

ISSUED THROUGH NEWS DIVISION.

9/10/39 - No. 1.



FLASH.

PASSED BY R. A. F. CENSOR

NOT FOR BROADCAST ON RADIO OR CLUB TAPES OR IN ANY FORM BEFORE 4 p.m.

R. A. F. 'S UNCEASING ACTIVITY ON WESTERN FRONT  
SIEGFRIED LINE BEING CHARTED IN DETAIL  
PLANES CONCEALED IN CAMOUFLAGED AIRPORTS.

BY 'EYEWITNESS'

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE.

WITH THE R. A. F.

From its carefully camouflaged airfields in this secret area of France the Royal Air Force is carrying out a programme of unceasing activity on the Western Front, although the present stage of the war is one in which there is very little concrete news to report in proportion to the work actually done.

With epic feats of skill and daring, the Siegfried Line is being charted down to the most minute detail. Dangerous reconnaissance in vital sectors of the German Hinterlands adds daily to Britain's knowledge of the enemy defence systems.

Co-operation with the French is close and unceasing and the two Air Commands are in constant consultation. Often in the lobby of the Headquarters here, a row of dark caps covered with gold stars and oakleaves reveals that high French officers are over for a conference.

The R.A.F. bases are hidden away in the countryside with marvellous skill. The first time I visited one I realised that I had passed right through it two days before without noticing that it was there. The other day, they told me, a pilot coming from London had been totally unable to discover the landing ground he was aiming at.

For considerable distances along the fringe of the woods camouflaged 'planes have been pushed back into the trees and concealed with a few quickly-removable loose branches. It has been done with such skill that they are almost invisible.

But they can be got out and into action at a minute's notice. Runways of wooden logs, or better still of special iron grids, have been laid down to make their movement easy.

The men have used their leisure moments to construct little thatched huts or wigwams near their machines, some of them quite luxuriously equipped inside.

A telephone call from headquarters may set everything suddenly in motion. The Aircraftsmen are summoned from their game of football to get the machines in readiness. The observers are told that such and such a section of the Siegfried Line must be photographed. And in a short time the flight sets off on its duties knowing that at any moment a swarm of black sinister-looking messerschmidts may swoop up and attack it.



So far the plans of the High Command have provided for more photography and leaflet-dropping than bombing.

Within the service over here the dangerous work at present being carried out is kept on an impersonal basis of anonymity and it is only by chance that the details of the heroic exploits ever leak out.

In the evening, when their day's work is over, the pilots often foregather in the leading hotel of the nearby town. Here you may meet a man who a few hours before has been photographing the Siegfried Line from a height of only a hundred feet. Watching the upturned faces of the grey-green clad German soldiers gazing at him in stupefaction.

Another may have returned from shooting down enemy planes in a spectacular air battle. But there is usually very little talk about it - they regard it as all part of the day's work.

Equally modest are the humbler ranks. As they sit at their meal on clean wooden tables outside the village dance hall where they sleep, their talk is more of the chances of a cigarette issue, or what their families are doing at home, than of the fights they have just taken part in.



AIR MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT.

Royal Air Force reconnaissance aircraft  
shoot down German Flying Boat.

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Further details of the Royal Air Force encounter with enemy flying boats over the North Sea are issued by the Air Ministry.

The pilot of a British reconnaissance aircraft observed an enemy flying boat. The dived towards the flying boat and the two joined action with bursts of machine gun fire. A second enemy flying boat appeared and took part in the engagement; shortly afterwards two more British reconnaissance aircraft came on the scene.

The British aircraft quickly gained the upper hand. The first enemy flying boat slipped out of the fight and fell into the sea. Its companion made off.

Two of the British aircraft were struck by bullets but neither was damaged. There were no casualties among the British crews.



Issued through News Division.  
9/10/39 - No.3.

FRENCH OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE NO.71.

Towards nightfall and during the night of October  
8th there were patrol activities on either side of the  
valley of the lower Nied and to the South of Saarbrücken.

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FROM FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION.



ISSUED THROUGH NEWS DIVISION.  
NO. 4 9/10/39

EMPIRE ANNOUNCEMENT

"NO RECKLESS INFLATION"  
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NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT TAKE CONTROL OF CURRENCY  
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The passage of the Reserve Bank Amendment Bill through the New Zealand Parliament on the last day before the recess, followed an all-night sitting on the Marketing Amendment Act. This empowers the Government by Order in Council to buy or otherwise acquire and to sell or otherwise dispose of any goods for consumption or use in New Zealand or elsewhere and to fix their buying price.

