf by the Minister and subject to the compliance with any conditions imposed by the Minister or other person giving authority, enter into or offer to enter into an agreement for the use or hire of any ship to which this order applies or for the carriage of goods in such a ship.

This order shall apply to every ship not being a fishing boat or a government ship or a licensed ship having a gross tonnage of 1,600 tons or more.

In this Order the following expressions have the meanings hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say:-

"ship" has the same meaning as in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894,

"Fishing boat" means a vessel of any description for the time being employed in fishing or in the sea fishing service.

"Government ship" means a ship which -,

- (a) belongs to His Majesty or is held by any person on behalf of or for the benefit of the Crown, or
- (b) is at the disposal of His Majesty whether by virtue of the exercise of any power of requisitioning the ship or otherwise, or
- (c) is under charter to or for His Majesty.

"licensed ship" means a ship in respect of which there is for the time being in force a licence granted in pursuance of an Order made under Regulation 46 of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939.

Copies of the Order will shortly be obtainable through H.M. Stationery Office and from booksellers in the usual way.

20.5.41 No. 14.

RUBBER QUOTA

At a meeting of the International Rubber Regulation Committee held on the 20th May 1941, the Committee fixed the following percentage of the basic quotas for 1941 as the permissible exportable amount:-

For the months of July, August and September 1941, 100 per cent.

Under the scheme of regulation, it is open to the Committee to revise their decision as regards the permissible exportable amount, from time to time, if for any reason this should, in their opinion be desirable.

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INTERNATIONAL RUBBER REGULATION COMMITTEE

ORGANIZATION OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD.

The Ministry of Food is the largest trading concern in the world. As a result of experience since the outbreak of war a method of conducting the Ministry's operations has been evolved which combines administrative experience with expert knowledge of the purchase and distribution of food supplies.

The Minister of Food has recently decided to make certain changes in the organisation of the Ministry directed to placing more definite responsibility on the Head of Commodity Divisions.

Mr. J. F. Bodinnar, the Commercial Secretary to the Ministry, has become the Head of the Supply Department, which comprises all the Commodity Divisions. He will be assisted by five senior administrative officers, who will be chiefly concerned with questions of policy and with matters affecting other Government Departments, e.g. the Treasury.

No alteration has been made in the existing arrangements in the Meat and Livestock Division, the Cereals Division and the Division which deals with Fruit, Vegetables and Potatoes.

In the remaining Commodity Divisions responsibility has been placed upon the following Directors:-

Animal Feedingstuffs	Sir Bryce Burt, Director of Animal Feedingstuffs
Bacon and Ham	J. Loudon, Director of Bacon and Ham
Butter and Cheese	H. E. Davis, Director of Butter & Cheese
Canned Fish	F. Wilkinson, Director of Canned Fish
Cocoa	John Cadbury, Director of Cocoa
Dried Fruits and Nuts	A. E. Gough, Director of Dried Fruits
Eggs	J. A. Peacock, Director of Eggs
Fish	John Adamson, Director Designate of Fish
Oils and Fats and Margarine	Herbert Davis, Director of Oils & Fats
Rice	H. L. Sanderson, Director of Rice
Starch	Col. F.C.C. Balfour, Director of Starch
Sugar	W. J. Rook, Director of Sugar
Tea	Sir Hubert Carr, Director of Tea

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MINISTRY OF FOOD.

20/5/41 - No. 17

DUKE OF KENT CONVEYS THANKS OF R.A.F.

The Duke of Kent to-day visited the Y.M.C.A. headquarters in London in his capacity as Chief Welfare Officer of the Home Commands of the R.A.F.

The Duke, who holds the rank of Group Captain in the R.A.F., is also Chairman of the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund.

The visit was made to convey the thanks of the R.A.F. for the urgent needs met by the Y.M.C.A. at isolated stations in all parts of the country, particularly during the last difficult ten months.

The Duke was met by members of the National Council of Y.M.C.A.s and also by Mr. Bertram Cruger, the representative in this country of the British War Relief Society of U.S.A. The Society has presented over 100 mobile canteens to the Y.M.C.A. during the last twelve months.

After the ceremony the Duke attended a meeting of the Council of Voluntary War Work, at which he thanked the representatives of other organisations for all they had done for the men of the R.A.F.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

20.5.41 - No.18.

