

SAFE ARRIVAL

First Echelon in Egypt

The safe arrival in Egypt of the first echelon of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force was announced on Monday night by the Deputy-Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser. The British Navy, he said, had again demonstrated its protective strength in safely conveying troops from the outposts of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The soldiers travelled in ships of the best class, and the naval escort was not only adequate but most imposing. The success of the organization associated with the embarkation of the troops in New Zealand was also mentioned by Mr. Fraser, who took the opportunity to define the Government's attitude on the general question of publicity as it affects the war.

"On behalf of the Prime Minister and the Government, it gives me great pleasure to announce that the First Echelon of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force has disembarked safely in Egypt," said Mr. Fraser. "The British Navy has again demonstrated its protective strength in safely conveying troops from the outposts of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It has done so in this instance just as efficiently as it guarded the transportation of the British Expeditionary Force across the English Channel to France.

"It is a great source of gratification and thankfulness to us all that our men have arrived safely, and, we are informed in good health and excellent spirits. They have gone overseas with the high purpose of serving personally in the struggle for democracy and civilization.

Stand For Freedom.

"They have literally, along with so many brave men from the United Kingdom and the other British Dominions, and in co-operation with our gallant French Allies, entered the lists against forces which if triumphant would overthrow everything that the people of New Zealand hold dear in our political, social, economic, moral and spiritual life, and which would reduce our country to the position of a vassal State, and our people to a condition of hopeless servitude.

"These gallant pioneers who have answered the call—a call inseparable from our nationhood, excited admiration when they marched through our cities on the eve of departure. They are typical New Zealanders—mostly by birth, some by adoption—and they have decided to stand shoulder to shoulder with the fighting men of every nation which is prepared to take a stand for international freedom because they hate bondage.

"The people of the Dominion will be glad to know that our soldiers travelled in ships of the best class. Having had the opportunity of inspecting them personally along with the Minister of Defence, I can vouch for that fact. Every possible provision was made for their comfort and well-being and they were generally provided for in a manner fit for men who are ready to perform the most immediate and by far the most important service possible in this nation's behalf. The naval escort was not only adequate but was most imposing.

Expeditious Dispatch.

"So many people were responsible for the organization necessary so successfully to complete the embarkation of the New Zealand soldiers that I could not even attempt to thank them individually. The community effort involved the service of many, including all those engaged in transport, and the workers on the waterfront and elsewhere. In this connexion there were some fine performances. The expeditious dispatch of a transport from Lyttelton necessitating all night work on the part of many men was an outstanding example. Comforts in great variety and in substantial quantity were placed on all ships by the National Patriotic Fund Board, and the generous-hearted citizens who made these gifts possible deserve our thanks. On behalf of the Government and the people of New Zealand I most sincerely thank all who assisted.

"This is a fitting opportunity to say a word on the subject of publicity in New Zealand as it affects the war, and

specially our own war effort. Everybody encounters rumours, sometimes of a most disturbing character, but generally merely mischievous. It is unfortunate that there appears to be no means of preventing the spread of these, but I earnestly counsel everyone to cultivate a habit of mind which will discourage their circulation.

Attitude To Publicity.

"The Director of Publicity has suggested that I should, in a few words, make plain the Government's attitude on the general question of publicity. It is not only our desire, but our set purpose, to give to the people of the Dominion the maximum of information consistent with the fullest regard for the safety of our troops and ships. For instance, every informed person in the community knew that troops had departed overseas, but it was our responsibility to prevent the publication of anything in any form which would be calculated to help the enemy to locate their position or to estimate the strength of the ships of war which formed part of the convoy. It is our responsibility to protect our men in every possible way, and, therefore, we adopt every conceivable precaution, and the people of our country must remember that we are at grips with an enemy in Nazi Germany which is as crafty in warfare as it is cruel and unscrupulous in the pursuit of its international ambition.

"The task ahead is as stupendous as it is necessary," said Mr. Fraser. "That the people of New Zealand will prove equal to it I have no doubt. Neither have I any misgivings regarding their determination to make any necessary sacrifice to secure the triumph of that international righteousness on which only lasting and honourable peace can be based."

IN MIDDLE EAST

Troops Proceeding To Positions

It was announced in a Daventry broadcast last night that the Australian Imperial Force and the New Zealand Expeditionary Force had begun to arrive in the Middle East, and were proceeding to their positions.

A War Office communique stated that the health of the troops was excellent, and that they were in high spirit.

On their arrival the A.I.F. and N.Z.E.F. received a message of greeting from the King.

MR. EDEN'S WELCOME

New Zealanders First Ashore

MESSAGE FROM KING

The troops were welcomed by the Secretary of State for the Dominions, Mr. Eden, who flew from England.

The first troops to land were the New Zealanders. They came down the gangway to the strains of "Auld Lang Syne," played by pipers.

The King, in his message, stated: "I know well that the splendid traditions established by the armed forces of New Zealand and Australia will be worthily upheld by you. I send you a warm welcome and best wishes for the future."

