VOICE OF THE PRESS

CARELESS TALK

Some people have been inclined to scoff at posters displayed at various points in Canada warning against careless talk of such things as ship departures. It seems at times that the caution voiced is rather exaggerated, that casual words dropped among friends could not possibly do harm.

The story told by a British seaman in New York, however, is almost an exact duplication of the picture story told on some of these wall cards. It is the tale of a sailor revealing to a girl friend the time of departure of his ship, and of the news traveling from mouth to mouth until it was relayed by means of a signal to a lurking submarine, and the vessel was sunk with heavy loss of life. It is a story that should make everyone think. It is a deadly example of just how dangerous it is to drop even a casual word. Careless talk does cost lives.

—Windsor Star

"SMACK JAPS"

A boatswain's mate rushed into a Chinese laundry in New York and asked for his bundle in a hurry, because he had to report for duty at noon. He didn't have a ticket but Geyne Sun didn't throw at him the old chestnut: "No tickee, no laundie." Instead he pushed the sailor's dollar bill back to him and gave the fellow his laundry, saying: "No monie. Smack Japs." And no doubt that Mate will smack 'em if he gets half a chance.

—Peterborough Examiner

ANTIMACASSAR

Macassar, a section of Celebes which borders the Strait of Macassar, where a Japanese convoy has been battered was famous in the eighteenth century as the source of Macassar oil, used as a hair oil. The oil was so popular that cloth covers, known as antimacassars, came into use to protect the backs of chairs from hair on which it had been employed.

—Sault Ste. Marie Star

ANOTHER WAR PERIL

Another of the unlisted perils of war—the danger that people may become cross-eyed trying to watch both the Atlantic and the Pacific at the same time.

—Stratford Beacon-Herald

THE OLD DAYS

Men's flashy socks are another thing that is out for the duration. However, these are a minor vanity of the days when Elmer, of Pippin Centre, used to drive along Main street with one foot outside the buggy box—and stunned 'em.

—Hamilton Spectator

AND STARTED BACK

Hitler went into Russia to find room to turn around in. Then he turned around.

—Brandon Sun

Russia Too Busy To Attack Japan

Naturally, it would be a great relief to our forces in the Far East if the heart of Japan were bombarded, as it easily could be, from the neighborhood of Vladivostok. But the war has to be considered in regard to all its operations on all fronts. There is no greater service that Russia could render at this juncture than to engage the massive land armies of Hitler with all her resources, and to continue to inflict the heavy blows she is now dealing. It is true, she has an equipped and self-dependent army in Far Eastern Siberia, and is capable of dealing with any attack that Japan might make. But it is obvious that the opening of a new front would be a distraction from her supreme effort in the west.

It is what Hitler would desire, and, therefore, obviously what we should not desire.

Supply of Rubber On Alkali Deserts

On the alkali deserts of six western states there are 500,000,000 pounds of natural rubber—enough to supply the United States for five months—ready for immediate harvesting, University of California scientists informed the government.

This rubber, although not quite as good as the prime product from the East Indies, is entirely satisfactory, the experts reported. Most important, they said, is that it is already on hand and can be collected and made into tires, tubes and other finished products without undue effort.

It exists in the rabbit brush, a large perennial shrub which covers vast stretches of the West's great open spaces. California, Nevada and Colorado have most of it but there are large tracts also in New Mexico, Utah, Idaho and perhaps other states.

The Citizen's Army

By Alan Maurice Irwin — INDIVIDUAL

A Weekly Column About This and That in The Canadian Army

Last week the only reference made in this column to Army slang had a slight note of acidity. This week as Ed. Wynn used to say "The programme is going to be different." For once the resurrection of Army slang from the dim mists of a peaceful past ties up very directly with a piece of news full of interest for the members of the Individual Citizen's Army and their army of relatives and friends.

The term is "Square-pushing" and the news the promised issue of a "walking out dress" to all Canadian "other ranks." Perhaps I should clarify "other ranks." This term means all soldiers other than commissioned officers. It saves paper, which is a commendable war time economy, and it saves breath, a wise thing to do at any time. Were this term not available, it would be necessary to speak of "officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and men." So the two-word substitution is an economy.

The relationship between the story of the new uniform and the slang term "Square-pushing" is very close. In the piping times of peace — and I admit there are those who never associate bagpipes with peace—the soldier was issued with two uniforms, one in which to train and fight, and the other, frequently variations of scarlet and blue or the dark green of rifle regiments, for walking out after the day's training was over. This "walking out" uniform in barracks was known as the "square-pushing" uniform, and although today's young soldier is perhaps not familiar with "square-pushing rig" as a colloquial definition the term does not apply to him because by the middle of March he will be the proud possessor of—to revert to the piping times of peace again—what we used to call a "best suit."

This new uniform, a picture of which appeared in this paper two or three weeks ago, consists of a smartly cut jacket and slacks, black low shoes of a lighter weight than the issued "ammunition boots" worn with battle dress, collars and tie and raincoat. In general appearance, although it is cut of the same weight of serge as were our jackets in the last war, it very closely resembles the jacket worn by officers even to the brass-buckled cloth belt. The breast pockets have the regulation Army pleat in them and there are patch pockets in the sides. This uniform, with which the "off parade" soldier is permitted to carry a "swagger stick" therefore becomes the modern equivalent of a square-pushing uniform.

With the aid of a copy of "Songs and slang of the British soldier—1914-1918" — which is the personal property of a member of the staff of the Historical Section of the Army in Ottawa, I have been able to locate several definitions of "square-pushing." The term is first recorded in the 1880's as being current in garrison artillery units and its orgiin is thought to be derived from the fact that soldiers were frequently seen escorting nursemaids as they pushed their perambulators around the "squares," then a frequent feature of town-planting. Later the term "square-pushing," according to the authority, was applied to a soldier going out in the evening "to court a particular girl or perhaps to find one." In 1914-18 this piece of Army slang was revived again to apply particularly to boots and, since members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force were amongst the best paid allied soldiers, it is quite likely that they were the principal purchasers of civilian boots to wear with their uniforms when off parade and attending social events, i.e., "square-pushing."

All of this becomes very apt once again as the new issue of "walking out dress" includes — something unheard of prior to A.D. 1941 — to use the Ordnance term, "shoes black, low, leather, pairs one."

75 Nazi Soldiers Meet 6 Britishers

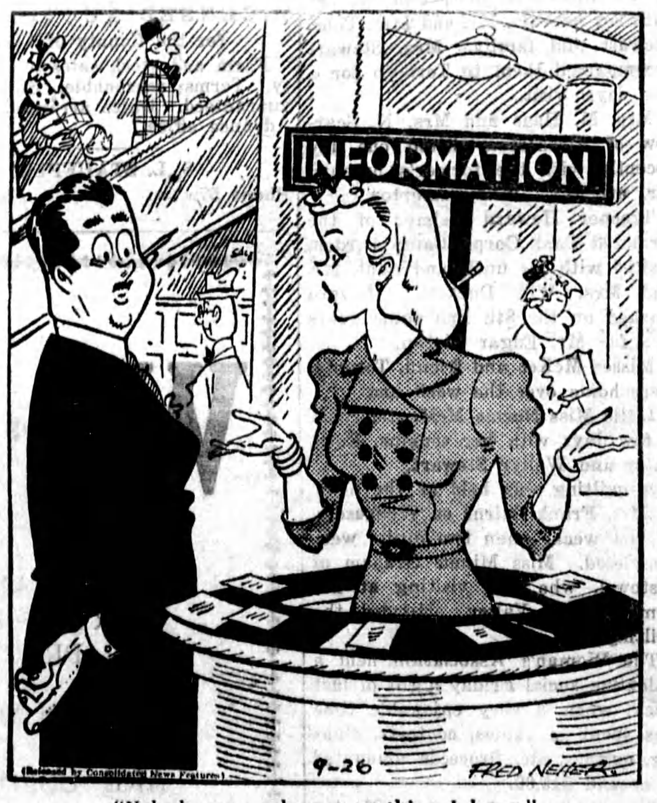
There's not much anyone can do with the odds standing at 75 to six, so the Britishers just sat back and smoked. Londoners got the story from a New Zealand soldier broadcasting to the British Isles.

