

B) 8. . Whether or not a distinct diplomatic warning was relayed either from Italy or from France to the Low Countries, a much more definite piece of information fell into the hands of the Belgian Government on Jan. 11th.

This was the capture of important German documents, including photographs of the Albert Canal - one of Belgium's chief strategical assets, - and a complete set of Supreme Command instructions for an invasion, at a blank date, which were being carried by courier from Berlin to German Army headquarters in Cologne, Through the forced landing of the German plane carrying the courier, accidentally on Belgian territory due to loss of direction in fog, on Jan. 11th, these incriminating documents were seized; the German officer vainly attempted to destroy them, and afterwards vainly attempted to kill himself in expiation for their loss. This explanation, detailed by foreign military attaches in Brussels and The Hague, may err in minor particulars, but seems in general to have been the signal to the Belgian and Dutch governments (who are in closest touch with each other) to take promptest precautionary defense measures.

3. Reactions in the Low Countries.

9. The reaction to the discovery of this alleged German plan of invasion, in Belgium are outlined in telegrams and despatches from our Brussels Legation. The reactions in Holland seem mainly to have been repercussions, a day later, to Belgian measures. In Belgium certain measures were taken on Saturday January 13th; in Holland parallel action followed on Sunday the 14th. On Sunday morning a special Cabinet meeting was held at The Hague, and while it was still in session, instructions were issued cancelling new army leaves except in certain business classes. The official communiqué issued at noon by radio read: