9 p.m. dockers' revolt ending today

'BUT WE STOP AT 7'

Express Staff Reporter
BIRKENHEAD, Thursday.

THE Birkenhead dock strike is almost settled. The 1,200 men who complained about having to work on from seven p.m. until nine p.m. are likely to go back tomorrow to replace the Royal Engineers—themselves ex-dockers—who have been doing their job since Wednesday morning.

A definite decision will be made before their normal starting time tomorrow.

Alderman Simon Mahon, area secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, tells them that their grievances are being considered.

Reinstated

Regional Port Director Gibson Jarvie said tonight: "Work in the port should be normal tomorrow morning.

"As it has been agreed on behalf of the dockers that they will go back unconditionally, the Port Labour Superintendent has removed the suspension of the 200 men who were stopped working last Friday."

The suspension of the 200 men because they had refused to work the extra two hours was a sore point with the dockers. They were ready to go back today providing these 200 men could return with them.

But Alderman Simon Mahon told them that Lord Leathers, Minister of War Transport, had said the suspended men would not be allowed to return with the others.

Go back—if

At the first meeting this morning, addressed by Mr. T. Holsgrove and Mr. F. Agnew, respectively chairman and secretary of the Birkenhead branch of their union, the dockers said they would go back to work immediately if they were promised that an agreement governing the extra two hours was reached before Monday.

They also agreed—to show that they were independent and didn't want the extra money—that if they went to work today they would give up their extra two hours' pay to the hospitals.

But these resolutions were dropped when Alderman Mahon told them about the Minister's attitude regarding the suspended men.

This afternoon they decided unanimously not to go back unless they could go in a body.

When Alderman Mahon tells them tomorrow morning that the suspension has been lifted, and they decide to go back, they will probably give their tomorrow night's two-hours' pay to the hospitals, said Mr. Agnew. He feels certain the men will return.

300 men in a ship

DOCKERS' CASINO RAIDED

DEEP in the bowels of a ship in dock the raiding party of police found a complete "gambling casino," said the prosecution in a Liverpool court case yesterday.

Dockers were playing there, guarded by sentries, to the strength of £10 on every throw of the dice.

Nine men were fined £5 each under the Defence Regulations for "being concerned in the organisation for gain of an unlawful gaming party."

The raid, it was said, was made after wives had complained that their men were coming home with every penny of their wages gone.

The dinner-hour schools inside docked ships, said the prosecution, averaged 200 to 300 men. On the day of the raid five crown-and-anchor boards were operating, two men in charge of each.

More than £300 changed hands in the few dinner-hour minutes.

In one session one man lost £42.

Torpedo-bombers hit Libya convoy

CAIRO, Thursday.—An enemy convoy escorted by destroyers and a mixed force of fighters and bombers has been attacked by R.A.F. torpedo-bombers in the Central Mediterranean, said tonight's Middle East communique.

Explosions were seen among the merchant ships. Two Messerschmitt 110's were shot down.

R.A.F. fighters were active over the Libya front lines yesterday. From all operations seven of our aircraft are missing.—Exchange.

April—May—June

STOCKHOLM, Thursday.—The Berlin Press suggests that a German offensive is unlikely to start before the middle of June.—B.U.P.

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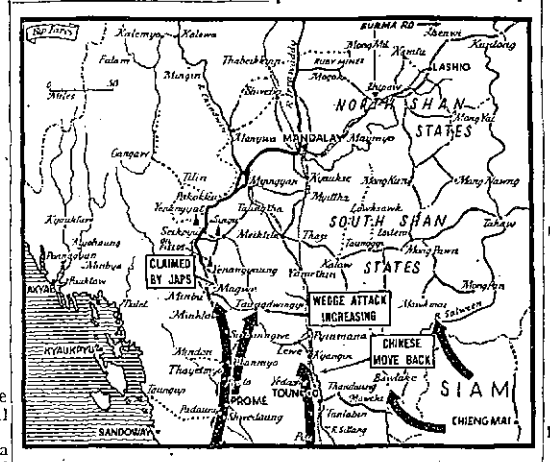
FIVE-COLUMN THRUST AT THE ALLIES



BIG ODDS IN BURMA

FROM PAGE ONE

we are now more or less compelled to abandon the protecting town.

All this is serious news. What is more serious still is the disclosure from Chungking that the R.A.F. spotted 40 transport ships arriving at Rangoon.

Chinese military experts estimate the enemy reinforcements to total five and a half divisions, as large a force as Lieut.-General Shojiro Iida has already under his command in Burma.

It indicates that the Japanese are going all out to cut off China from the outside world, and reach the frontiers of India before the rains come in some five or six weeks' time.

Allied difficulty is that only a trickle of supplies or reinforcements can at present reach General Alexander's army.

The Bay of Bengal, infested with enemy submarines, is unsafe for lightly protected convoys. The enemy continues to claim that he has occupied Akyab, one of the few remaining harbours.

Overland, heavy guns and tanks cannot at present be transported.

It would be foolish to deny that the situation becomes graver every day. Gallant as British and Chinese are fighting, the enemy is making rapid progress.

The oilfields must be written off as a less. Prospects of holding Mandalay are receding.

Alexander's men may have to retreat to the mountains of Upper Burma, there precariously to attempt to hold the enemy away from Assam.

Ruhr raider waded in leaking petrol

Express Air Reporter.

STORIES exemplifying the desperate perils our bombers have to face in raiding Germany were told last night in Air Ministry accounts of attacks on the Ruhr and the Kiel Canal.

Here is what one of this week's Ruhr raiders reported:—

"We had just opened our bomb doors when the searchlights and the flak came right on us.

"The plane was hit along its whole length; the needle of my airspeed indicator flopped back to zero, and several of the other instruments went as well.

"The rear gunner called out that he had been hit, but that he thought he could stick it until we got clear again.

"One of the petrol pressure pipes was gashed, and petrol streamed into the fuselage, running down the cat-walk and pouring out at the back of the machine.

"The radio operator went to the rear turret to see what he could do to the wounded gunner, and, as he walked along, the petrol was well over his ankles.

"The second pilot was trying to stop the flow of the petrol from the leaking pipe with first-aid bandages and wrappings. He could not stop it altogether.

KEPT GOING

"But the old girl kept on going. As we neared the English coast both engines cut; the petrol in the main tanks was finished.

"We had to pump the undercarriage down by hand, and the flaps would not work, but we landed all right without them at an airfield a little way inland.

"We felt we had been quite lucky."

Bombers returning from the raid on Lubeck last month had savage dogfights over the Kiel Canal and Heligoland Bight. Five members of the crews of three machines have been decorated, it is announced.

The D.F.C. goes to Flight-Lieutenant Arthur Humphreys, whose aircraft, in a series of smashing attacks by a fighter, had its rear gunner wounded and two gun-turrets put out of action.

The plane was forced down to 200 feet, and only the teamwork of Humphreys and his radio operator, Sergeant Kenneth Wheeler, who gets the D.F.M., brought it safely home.

On another raid, in March, Flight-Sergeant Thomas Willmott, after destroying one fighter and damaging another, saw one of our planes being attacked by three Me.109s.

He had used all his ammunition, but he made feint attacks on the Germans, who broke away.

JAPS AGREE TO NAME PRISONERS

The Japanese Red Cross at Tokyo agreed yesterday to publish names and news of British civilian internees and prisoners of war in their hands.

Now they will accept individual inquiries made through the usual channels of the Red Cross provided these inquiries reach Tokyo.

The British Red Cross in London has already opened a Far Eastern section through which these messages may be sent.

Only in the case of serious illness will cables be sent through the International Red Cross at Geneva.

All other messages will go by letter, and as communications to Tokyo are most involved and uncertain it is expected to take weeks before an answer can be obtained.