During the fighting back and forth across the scorching sands of Libya, six British trucks with their crews were returning to their column when they ran smack into 75 German trucks going in the opposite direction.

The Germans pulled to the side of the road and stopped. The British did likewise. And because there didn't seem to be anything else to do about it, all lit up cigarettes.

For a few seconds all was quiet, then the firing started and the Britons ran the gauntlet past the German trucks and rejoined their unit safely.

LIFE'S LIKE THAT — By Fred Neher



"Nobody ever asks me anything I know."

London Papers Still Advertising

Every Advertisement Direct Testimony To Faith In The Future

London, where food and clothing are rationed and the shoppers are "less than 20 minutes" from the enemy, is still carrying on its newspaper advertising.

Lord & Thomas, New York advertising firm, recently issued a study prepared by its London branch on British business and advertising in the third year of war, said:

"Woven deep into the ways of democracy is advertising: A bridge between the freedom of pepole to buy and the freedom of people to sell. No Nazi bombing has been able to destroy that bridge in Britain.

"Every advertisement appearing there today is a flag of defiance; is direct testimony to someone's faith in the future; is someone's toast to victory."

Papers Cut Down

Since the Nazi invasion of Scandinavia whence Britain obtained the bulk of its paper pulp, British newspapers have been reduced to four-page issues and no large posters are available.

Because of this the demand for advertising space in Britain far exceeds the supply but items advertised there include: Soap, radios, dog food, chocolate, shoes, tooth paste, cider, vaseline, beer, fur coats, clothing.

The British Government is the largest single advertiser in the newspapers, placing 17 per cent of all advertisements published and even on such a major news announcement as the clothes rationing order, used paid advertising space.

Lord and Thomas said government advertising has had this effect:—

"The public is developing stronger than ever habits of studying advertising columns for instructions and advice . . . of utmost importance in their lives. The effect of this, on the future of advertising, is incalculable."

The firm concluded from its study prepared as the United States plunged into the war.

"Drastic changes in our life and business are surely ahead of us. But this (study) will serve its purpose if it shows one thing. That not war — only defeat — destroys the ways of democracy, the spirit, humor and enterprise of a free people."

British advertising, Lord and Thomas said, protects the advertisers' investment in trade names, keeps contact with the changing habits of the public and the new markets growing up in the war, and "fulfills its responsibility of maintaining the freedom of the press by non-government support" besides upholding public morale.

The firm said one of the strongest supports of British morale has been the "stubborn" resistance of the retail disruptions while "buying and selling keep making the best of it."

Since Jan. 1, 1942, no new shops may open a new retail business. Any opened since Oct. 28, 1941, had to be granted a government license after proving their services were needed.

Norway Invasion Costly To Germans

In the final reckoning it will be revealed that Norway made a sizable contribution to the Allied cause in the form of deaths and damages inflicted on the German fighting forces when Germany invaded Norway and during the 62 days of open warfare that followed. The conquest cost the Germans between 60 and 70 thousand lives (some estimates run as high as 100,000); it cost Germany one-third of her navy; it cost Germany vast amounts of war materials; it cost Germany her first defeat on land when the city of Narvik was recaptured by Norwegian and British forces. Perhaps most important of all, it cost Germany valuable time—62 days of fighting for what was carefully planned as an "overnight job." That delay was probably in part responsible for the postponement of the invasion of England.

MONEY can't BUY BETTER VALUE 10¢

THE WAR - WEEK — Commentary on Current Events

United Nations Stand With Backs To Wall In Far Eastern Battle

One bright spot in a far from cheerful picture of the Battle of the Pacific is the news that a United States naval force has arrived in New Zealand and that other reinforcements have landed at stations along the 4,000 mile route from Pearl Harbour. This is an important victory. It means that the supply line from America to its terminus in New Zealand is open for reinforcements and for the vital weapons of war.

In two months of war in the Far East the enemy, striking with superior man, naval and air power, has pressed the initial advantage of surprise into far reaching gains. The lot of the United Nations has been one of retreat until now they stand at bay in their key defense positions. The call has gone out from headquarters to hold at all costs for reinforcements are on the way.