Special accounts are to be opened at the Reserve Bank for the purpose of the Acting Prime Minister. No limit is to be placed on the authority of the Bank to grant overdrafts to such accounts and any such overdrafts are not to be deemed to be unsecured advances.

In fixing the price of goods acquired, due regard is to be given to the existence of a state of emergency. The Government rejected an Opposition amendment providing for review of the measure within twelve months after the end of the war.

There was much Opposition criticism of the Reserve Bank Amendment Bill, giving the Government complete control of the Dominion's credit and currency. The Acting Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, said there would be no reckless inflation and that, war or no war, when the interests of the country were at stake, the Government must take every step to give themselves complete power. After passing all stages in the Legislature, the Bill received the Governor-General's assent.



Issued through News Division  
9/10/39. No. 5.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCEMENT.

SEA FISHING INDUSTRY ACTS, 1933 and 1938.

The following Order dated the 4th October, 1939, has been made under the Sea-Fishing Industry Acts, 1933 and 1938.

The Sea Fish Industry (Immature Sea-Fish) Revocation Order, 1939.

This Order revokes the Order of 1938, which prohibited the landing or sale of undersized sea fish of the kinds specified therein, viz: hake, haddock, whiting, dabs, lemon soles, megrims, plaice, soles and witches. This action has been taken because a certain number of undersized fish are unavoidably taken in the course of fishing operations notwithstanding that a minimum size has been prescribed for the mesh of nets. In the present emergency it is desirable that any fish so taken should be available for food.

Copies of the Order (S.R. & O. 1939 No. 1323) may be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office or through any bookseller, price 1d. net.



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCEMENT.

NATIONAL RAT WEEK, 6TH TO 11TH NOVEMBER, 1939.

In view of the serious depredations on food stocks by rats, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries considers that the annual Rat Week should be held this year notwithstanding the War. The Week will begin on Monday, 6th November, and the Minister asks everyone to make a special effort during the week to destroy any rats on their own lands and premises and to take all possible steps towards securing concerted action against these vermin.

The Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919, places an obligation upon every occupier of "land", which term includes buildings on or under land, to take steps to destroy rats and mice on the property which he occupies and to prevent such property from becoming infested. County Councils, County Borough Councils and many other local authorities in England and Wales are empowered to enforce the Act in their respective districts and these authorities have, as in previous years, been invited to co-operate in this year's campaign.

The Ministry's Advisory Leaflet No.49 - "The Destruction of Rats and Mice" contains information and advice on methods for dealing with rats. A copy may be obtained free of charge from the Offices of the Ministry, 10, Whitehall Place, London, S.W.1.

Further information on the subject of rats is contained in Bulletin No.30 "Rats and How to Exterminate Them", copies of which are obtainable through any bookseller, or direct from H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2. price 6d. (7d. post free).



Issued through News Division

9/10/39

No. 7.

NEWS FLASH

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY STATEMENT

The Admiralty announce that statements appearing in the Press to the effect that His Majesty the King recently decorated personnel of the Fleet Air Arm are entirely without foundation.

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Issued through News Division.

9/10/39 No.....8.

BOARD OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCEMENT.

MUSEUMS AND SCHOOLS.

The Museums Association has issued a circular to all its members drawing attention to the various ways they can help in the education of children in war time.

The circular stresses the importance of providing additional educational facilities as well as the need for continuing existing services.

It is suggested that where the double-shift system is in operation the children who are not at school may be taken to the museums and art galleries where facilities will be given for lectures, study of museum specimens and, wherever possible, for the reception of school broadcasts.

The Association is in close contact with the Board of Education on these subjects.



THE ARMY'S BOOTS.

No Shortage.

The British Army is not short of boot leather.

In fact, it was stated at the Ministry of Supply to-day, sufficient stocks of sole leather to keep the British Army well shod until well into 1940 were ear-marked before the outbreak of war. Ample supplies to meet all requirements after then are being arranged. There is no difficulty at all about upper leather.

Prices of both imported hides and tanned kips were fixed by the Ministry of Supply at the outbreak of war at the pre-war level to prevent speculation. At the outset there is always a danger of speculators rushing in.

From the start, however, the initial arrangements for fixing prices made by the Ministry in consultation with representatives of the trade, were designed and regarded simply as a temporary expedient, as the commencement of a long term policy.

There is no question now of the Minister of Supply being forced by protests from merchants to sign any Order altering prices. The Order, in fact, was signed as part of normal and deliberate policy.