Training school for boy miners

Union's 'youth charter'

Express Industrial Reporter

A proposal that the Government should acquire an unused mine or part of a used one as a training school for boys of 16 and upwards who wish to become miners was made by the Mineworkers' Federation yesterday.

This is part of a youth charter drawn up to attract boys to the coal mines, since numbers in the industry are falling.

At the proposed training school boys would be given three months' intensive training, starting at 7s. a day for boys of 16 and rising 6d. a day every half-year until they are 19½.

To meet Duce

Mussolini will preside over a meeting of the Prefects of Italy called for April 28 at the Palazzo Venezia.—Rome radio.

Spain has snow

ROME, Thursday.—Torrential rain, hail storms and heavy snow are sweeping Spain.—Reuter.

SPORTS SECTION

Pre-Guineas plans for classic hopes

FIRST acceptances for the Guineas had to be made last Tuesday, the day flat racing opened, so naturally (writes THE SCOUT) there are no notable scratchings yet from the New 2,000 on May 12 and New 1,000 the following day.

Owners can make final plans after two Salisbury meetings and another at Newmarket.

Lord Derby will doubtless run both Watling Street and Umbulla in the 2,000, but Mr. Allnatt stands or falls by Ujiji. Lord Rosebery's Hyperides is due to reappear at the next Newmarket meeting where it has been decided to oppose him with Watling Street. I expect Canyonero to tackle the King's Big Game in the Salisbury Stakes (May 2).

Big Game is Beckhampton's only 2,000 colt but Lawson has accepted with four.

Clash between the royal filly Sun Chariot and Ujiji in Salisbury's Southern Stakes tomorrow week over six furlongs will be instructive but will not prove stamina.

Sonibal and Perfect Peace are left in both races for the Guineas, but the failure of Mah Iran may decide Frank Butters to keep Sonibal for the 1,000. Last filly to beat the colts was Sceptre 40 years ago.

Salisbury entries continue to be extensive—274 on May 9. First of nine races there next week will be at 1.30 and the last at 5.30. Pontefract kicks-off at 2.30 and ends at 5.25. There are 192 entries for Pontefract's May 9 fixture, and Stockton has 162 the preceding Saturday.

Weights for two races at Newmarket Spring Meetings have been raised 5lbs. so the heavier and older lockers can still be available.

ACCEPTANCES

2,000 GUINEAS

Run at Newmarket, Tuesday, May 12. 1 mile.

Beckhampton: Bakkerville, Big Game, Brilkan, Canyonero, Cheonie Book, Collaborate, Dust-a-blowing, Fulco, Gold Nib, Heavy Shot, Hero the Hunter, Hyperides, Kolo Mahrah, Nimrio, Perfect Peace, Pendo Sabre, Si Fathin, Soap Bubble, Sonibal, Tribonian, Troop Leader, Ujiji, Umbulla, Watling Street.

1,000 GUINEAS

Run at Newmarket, Wed. May 13. 1 mile.

Afterthought, Blue Rood, Ceylon Rose, Cheerful Anne, Cherry Wood, East Glen, Elevator Cross, Equipoise, Eve, Fair Hour, Fairly Hot, Fenction, Echo, Gleanings, Gloria Mundi, Hesperides, Highway Code, Larch Rose, Light of Day, Little Purston, Mah Iran, Peradventure, Perfect Peace, Sedition, Sky Belle, Sonibal, Star Sapphire, Starry Sky, Sun Chariot, Tazia, Treasure from Heaven, Trouble.

Amateur boxers from the Army and Navy of Free France will refer a National Fire Service team at Cubitt-Town Road Baths, London, tomorrow (2.30).

Liverpool F.C. directors have decided to give Fulham permission to play for Northampton Town in the Football League Cup.

CLUBS EXCHANGE LEADERS

WAR-TIME football continues to provide its peculiarities. Latest example is a new version of the "guest" player, featuring Reading and Crystal Palace.