How long can they "hold that line?" The allied task is complicated by the extended lines of the Japanese attacks, stretching over nearly 5,000 miles of land and water. They have opened up so many danger points that Allied forces are unable to concentrate for the proper defense of any one. With Japan's shorter lines of communications, the enemy has been able to throw superior forces against every point attached.

Japanese Strategy

The strategy of Japan's vast expansionist programme is now clear. For years systematic planning, spying and waiting have been part of this stupendous scheme of conquest. The little yellow men have charted every channel and shoal from the Strait of Malacca to the reefs of Australia and on into the mid Pacific. They have surveyed every Allied land defense and know their weaknesses. They have mapped out jungle trails and spotted suitable ground for air bases. Thus the Japanese knew where to attack and how and, as in the case of Pearl Harbor, when.

With the fall of Singapore imminent, the Allies have been forced to move their Far Eastern fleets to Dutch East Indies bases. An all-out desperate attempt must be made to hold Java and Sumatra, already feeling the hard blows of the Japanese hordes. They are key points in the defensive system of the United Nations, forming a rampart between the Indian Ocean and the China Sea.

Burma is in grave danger. The Burma Road, the vital life-line of supplies from the United Nations' arsenal to China is threatened. The loss of Burma would be a deadly blow to China.

Watching Hitler

Should Singapore fall and the Japanese become entrenched on the East Indies and Java, they would be masters for the time being of the entire Southwest Pacific with the exception of Australia. Australia would then become the Allied stronghold and the point from which the United Nations would have to fight the long way back. The island continent is preparing to meet the growing threat of a direct invasion.

Were Japan alone to be dealt with, the job would be finished quickly. But Britain and the United States have to disperse their forces and materials over the face of the earth. Americans are fighting on the land, sea and air in the Far East. An American expeditionary force has landed in Northern Ireland. American supplies are going to Britain, Russia, Africa and the Middle East.

Neither power intends to let Russia down and permit Hitler to come back next summer and nullify the winter victory which the Russians are consolidating. The demands of the Far East and Australia cannot be met at the cost of giving aid and comfort to Hitler in that fashion.

Churchill's Forecast

Britain also cannot relax for a minute in Africa. Things momentarily are going poorly in Libya, showing the need for considerable reinforcements. Defeat there would expose the Suez Canal and the oil fields of Irak, Iran and the Caucasus to Axis attack.

Likewise, Britain and the United States cannot weaken their strength in the Atlantic to bolster their naval forces in the Pacific and Mediterranean. American supplies must be kept flowing across the Atlantic at all costs and this requires heavy convoys. The Germans already have carried their submarine warfare to these shores and generally are expected to produce a new burst of underseas fury in the spring.

Not long ago Mr. Churchill warned that "Japanese naval supremacy will last long enough for Japan to inflict many heavy and painful losses on the United Nations and their establishments in the Far East," and added "I believe we shall presently regain naval command in the Pacific and begin to establish effective superiority in the air. Later on—in 1943—we should be able to set about our task in the Pacific in good style."

New Command

Vice-Admiral, C. E. L. Helfrich of the Royal Netherlands Navy has succeeded Admiral Thomas C. Hart as commander of the United Nations, sea forces in the East Indies. Ill-health forced the American commander to retire.

tI is considered that Helfrich, in the defense of his homeland, will follow a policy of "no retreats", commensuate with conserving his forces for the most effective blows against the invaders.

The sea areas over which the invaders must move to press home their conquest are scalloped with tiny bays and inlets from which the presumably inferior defending forces may dash out to harry their convoys and wage hit-and-run war on their fighting units.

Admiral Helfrich was described by an American naval spokesman as a master in those tactics.

THREE MEN

Franklin D. Roosevelt was 1941 Man of the Year, but Adolf Hitler remains the World's No. 1 poisonality . . . Your description of Churchill as: "wholly British and half American" is aptly put to say the least. If ever any man rated the title of "Man-and-a-half" it's the British prime minister.

—Two Letters in Time Magazine

REG'LAR FELLERS—Chance of a Lifetime — By GENE BYRNES