MIDDLE EAST WAR COMMUNIQUE.

The following official communique was issued from British G.H.Q.,
Cairo, today:

LIBYA Tobruk. Nothing of importance to report.
Sollum area: Our patrolling activities are
continuing.

ABYSSINIA At Amba Alagi arrangements are proceeding to complete
the surrender of the Italian Forces. In the
southern areas torrential rains are temporarily
interfering with the progress of our operations.

IRAQ After a short engagement with Iraqi rebel troops the
British forces have occupied the town of Fallujah
where the important bridge was found to be intact.
At Habbaniya and in the Basra areas the situation
remains quiet.

CRETE Early this morning German parachutists and air-borne
troops made an attempt to secure a footing on the
island. A number have already been accounted for.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION (MILITARY AFFAIRS).

20.5.41. No.21.

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE

The Board of Admiralty regrets to announce that H.M.S. CAMITO,
an auxiliary vessel of the Royal Navy (Commander A.A. Barnet, R.N.R.),
has been sunk.

The next of kin of casualties have been informed.

20.5.41. No.21.

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ADMIRALTY

20/5/41 - No. 22

NAVAL AIRCRAFT RESCUE IN IRAQ

During operations in Iraq a Naval aircraft, which had been damaged while taking part in an attack on the barracks at Samawa, had to make a forced landing three miles south of the town and was quickly surrounded by members of Raschid Ali's forces, who opened fire.

Other Naval aircraft, which had observed this incident, promptly landed, rescued the crew without casualty in the face of armed opposition, and once more took to the air.

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ADMIRALTY.

20/5/41 - No. 23.

Not to be published on the Club Tapes or by broadcast
or in any other way before the morning of Wednesday,
21st May.

COST OF LIVING FIGURES FOR 1st MAY, 1941.

The Ministry of Labour and National Service announce that at 1st May the official cost of living index figure was 100 points above the level of July 1914 as compared with 98 points at 1st April.

For food alone the index figure at 1st May was 71 points above the level of July, 1914 as compared with 70 points at 1st April, the rise being due to increases in the prices of fish. Among items other than food there was a further increase in the prices of clothing and clothing materials, partly due to the effects of the purchase tax. Since this tax came into operation, on 21st October last, the resulting increases in prices have raised the cost of living index figure by nearly $4\frac{3}{4}$ points.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE.

20/5/44 - No. 24

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED BEFORE THE MORNING PAPERS
OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 24th, 1944, OR BROADCAST
BEFORE 7 a.m. ON THAT DATE

SUPPLY OF NATIONAL HALF-CREAM DRIED MILK UNDER
THE NATIONAL MILK SCHEME

The Ministry of Food announces that, following consultation with the Ministry of Health, it will shortly supply under the National Milk Scheme a dried milk with a modified cream content of 16½ per cent as compared with the 27 per cent content of the full cream powder which has been issued since the beginning of the Scheme.

The modified product is intended for those infants under 12 months old, particularly during the first two or three months of life, who may be subject to digestive troubles if fed on a full cream dried milk. Since the half-cream powder is not suitable for all infants, mothers applying for issues should first obtain the advice of a doctor or an officer of a Welfare Centre.

Arrangements for the supply of the new product, which will be known as "Half-cream National Dried Milk," will be similar to those existing for the full cream powder, which will continue to be issued under the Scheme.

MINISTRY OF FOOD

20.5.41. No. 27.

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 3953.

Air Ministry News Service.

AMERICAN AIRCRAFT IN NORTH AFRICA.

American aircraft were used in the air bombardment of enemy positions around Fort Capuzzo on the afternoon of May 18. This is the first time that aircraft manufactured in the United States have been used as bombers in the North African campaign.

Heavy bombs were dropped on German tanks and mechanised vehicles, dispersed near the old Capuzzo aerodrome.

The Squadron has an American citizen on its nominal roll. He is a sergeant airgunner who was awarded the DFM for gallantry in the Abyssinian campaign.

FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MORNING PAPERS OF FRIDAY, MAY 23rd, 1941.

NOT TO BE BROADCAST BEFORE 7 A.M. ON THAT DATE.

