

# The World Observer

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20 cents

## Germany launches west offensive

### Daring sweep through Ardennes

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, German troops from two army groups crossed the border to French ally Belgium. In their initial assault, the Wehrmacht employed six armies with over 50 divisions, most of them committed to the key area in Ardennes forest, where two French armies protected the border to the Reich. The German Luftwaffe supported the attacks with waves of bombers and fighters. But the French pilots did surprisingly well against what was claimed to be the world's strongest air force. French interceptors managed to shoot down several wings of the modern Messerschmitt 109 fighter airplane.



**Massed use of German tanks rushed the French**

A German airborne assault turned into a disaster after French aircraft achieved successes against the slow German transports with inadequate protection. The paratroops dropped into undefended territory, but soon French armored formations crashed into them, mowing them down in a desperate fight.



**French fighter pilots took eye for an eye**

But on the main momentum of drive the German force seemed unstoppable. Without assistance of the second wave, the German 1<sup>st</sup> Tank Army cleared the path for following streams of infantry, sporadically supported by dive bombers on important obstacles. The Germans thus smashed through the Ardennes into Sedan, where a spectacular tank battle soon followed.

Further north, in the Liège area, three German armies overran four French corps, and pushed back other French troops from Namur.

### Tank vs. tank

In the first major tank battle in history, three German armored corps faced three French. In their initial impulse, the Germans ran into extremely stiff defense, proving the superior armament and guns of their French counterparts, and lost several hundred tanks without any meaningful success. But after a day of pause, the relations turned around. Over the intact bridges of the Meuse came division after division of German motorized and horse-drawn infantry. More than six corps assembled for the final fight for the key point to operational success. The French could only muster one motorized corps. Taking advantage of their mobility, the German armored formations evaded the French tanks, pushed through the lines with bold determination.



**French tanks more than matched German foes**

## British counterattack

The British Expeditionary Force launched a counterattack on the German supply lines after their breakthrough in Ardennes Forest and Liège. In a hasty drive through the well-paved region of Brussels, they hit the flank of a German corps defending Liège. Despite the fact that the British had no air support at all, they slowly drove away the Germans from the area. German planes of older models could not effectively hinder the British advance through the forest area. By the end of the month, the British had recaptured the area, but were still facing a narrow but well-defended German flank defense.



British infantry at the edge of a forest

## Situation unclear

After the German breakthrough in Sedan, armored and infantry formations suddenly spread in various directions, a spearhead under General Erwin Rommel reached Le Havre on 28<sup>th</sup> of May. The country is in disarray, panicked civilians crowd the streets. Where German troops show up, the French exhibit an almost hysterical medley fear. It must be said though that nothing could be observed of expected or claimed atrocities. Combatants of all warring parties adhered to the Geneva convention.



German motorcycle troops reach Lille, France

## British counterstrike at Cyrenaica

Canadian troops under command of General Sir Archibald Percival Wavell put to flight the Italian army that dared to step before the gates of Alexandria, Egypt. The swift commonwealth troops outmaneuvered the Italians. Air dominance gave the edge to the valorous Canadians. After their thrust to the Egypt border, 50,000 Italian prisoners were counted.



Remnants of the Italian army in Egypt

## Coup D'Etat

Yugoslavia has a new government

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, Yugoslav army officers lead by General Dusan Simovic seized government buildings in Belgrade. Former prime minister Cvetkovic and his administration was arrested. Yugoslav formal head of state, the regent Prince Paul, fled to Skopje where seemingly loyal elements to the old government remain. Simovic has declared the 16-year old minor Peter II king of Yugoslavia, to back his claims of a legitimate government. The general and his Serbian nationalist and pan-slavistic supporters criticized the former leadership for leaning towards the axis Berlin-Rome.

## Russian bombardment of Helsinki

For the third time since the beginning of the Russian-Scandinavian conflict, Russian armed forces have bombarded civil targets in the republic of Finland. Over 100 Russian heavy bombers reportedly dropped over 800,000 lbs of bombs on the Finnish capital of Helsinki.

## Italy lashes out at British Fleet

In an attempt to take out British sea power in the Mediterranean, several hundred Italian bombers approached the British Fleet that had just a day before left Alexandria for a mission to support British operations in Africa. But the Italians did not reckon with British Hurricane fighters as well as interceptors carried by fleet carrier Furious. Despite heavy losses, the large numbers of aircraft committed led to the sinking of several British ships, among them the battleship Barham and several cruisers of the Royal Navy.



**Barham lethally hit by Italian aerial torpedoes**

## Rumors of Power

### Has Tukhachevsky dethroned Stalin?

Journalists of the free world were denied information and access to most districts of Moscow. Troops of the Siberian 'Front' (Army Group) were dispatched to guard all bridges, road crossings, train stations and official buildings in town. Rumors are that Soviet marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky, commander of Siberian forces, has dismissed Stalin from his post of president of the Soviet Union, and taken over government affairs. Stalin and his loyal company have not been seen for weeks in town.

## Japanese blockade of China

British merchantmen were surprised of being turned away by Japanese war patrols after a 10,000 mile journey from Britain, several miles before the harbor docks of their destination port Hongkong. Ships of other nationalities faced the same on their approach to still existing trade sites with the republic of China. Ships in Hongkong were even prohibited to leave. Several countries have protested before the league of nations of this willful damage to their properties and trade relations. Several officials have demanded the exclusion of Japan from the league of nations only to find out that Japan is not even a member state.

## Turkey closes Bosphorus

Turkish president Ismet Inönü today declared to a stunning world public the closing of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, the shallow strait which connects the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Bulgaria and Romania are thus cut from their western trade partners. Ankara announced that Russian there will be an exception given to Russian ships. The stunned world may now choose to let Russo-Turkish politics dictate the free trade between nations or accept another decline in international trade, liberty and friendship.

## The President speaks

My Fellow Americans, I address you tonight to discuss a few issues that have been raised concerning the policies of this administration and my family. There is a wide debate among political leaders as to how involved America should be in current global conflicts. This debate crosses a wide spectrum from those who feel that America should be actively involved to those, called isolationist, who believe that America should do everything possible to turn our eyes and not do anything that would threaten any US involvement in any global conflict, even if it means losing international trade, diplomatic and economic interests. Clearly, the answer does not lie on either end of that spectrum but somewhere between those two extremes. America has vital diplomatic and economic interests outside of the United States of America that must be protected. At the same time, we must never forget the pain and loss suffered by Americans as a result of the last global intervention in the Great War. Therefore, we must strive to find a way to maintain our interests in a manner that best protects Americans from direct involvement in current global conflicts.

There are some that call themselves isolationists that accuse me of leading America into war. These isolationists, as mentioned earlier, are on one extreme and therefore any recognition and protection of American interests abroad shakes them to their very soul with fear and makes them lash out at ANY idea that would seek to protect those American interests. My fellow Americans, we should not avoid tough decisions because of fear. As a result of the Great War, America has become a world leader and with that title comes certain international obligations that do not allow us to act out of fear.