Proposals for freeing imported hides, issuing a new price schedule for imported tanned kips, and several other modifications were all linked together in the new Order.

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9/10/39

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No. 10.

EMPIRE ANNOUNCEMENT

South Africa Prepares.

One Army under a Single Command.

The expansion of the Special Service Battalion into two Special Service Brigades of about 3,000 men each and the creation of additional battalions in the Active Citizen Force to meet the wishes of many citizens to volunteer for training, are announced by the South African defence authorities.

The Union Defence Force has undergone far-reaching re-organisation and expansion in recent weeks and all weak spots in the country's armour are being strengthened.

The organisation, training and administration of the rural commandos, which have for some time been segregated from the Active Citizen Force section of the Defence Force, will again be included in the normal defence organisation and in future the Union will have only one army under a single command.

The following are some of the other measures taken by the Defence Department:-

Applications are invited from citizens who wish to be trained as observers, air-gunners and bomb-aimers in the South African Air Force.

Refresher courses arranged for Active Citizen Force officers on the reserve of officers or on the general list and for N.C.O's in the Class A. reserve.

The formation of a civic guard at Johannesburg, and the development of an anti-aircraft unit at the Cape.

Active Citizen Force units have practically reached their full war strength and there is a big overflow of volunteers, both Afrikaans- and English-speaking, from which the new battalions will be formed.

An official announcement states that the Minister of Defence, (General Smuts), has received many offers of assistance from public bodies, associations and private individuals anxious to strengthen the hands of the defence authorities, and that offers of substantial financial help have also been forthcoming.

The Special Service Battalion, now expanded into two Special Service Brigades, was established in 1933 to give an occupation to boys who, on leaving school, had no employment, and to help find them suitable occupations. After military and vocational training from 12 to 18 months, most of these lads secured jobs and passed into civil life, but remained on the Military Reserve. About 12,000 have so far been through the Special Service Battalion and have thus been well grounded in military duties.

The Active Citizen Force corresponds to Britain's former Territorial Army.

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Issued through News Division.

9/10/39.

No. 11.

EMPIRE ANNOUNCEMENT.

Australia Says "No Armistice".

The Australian Press unanimously supports the views on Hitler's speech expressed in the official statements issued in the United Kingdom, and there is nowhere any suggestion that an Armistice could or ought to be arranged.

The "Daily News" reports that New South Wales Labour Council rejected a motion urging the Commonwealth Government to make representations to the Allied Governments that the first opportunity should be seized to negotiate peace. The decision to summon Dominion Ministers to meet in London was unanimously approved.



9/10/39.

No....12.

PASSED BY R.A.F. CENSOR.  
NOT FOR BROADCAST ON RADIO OR CLUB TAPES BEFORE 8 a.m.  
R.A.F. PLANES SURVEY WHOLE GERMAN FRONTIER.  
DAYLIGHT FLIGHT FROM FRANCE TO NORTH SEA.  
INVESTIGATING REPORTS OF TROOP MOVEMENTS.

BY EYEWITNESS - WITH THE R.A.F. IN FRANCE.

For the first time, four British 'planes have carried out daylight reconnaissance flights the whole way along the German Frontier from France to the North Sea.

The 'planes went to investigate the latest reports received by headquarters from across the border. Recent rumours have concerned the evacuation of important cities. Big troop movements near Aix la Chapelle, significant concentrations of aircraft, intensive building of fortifications near the Luxemburg frontier, and many other interesting developments.

The results of these British reconnaissance flights are now being studied by the experts, and it is understood that a series of photographs taken by two of the 'planes are expected to be of the utmost value.

The machines went in pairs from one of the Secret British aerodromes "somewhere behind the Maginot Line".

The first two ran into bad weather and flew for much of the time at about 6,000 feet.

Passing the southernmost top of Luxemburg, where French Artillery were pounding the fringes of the Siegfried Line below them, they continued to make their observations, dodging from one gap in the clouds to the next.

At Coblenz, German anti-aircraft gunners heard them and opened fire, presumably judging the range and direction by the sound.

The shells screamed up through the clouds and burst all around them, but the 'planes were not hit, and held straight on along their course.

Hurriedly the German gunners telephoned ahead to other batteries, and when the British 'planes reached Sieburg there was another barrage of anti-aircraft fire awaiting them. This too, however, they passed through unscathed and held on along the Belgian border over Aix la Chapelle.

Soon they saw the Rhine turn west and disappear into Holland, and then the weather made it impossible to see any more.

They flew on to the North Sea coast of Germany. Then carefully avoiding Holland, went safely home to the landing field in England where they were expected.