THE CAMPAIGN IN EAST AFRICA.

The East African campaign has been a model of concerted action by mobile columns which have covered vast distances at almost incredible speeds, in face of strong resistance and great physical difficulties.

Carried through by armies in which the British South Africans, Rhodesians, Indians, Sudanese, East and West Africans, Free French, Belgians and Abyssinian Patriots, are all represented, it has resulted in the conquest of three countries and the re-conquest of a fourth in about four months.

Early this year, Abyssinia, Eritrea, Italian Somalia and British Somaliland - representing a total land area seven times as large as England, Scotland and Wales put together - were dominated and defended by a well-equipped force of 100,000 Italian metropolitan and 200,000 native troops, with a considerable air force, under an able commander, the Duke of Aosta.

To-day, the Duke of Aosta is our prisoner, his armies smashed and scattered. Of these armies we have captured approximately 100,000; there may be 50,000 left and 25,000 stragglers; the remainder have deserted or disappeared. All that remains of this Fascist East African Empire is a few pockets of Italian resistance at Gondar, Jimma and elsewhere, which are virtually surrounded. Resistance at these points may be prolonged on a basis of more or less guerilla warfare, but, as such, it will represent more of a nuisance than a danger.

To appreciate the full significance of this feat, it should be remembered that the conquered territory is mountainous, undeveloped, and subject to extremes of heat and rainfall. Yet General Platt's column advanced 450 miles from Kassala to Amba Alagi in four months in spite of a fifty days' siege at Keren, and General Cunningham's columns, coming northwards, took only 50 days to advance 1150 miles from Kismayu (already in enemy territory) to Addis Ababa against a well-equipped enemy. In contrast, it took the Italian Marshal Badoglio seven months to advance 425 miles from Adigrat to Addis Ababa in 1936, when opposed solely by primitively equipped Abyssinians, and with the help of mustard gas.

This brilliant campaign of Generals Cunningham and Platt, apart from high-speed conquest over great distances, has also involved major military operations. The long drawn and bitterly contested battle of Keren was a triumph of assault under most difficult conditions. The crossing of the Juba river, the capture of Marda Pass and the battle of Dessie were equally magnificent feats of arms, as was the advance upon Amba Alagi.

The war in East Africa started inauspiciously for the British.

/When Italy

When Italy started hostilities in June, 1940, General Wavell had under his command in the Sudan and in Kenya forces whose training, preparations and dispositions were incomplete.

The opening months of the war, therefore, saw little but a series of strategical withdrawals from a long frontier line the nature of which was such as to make it difficult to hold. We withdrew from KASSALA: we withdrew from GALLABAT: we fell back on the BLUE NILE: we gave up MOYALE and the northern desert frontier strip of KENYA. In each case the garrison gave a good account of itself, and inflicted disproportionately heavy losses on the advancing enemy. In spite of these withdrawals, however, the situation was always in hand. Then, British Somaliland was invaded in superior force and was abandoned by us. For the first time the Italians could claim a resounding success.

During the autumn of 1940 reinforcements reached General Wavell. British troops, South Africans, Rhodesians, Indians, East African and West African units, and later Free French and Belgian contingents, combined in a force with which General Wavell took the offensive, not only in East Africa but also in Libya.

In mid-December 1940, South African and Gold Coast troops raided EL WAK on the KENYA - SOMALILAND frontier and countered the threat of an Italian advance: by the middle of January the enemy evacuated BUNA and the ground was prepared for action against Italian Somaliland. On the Sudan frontier, after a series of brilliantly conceived and conducted patrol-actions, KASSALA was retaken on January 19th. At the beginning of February similar small-scale actions on our part compelled the enemy to evacuate GALLABAT.

On the BLUE NILE the advance began at the same time; from N.W. KENYA the DUKANA area was invaded, and on February 9th AFMADU, in Italian Somaliland, was taken, and on February 13 KISMAYU was occupied by our troops. MOGADISCIO, 250 miles further on, was taken on February 25; by February 13 our northern forces had already pushed through from KASSALA to the KEREN hills, and on the RED SEA littoral a mixed Anglo-French force was advancing south from KARORA. Meanwhile, in many areas Abyssinian patriots with the guidance of British officers commenced harassing operations against the Italians, and on 4th March scored a notable success by the occupation of BURYE. An Anglo-Belgian force captured ASOSA on March 14 and cleared the BARO salient of enemy forces. Thus simultaneous attacks were being delivered from all sides against the Italian forces.