Major-General Freyberg's comment on the men under his command was typical: "I will wager any military experience I have that these men will strive their hardest to uphold the reputation of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the last war."—By radio.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY WAR OFFICE

Troops In High Spirits

LONDON, February 12.

The War Office announces that the Australian Imperial Force and the New Zealand Expeditionary Force have begun to arrive in the Middle East, and are proceeding to their specified areas. The Second Australian Imperial Force is under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Blamey, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., and the New Zealand Force is commanded by Major-General B. C. Freyberg, V.C., C.M.G., D.S.O. The health of the troops is excellent, and they are in high spirits.

COMFORT ON TROOP TRANSPORTS

New High Standard Set

ITEMS FROM THE CANTEEN LIST

Rations that would not shame a first-class hotel were loaded on to the transports which carried the First Echelon of the New Zealand Special Force away from Wellington. Among the vegetables were cases of asparagus, celery heads, turnips, beet, sprouts, parsnips, carrots, beans, peas, cabbages and cauliflowers.

Here are a few items from a canteen steward's list: Cigarettes and tobacco in 22 brands, every description and make of cordials, biscuits, chocolates and popular sweets, tinned fish, pastes, meats, tinned fruits and salads, popular toothpastes, brushes for all purposes, razors and blades, assorted soaps, aspirin, sacks of peanuts, walnuts, and hazelnuts, large stocks of health salts, writing requisites and numerous other lines.

The standard of the accommodation set a new level in troop transportation, and the standard of the food and general comforts provided was on the same level.

Fresh fruit was issued daily to the men and the breakfast included kidneys and bacon. Supper comprised tea, coffee, cocoa and assorted sandwiches.

The transport shipping office was established by Army Headquarters to supervise the receiving, storing and loading of all food supplies, ordnance goods, equipment, vehicles, canteen stores, medical supplies, Red Cross and gift goods. The office was under the transport shipping officer and his staff. As with the allied branch, the embarkation office, the positions were in the main filled by returned soldiers and the work was largely voluntary. There was no rest for the transport shipping side; well before the day the transports left and for a good period afterward the staff had to work from morning till morning, the senior non-commissioned officer sleeping on the premises.

The work was heavy with detail and was involved because of the great diversity of the goods, but the problems of shipping and stowage aboard the transports left no time for any man thus engaged to be wearied by his work.

As the embarkation officer and his staff must plan the accommodation of the troops, the transport shipping officer has to discuss with ships' captains

and chief officers the space for the stowage of goods and confer with the ships' officers in-charge and the canteen stewards.

An officer almost unknown to the general public is the gifts' officer. He has to handle and distribute hundreds of packages and parcels on behalf of such organizations as the Red Cross and Order of St. John, the National Patriotic Fund Board, together with many other societies formed for the purpose to help provide comforts for the troops.

These organizations supply everything from equipment, indoor games, pianos and other musical instruments, toilet gear, stationery, soap, fresh fruit, coffee and cocoa, to the matter and the hundred and one other comfort lines. If wives and mothers could have seen the results of the efforts of these organizations to improve the soldiers' lives pleasant, they would have been well pleased.

FORT DORSET NOTES

CAMP ENTERTAINERS

ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY

The Tin Hat Pierrot Troop, under the direction of Mr. L. Edwards, provided light entertainment for the men at Mount Pleasant on Monday night for the men at Mount Pleasant at a concert arranged by the Official Camp Entertainers. Mr. G. Edwards was stage manager, and arranged gold and black satins, which proved an effective background for the performers' costumes of the same colour. The lighting effects and coloured spots (in the capable hands of Mr. Fred Shand) much towards the success of the show.

The performers were Misses Scott, Peggy Pyke, Pearl Scott, Cécile Baume, and Irene O'Connell. Messrs. Stan Porter, Frank Dickson, Chandler, Harison Cook, Ross Williams, and Len Morris. The most popular item was Harison Bay singing of "Widdicombe Fair" assisted by the company, and joined by Shand's weird lighting effects. The girls of the party acquitted themselves well, and the nonsense of Chandler and Ross Williams kept the audience simmering.

During a brief interval Lance-Bombardier G. Aitken played a selection of popular "hits," the "boys" showed their appreciation in no uncertain manner. Gunner Houghton, accompanied by Lance-Bombardier Aitken, the guitar, sang "Popeye" and "Tweet, Tweet."

The second part by the Tin Hat party included Ross Williams singing "Siegfried Line." Jack Williams told the soldiers how he wanted a "voice," and Len Morris demonstrated what a little hypnotism could do. There were other items by Stan Porter and the girls, the entire company bringing the concert to a close with the singing of "Roll Down the Hill," after which supper was served.

FORT DORSET NOTES

The sports meeting arranged by the Recreation Committee was much appreciated by the Battery, and all concerned are to be congratulated for their success.

We trust they will arrange another meeting in the near future.

The results of the various events were as follows:—100yds., Gnr. Sandle; 440yds., Gnr. O. T. Me