The other pair of 'planes took off before dawn and were already well over Germany when the sun rose above the hills to the east of the Rhine.

They were favoured by better weather, and were able to take the photographs they were sent out to get.



Issued Through News Division.

9/10/39. -

No. 13.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE AND PENSIONS.

Here is some official advice about national health insurance and widows', orphans' and old age pensions in war-time.

NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE.

If you are insured and need medical attention you should apply to your insurance doctor. He may, of course, have been called up for national service but, if so, arrangements will have been made for the treatment of his patients so long as he is away. You can find out what these arrangements are by applying at the doctor's surgery or by writing to your Insurance Committee, whose address is on your medical card.

If you have left home, you will be able to get medical attention from an insurance doctor in your new area. Send home for your medical card if you have gone away without it. If for any reason you cannot get hold of your medical card, tell the doctor that you are an insured person and, if possible, show him your contribution or record card.

Approved Societies are carrying on with the work of paying cash health insurance benefits, but take care, if you change your address, to let your Approved Society have your new address as quickly as possible. If you need sickness, disablement or maternity benefit, write to your Approved Society, or go to their local agent.

PENSIONS.

Steps have been taken to see that there is no interruption in the regular weekly payment at Post Offices of pensions and allowances paid by means of order books. If you have not moved away from your home town or village, go to your usual Post Office: but if you do move away, be sure you take your order book with you, for otherwise you must not expect to be able to obtain further payment except after considerable delay. With your book in your possession you will be able to cash the orders in it on the proper dates at the nearest Post Office in your new area.

If you are over the age of 70 and get your old age pension order book from a local Pension Officer, your pension orders can be cashed at a Post Office in a new area within Great Britain. When you first cash an order after removal you should fill up the post card provided at the Post Office to notify your former Pension Officer of your change of address. A further card should be sent after any subsequent change of address. In case of difficulty you should get into touch with the local Pension Officer in the new area, whose address can be got from the Post Office.



Issued through News Division.

9/10/39

No. 14.

BOARD OF TRADE ANNOUNCEMENT.

PROHIBITION OF EXPORTS.

The Board of Trade have issued two Open General Licences under the Export of Goods (Prohibition) (No.2) Order, 1939. The effect of the first is that motor-cycles and tricars, motor-cars other than commercial vehicles and ambulances, and chassis and engines for such motor-cars may be exported to any destination as from Monday, 9th October, without an export licence. The effect of the second is that (1) no export licence is required as from Wednesday, 11th October, for the export to any destination of domestic refrigerators, and certain kinds of paper, and (2) no export licence is required as from Wednesday, 11th October, for the export of plumbago crucibles and rubber tyres of a diameter less than six inches, and tubes therefor, to France and French Colonies and Protectorates or to any destination outside other foreign countries in Europe or on the Mediterranean or Black Sea.



Issued through News Division.

9/10/39.      -      No. 15.

E M P I R E      A N N O U N C E M E N T.

HITLER:      MORE DOMINION COMMENT.

The Canadian Press continues to ridicule Hitler's peace speech. Newspapers of all politics are at one in pointing out the futility of sitting round a conference table with Nazi statesmen. Among the most effective rejoinders to the "Peace Offensive" is that made by the "Toronto Globe and Mail". Without a word of comment, that newspaper lists the previous occasions on which Hitler has summoned the Reichstag to hear his pronouncements, and readers are left to make their own estimate of the value of the Fuehrer's latest proposals.

The New Zealand Press is no more friendly. The "Dominion", the chief Wellington newspaper, insists that the world must be free of the constant threats and terrorism which the Nazis have inflicted on civilization, and declares: "For this lasting and righteous peace, this Dominion, in common with the rest of the Empire and her Allies, will fight on to the end".

The "New Zealand Herald", of Auckland, says that the ranting rhetoric of Hitler "has no longer any power to persuade or to alarm," and the "Press" of Christchurch, while asserting that there is no basis for negotiations, urges that the Allied Governments to state why they reject the terms of Hitler, who must not be allowed to pose as a peacemaker.

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Issued through News Division

9/10/39

No. 16

FOREIGN AFFAIRS ANNOUNCEMENT

Information has been received through the United States Embassy in London that orders have been given by the German authorities for the release from prison and the transfer to their hotels of the British Consular employees detained at Hamburg.

The persons in question are Mr. L.G. Bayliss, British Vice-Consul at Hamburg, Miss Mary Joss, an employee of the British Consulate-General at Hamburg, and Mr. Croxen, a member of the staff of the British Consulate at Munich. These three officials are being detained in Germany pending the completion of arrangements for the reciprocal exchange of Consular Officers.