Obviously not all of them could be on the same scale, nor could equal progress, measured in miles and hours, be made on all fronts. The functions of the several forces were indeed very different. Thus, in the BLUE NILE sector, the object of the relatively small forces engaged was to encourage and give point to the activities of the Abyssinian patriots. The South African forces operating from the North KENYA border had to mop up the many enemy posts established on the plateau and to protect the left flank of the Italian Somaliland column by preventing any concentration of the enemy in that difficult NEGHELLI area which had served the Abyssinians as a base in the 1935 Italian campaign. On the other hand, the column operating from KASSALA was aiming at the capital of ERITREA and at its harbour, MASSAWA, and that from N.E. KENYA, having secured the passage of the JUBA river, was aiming at the heart of ABYSSINIA. These two striking columns under Generals Platt and Cunningham respectively were therefore responsible for the main offensive.

In the speed of their advance already described, General Cunningham's troops have beaten all the records of this or previous wars.

On the JUBA river, at the MARDIA pass and on the AWASH river, the enemy had strong positions from which he had to be dislodged by frontal attacks. The magnitude of the military operations is shown by the fact that between AFMADU and HARAR over 32,000 prisoners were taken, together with great numbers of guns and machine guns and vast quantities of military stores. Our own supplies had to be brought up along ever-lengthening lines of communication. Air-borne troops were sent out 200 miles and more to bring under control the N.E. areas of Italian Somaliland. The rush which took our troops from DIREDAWA across the AWASH (itself deemed an impassable obstacle) and up the passes to ADDIS ABABA rivalled that which captured MOGADISCIO: it took 5 days for the 250 miles.

/Meanwhile,

Meanwhile, in ERITREA, the battle for KEREN was in progress. For fifty days the Italian garrison was on the defensive. At first the fighting was sporadic, while our troops were being brought up, but for the last fortnight there was an intense struggle. The position was one of the greatest strength and the Italians fought desperately: hill-tops and ridges which commanded the town changed hands again and again in attack and counter-attack. The British and Indian troops had to clear road obstructions and scale precipices hundreds of feet high under heavy fire. It was not until March 27th that the Italian forces gave up the struggle. Our troops pursuing the Italian retreat overcame road obstructions held by the enemy rearguard and on April 1st received the submission of ASMARA. From the capital of the colony, part of the Italian army fell back on MASSAWA. The rest retreated southwards, hotly pursued; thousands surrendered; the historic battlefield of ADOWA fell into our hands, and then the holy city of AXUM, and on April 9 MASSAWA capitulated and in ABYSSINIA there were left only more or less disorganised bodies of troops groping their way towards DESSIE, GONDAR and JIMMA.

The resistance put up by the Italians is not to be under-rated: even if it proved ineffective. That was not because the Italians did not fight but because they were out-fought. The generalship on the British side was too good for the defence, and it was backed by the superior tactical performance and fighting qualities of the British troops. The auxiliary services competed as successfully with the exceptional difficulties of the terrain. Cooperation by the Royal Navy, and the Royal Air Force was such as to afford every operation its full chance of success.

As a contribution to our final victory, the East African campaign has both moral and material significance. Already, one wrong has been righted, and the Emperor of Abyssinia has been restored to the throne.

The loss of the East African Colonies is a blow to Fascist prestige which will have serious repercussions in Italy itself. The liquidation of the Italian army there leaves Italy so much the poorer in trained man-power and in the armaments which she can so ill afford. At the same time the approaching end of the campaign leaves free for service in other fields large British forces trained in a hard school of war and flushed with victory.