Neither centre forward McPhee (Reading) nor Blackman (Palace) has been ringing the bell in recent matches.

Maybe a change of surroundings will help. So think the clubs concerned, for centre forwards will be swopped tomorrow. McPhee leads Palace attack against Fulham, and Blackman plays for Reading against Watford.

Fulham hope the change will not prove too effective, for they have an outside chance of becoming Group 4 London Cup semi-finalists. They must win, and Portsmouth lose at Chelsea.

Incidentally, both London semi-finals will be played at Stamford Bridge—Group 3 v Group 4 leaders on April 25 and Group 1 v Group 2 winners on May 2.

Spurs and Charlton, level on points in Group 3, meet at Charlton tomorrow when the home attack will be led by Tadman. Tottenham's choice is held up by injuries.

W. Whittaker (Kingstonian), R.A.F. and England amateur international will be Brentford's centre half at Aldershot.

Inter-Allied Services Soccer Cup semi-final between British Army and Norwegian Forces will be played on the Queen of the South ground, Dumfries, on April 25.

The Gold Coast is alert

Express War Reporter
GORDON YOUNG

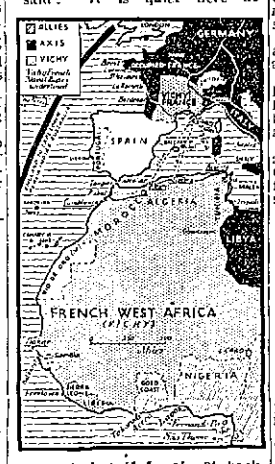
WEST AFRICAN PORT, Thursday.

THEY are getting the stirrup pumps out in West Africa. Laval's return to power is seen as a "yellow warning" to the four colonies of Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Nigeria — all vital links in Britain's communications with the Middle East.

I have just completed a 1,200-mile flight throughout West Africa, and can testify that the whole coast is on the alert, realising that it may become one of this war's new focal points.

Any drastic change in Vichy policy would vitally affect Britain's colonies, surrounded on all inland frontiers by thousands of square miles of Vichy territory.

When I first arrived everyone said: "It is quiet here at present, but if Laval got back into the Government anything might happen."



When I left one town it was pasting up A.R.P. notices and practising with A.A. guns. Its local education officer had been made chief warden.

Other ports, where palm beaches make the coast look like Miami, have a black-out now, and along the air route you see the noses of occasional A.A. guns poking from sandy emplacements.

There are three naval bases—Freetown, Takoradi and Accra. Another good harbour is Lagos, from where a trans-African road runs all the way across Africa to Khartoum and Cairo.

Most important is the development of air routes, especially since the Americans came into this business last summer. Aircraft are now stripped of all luxury seats and upholstery.

Sitting on top of a couple of boxes on the floor of the aircraft, I flew on successive days from one jungle airfield to another, and everywhere I saw a great organisation progressing. One landing field is on a site where only last September there was nothing but steaming jungle.

Jungle cleared

Using native labour, and importing from the United States land-clearance machines used by farmers in the Middle West, experts had the jungle cleared and the runways working by January.

I arrived there in the early morning, and was led to brick-built, mosquito-proof airfield buildings for a breakfast of iced fruit, cereals, bacon and eggs, waffles and maple syrup, and coffee.

For months German submarines have been prowling along the coast. Vichy says that U-boats and supply ships are never allowed to use Dakar. If they don't, they would like to.

British West Africa is over 3,000 miles from Brest. It is only a few hundred miles by sea from Dakar.

GERMAN DIVISION SMASHED
RED ARMY ENCIRCLING TOWN
MOSCOW
Smolensk
Orel
Kursk
Voronezh
Kharkov
Rostov
Taganrog
Sea of Azov
Kerch
Sevastopol
Odessa
Kishinev
Bucharest
Black Sea
Ploesti
Constanta
Varna
Sofia
Salonika
Athens
Crete
Tobruk
Benghazi
Tripoli
Malta
Sicily
Naples
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