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Issued through News Division.  
9/10/39. - No.17.

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY ANNOUNCEMENT.

THOSE BOOT REPAIRS.

NO PRICE INCREASE AUTHORISED.

The Ministry of Supply has not given sanction to any body to increase charges for boot repairs.

The notice issued by the Boot Trades Federation was issued under a misapprehension which is being corrected by the Federation.



Issued through the News Division.

9/10/39. No. 18.  
(additional matter)

MR. AUGUST ZALESKI.

The Foreign Minister of Poland Mr. August Zaleski is arriving in London from Paris on Wednesday. He will visit Lord Halifax at the Foreign Office in the afternoon and will also be received by the Prime Minister.

The Polish Ambassador is giving a Dinner in the evening, at which Lord Halifax and other members of His Majesty's Government and the leaders of the Opposition will be present. On Thursday morning Mr. August Zaleski will continue his talks at the Foreign Office and then will attend an official luncheon given in his honour by His Majesty's Government, with Lord Halifax as the host. In the afternoon Mr. Zaleski will be entertained at tea at the House of Commons by a group of M.P's. from all three parties. Mr. Zaleski will be leaving on Friday morning.



Issued through News Division.

9/10/39.

No.....18.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

The following particulars concerning M. August Zaleski, the new Polish Foreign Minister, are issued for information:-

August Zaleski, Foreign Minister in the cabinet of General Sikorski, was born in Warsaw in 1883, is son of a Polish squire. He was educated in Poland and then at the London School of Economics. During the world war Mr. Zaleski was active for the Polish cause in France and England. He was editor of the "Polish Review" in London between the years of 1917 and 1918, and wrote the "Landmarks of Polish History", published in London in 1917.

In 1918, when Poland obtained her independence Mr. Zaleski was appointed Polish Minister to Switzerland and then to Greece. In 1921 he was Director of the Political Department at the Warsaw Foreign Office, and from 1921 to 1926 Minister in Rome. In 1926 he became Foreign Minister and held that post until 1932, when he was succeeded by Col. Beck. He was then appointed senator and was chairman of the largest private bank "The Commercial Bank" in Poland until 1939, when he took up again his duties as Foreign Minister.

A graduate of London University, Mr. Zaleski knows England well and has many English friends. He was President of the Anglo-Polish Society in Warsaw in recent years, after his temporary withdrawal from active political life, and always supported a policy of the closest collaboration with the western powers.



Issued through News Division.

9/10/39.

No. 19.

FLASH

Admiralty Announcement.

Yesterday, Sunday, afternoon a German Naval Squadron was reported by British Patrol craft to the South Westward of Norway.

Our forces endeavoured to engage it; but darkness enabled the enemy to escape. During today repeated actions have taken place in the North Eastern areas of the North Sea between German bombing aircraft and British cruisers and destroyers. No British ship has been damaged. Casualties to the enemy are not known.

Read out 8.24. p.m.



Issued through News Division.  
- 9/10/39. No. 20.

FRENCH OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE(EVENING)-

There has been very great activity by enemy patrols between the Moselle and the Saar. The artillery of both sides has been active between the Moselle and the Rhine.

On the sea one of our patrol vessels has successfully attacked an enemy submarine.



21

NOT FOR PUBLICATION.

THE FOLLOWING NOTICE IS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION:-

NEWS DIVISION ARRANGEMENTS.

As from Monday, 9th October, the existing staff of the News Division will continue to provide the centralised machinery for issuing all news and communiques furnished to them by the representatives of Service and other Government Departments accommodated in Senate House.

There will be a 24-hour service as hitherto.

All news and communiques will be issued immediately to the Press, B.B.C., B.O.W., etc. as received.

The issue of morning and evening bulletins at specified times will be discontinued.

The formula "Issued through the Ministry of Information" will cease to be used.

Each announcement issued to the Press will for the time being bear in the top right hand corner the words "Issued through News Division" (with date and serial number). Examples:-

Issued through News Division

10/10/39

No. 43.

"The Admiralty (or department concerned) announces

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or

ADMIRALTY ANNOUNCEMENT

or

FROM THE ADMIRALTY

Press Liaison Officers will continue to assist Press inquiries generally, and to arrange, when requested, for visiting newspaper men to be put in touch with representatives of the Government Departments housed here.

(Signed) TOM CLARKE

(Deputy Director,  
News Division).