The successful issue of the campaign has one important bearing on the question of supplies. As long as there were Italian warships in the Red Sea, based on the impregnable harbour of MASSAWA, our traffic through those waters was threatened; and although in fact Italy had failed almost completely to interfere with that traffic, yet its protection demanded the presence of British naval craft, and the waterway could not be considered safe. Now that threat is removed and the United States have been enabled to declare that the Red Sea is no longer a combat zone.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION (MILITARY AFFAIRS)

20/5/41 - No. 29

MAJOR-GENERAL DOBBIE APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF
MALTA

The Colonial Office announce that His Majesty the King has been pleased to approve the appointment of Major-General (temporary Lieutenant-General) Sir William George Shedden Dobbie, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Malta,

Sir William Dobbie has been administering the Government of Malta since he assumed command of the troops in April, 1940, with the exception of a short period in May 1940 immediately before General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter left the Colony.

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General Dobbie, who was born in 1879, was educated at Charterhouse and Woolwich. He saw active service in the South African War and in the Great War, being awarded the D.S.O. in 1916 and appointed C.M.G. in 1919. After the Great War he held various appointments in this country and in Egypt, where he commanded a Brigade (1928-1932) until in 1935 he became General Officer Commanding in Malaya. He was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel in 1925, Colonel in 1926 and Major-General in 1932. He retired in 1939, but was appointed to Malta with the temporary rank of Lieutenant-General in 1940, when General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., was forced, through ill-health, to relinquish his duties as Governor and Commander-in-Chief. He was appointed K.C.B. in the present year. He is Colonel Commandant of the Royal Engineers.

COLONIAL OFFICE PRESS SECTION

20.5.41. No. 30.

ADMINISTRATOR OF ST. VINCENT

It is announced by the Colonial Office that Lieutenant Colonel A. E. Beattie, C.M.G., C.B.E., M.C., Colonial Secretary, Gibraltar, has been appointed Administrator of St. Vincent, Windward Islands, in succession to Major W. Bain Gray, C.B.E., whose appointment as Governor of St. Helena was announced recently.

COLONIAL OFFICE PRESS SECTION

20.5.41 - No. 33.

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE.

Last night a Heinkel 111 was engaged and shot down off the East Coast by H.M. Trawlers TRANIO (Lieutenant A.L.G. Gillies, R.N.R.), CASWELL (Skipper J.W.B. Jobson, R.N.R.), THOMAS LEEDS (Temporary Skipper (R.A. Cook, R.N.R.) and STELLA LEONIS (Acting Skipper Lieutenant W. Perrett, R.D., R.N.R.). The enemy aircraft had previously been under fire and damaged by H.M. Minesweeper PRINCESS ELIZABETH (Temporary Lieutenant F.A. Smyth, R.N.R.).

No casualty or damage was sustained by our ships.

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ADMIRALTY.

20.5.41 - No. 34.

Air Ministry No. 3955.

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE.

Although there has been a little enemy activity over Coastal Regions today, nowhere has the enemy flown far inland.

Up to 8 p.m. no reports have been received of any bombs having been dropped.

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BRITISH PRISONERS IN ENEMY HANDS.

Next of kin, if able to identify the men from the information published, are requested to advise the Casualty Branches of the Services concerned, forwarding Regimental or any other details.

The following is the latest list of British prisoners of war as received from enemy sources and said to have been taken in Greece:-

HADLEY	7359876	LONDON
LEIGH or LEE	5379541	LONDON
SERGEANT MICKEE or MCKIE	2754188	GLASGOW
GODDARD	2656668	FOLKESTONE
HOWELL	7376870	LONDON
BRADFORD	6847981	LONDON
GRIGG	7366164	WIMBLEDON
T. SMITH	7264061	HASTINGS
MOORE	7366098	BEDFORDSHIRE ?
GOODE	7365179	BIRMINGHAM
SQUIRES	6010612	LONDON
LEE or LEIGH	7361921	LONDON
HEWETT	7361920	LONDON
SMITH	5948935	BIRMINGHAM
SERGEANT WRIGHT	66	SEAFORD
MOSS	7366522	LONDON
BODEN	7363534	BIRMINGHAM
CUNNINGTON	7368541	BIRMINGHAM

Tuesday, May 20th, 1941.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION.

NEWS BULLETIN No. 386.

INDIA AND RASHID ALI.

Strong condemnation of the action of Rashid Ali and his intrigues with Germany are forthcoming from the press of India. Here are a few samples:-

"Ahsan", the Lahore daily, writes, "Germany's sole object is to see Muslims annihilated. Turkey would never break her pledge given to Britain. While it is generally believed that the Iraq tangle is the outcome of Rashid Ali's secret intrigues with Germany, Turkey has taken the first opportunity to express disapproval of the action taken by the Iraq Government because she is convinced that countries which have agreed to act as instruments of Germany have lost their independence and sovereignty."

"Hamdam", Urdu daily of Lucknow, says:- "Hitler's moves and threats fail to influence Muslim countries which have proclaimed their friendship towards Britain and refused to become involved in a European war. The present Government in Iraq has alone struck a discordant note."

"Shahbaz", another daily of Lahore, writes:- "Rashid Ali's activities which have jeopardised the entire Islamic world are being denounced in every Islamic country."

"Inqilab", of Lahore, declares, "The danger which has appeared in Iraq constitutes a direct threat to the safety of India. If the Nazis succeed in establishing their domination over Iraq by exploiting their secret negotiations with Rashid Ali's regime it would not be difficult for them to enter Iran and Baluchistan."

"Azad", the pro-Muslim League of Calcutta, says:- "It appears that Rashid Ali is only rushing towards his own doom. By adopting an anti-British policy he is not only injuring himself but harming Iraq's cause as well."
Ministry of Information. M.o.I. 1.

THE FOLLOWING WAS BROADCAST IN THE
GERMAN SERVICE OF THE B.B.C. TODAY:-

HESS: MORE NAZI CONTRADICTIONS.

The Leader's Deputy has been for a week a prisoner of war in England. Increasing proof is arriving in Britain and America of widespread listening in Germany to the British wireless which has been giving the truth about Hess.

Listening has been increased by the increasing tangle of lies put out by the German propaganda system. This was perfectly exemplified last night in broadcasting to America.

Early in the evening the Berlin station DZD was heard broadcasting in Spanish to South America a statement that Hess's family would be treated "in accordance with Hess's behaviour and utterances in England".

Three hours later the same station, broadcasting in German to the United States, denied that Germany had made any such threat. It claimed that such reports were being circulated by British propaganda.

On 30th January Hitler stated in the Sportspalast: (Extract from Record):
"I have from the very outset taken count in my calculations of every possible contingency".
British Broadcasting Corporation. M.o.I. 2.

(Cont'd)

MORE GIFTS FOR AIRCRAFT

The Minister of Aircraft Production acknowledges with gratitude the following gifts towards the purchase of aircraft:-

Towards Stafford Spitfire Fund.....	£21.		
(From Directors & workmen of British Diamond Cutters, Ltd., - refugees now working in Stafford - gift in commemoration of invasion of Low Countries).			
Staff of Jaipur State Railway.....	£65.		
(Making a total of £115).			
Helmsley & District Spitfire Fund.....	£696.	13.	10d.
Calabar (Nigeria) making a total of £1,000.....	£300.	0.	0d.
Wirral & Hoylake Urban District Council (objective of £5,000 in view).		£4,000.	0. 0d.
Midland Bakers' Spitfire Fund.....	£5,117.	3.	3d.
(Master Bakers of Warwick, Worcester, Derby, Leicester, Notts. and South Staffs. Spitfire to be called "Midland Baker".)			

Ministry of Aircraft Production

M. o. I. - 3

£2,000 FOR "BRITAIN'S BRAVERY"

A Mr. Young, of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, who last year sent a personal gift of £1,000 "in appreciation of the airmen of England", has now sent a further gift of £2,000 from his firm "in appreciation of the continued bravery of all the people of Britain."

Mr. Young's previous gift was transferred to the Air Ministry. His latest benefaction will be included in the next schedule of war gifts transferred to the Treasury. Dominions Office Press Section.

M. o. I. - 4

NORTHERN IRELAND FACTORY CONTROL

The Board of Trade announce that the functions of the Control of Factory and Storage Premises which was recently set up to co-ordinate the requirements of all Government Departments for factory and storage accommodation will, in respect of Northern Ireland, be exercised by the Ministry of Commerce, Northern Ireland.

The Ministry of Commerce have appointed Mr. James Stewart, of the Ministry to act as Regional Controller of Factory and Storage Premises in Northern Ireland. Board of Trade

M. o. I. - 5