

Kovachitch, the Croat Director of Propaganda, alluded to partisan bands still operating in Slavonia and Srem and in Lika.

The Germans are evidently most anxious to control Croatia with Croats under their own command. In May they put out appeals for reserve officers and n.c.o.s. and others to join the Croat Waffen-S.S., promising to pay them, assure their food, support their families and guarantee the salaries and pensions due to them from the Croatian State.

The food situation in Croatia remains bad. A trade delegation has gone to Bucharest in the hope of getting large consignments of food.

Various reports indicate that the partisans' activities in Slovenia have so rallied the Slovene population to the Italians that conditions in Italian-occupied Slovenia are quiet; that the Serb forces collaborating with the Italians along the coast are divisible into Gjayitch's chetniks in Lika, Drenovitch's in North Dalmatia, the late Birchani's in Southern Dalmatia, and the Montenegrin "nationalist" chetniks, under Bayo Stanishitch and Djukanovitch, in Eastern Hercegovina and Montenegro; that the last-named are taking a prominent part in the present Axis drive against the partisans; that a Communist pamphlet circulated by the partisans levels the same accusations against the Croat Peasant Party as against Mihaylovitch, *i.e.*, of collaborating with the enemy and of "conspiring" to restore pre-1941 Yugoslavia; and that the Croat Peasant Party leaders would be glad to come to an agreement with Mihaylovitch, if spheres of control, divided by a line somewhat west of the Drina, could be arranged, without prejudice to the future political settlement and to questions of a Yugoslav or of a Danubian Union.

A member of the Bulgarian Agrarian Party, Kozuharoff, has approached the Yugoslav Military Intelligence representative in Istanbul, declaring that his party is strongly pro-Yugoslav and hopes for a Yugoslav-Bulgarian union. He was requested to ask Gitsheff to indicate his views on the future of the Balkans, and to do everything possible to ensure the good treatment of the population in Bulgarian-occupied Serbia.

Dr. Shubashitch, the Ban of Croatia, before returning to the United States, addressed a memorandum to King Peter stating that the divided condition of the Yugoslav Government in London constituted a crisis of the State. On the one side were the Slovenes, Croats, Serbs of former Austria-Hungary and the democratic group of Serbia, who all favoured a genuine Yugoslav policy based on the co-operation of the three peoples. On the other, were those whose outlook was purely Serbian, and who monopolised all the positions of power. Only a clearly defined Yugoslav policy could save Yugoslavia. (Note: Dr. Shubashitch, though a Croat, fought in the Serbian army in the last war and was a personal friend of King Alexander. His Yugoslavism is above suspicion.)

The Bulgarian press and such pronouncements as came from public men (it is true that there were few such) entirely failed to echo the note of caution now audible in the Hungarian press. On the contrary, there was a crescendo of abuse of bolshevism and Anglo-Saxons, and of adulation of Hitler. Against this, there was continued evidence of serious unrest among the population. There were conflicts with the police, in connexion with deportations, and more assassinations, effected or attempted: a Deputy, a police official and other persons lost their lives. The incidents were always attributed to Communists, usually alleged to be Jews; but there were some indications that the Agrarians also were involved in the resistance. The Sofia police claim to have established that two of the terrorists shot in the attempt on the life of a radio expert (reported in last week's *Summary*) were the men responsible for shooting Pantev and Yanev.

On the 3rd June, for the first time, the press reported fighting in Greek Macedonia between Bulgarian troops and Greek guerrillas. Although one foreign report, dated the 27th May, said that the deportation of Jews from Sofia had been postponed, owing to demonstrations by non-Jews, the *D.N.B.* published a later and categorical statement by the Minister of the Interior that the deportation had begun, was proceeding normally and would be completed by the appointed date. The whole Jewish population of Sofia, numbering some 30,000 souls, is affected, except about 3,000 persons, mostly persons married to "Aryans." It was stated that Jews who were Bulgarian citizens would not be deported to Poland, except for misconduct. Those who wished would be allowed to leave Bulgaria, but not to go to Turkey or Palestine. The rest would be left in smaller country places in Bulgaria. A later message reported 27,000 Sofia Jews as already having arrived in Karnobat, Vidin and Plevna, North Bulgaria. Here they will be lodged in houses, but are subject to curfew and other restrictions. The date originally fixed for completion of the operation—the 7th June—had been postponed, but

Sofia would be "Jew-Free" by the end of the month. A Commission has been set up to liquidate valuables deposited by Jews in the main banks.

The 14,000 Jews from Macedonia and Thrace have been handed over to the German authorities for deportation to Poland.

The Greek puppet Government's promise of an amnesty for all guerrillas who should bring in their arms seems to have met with little success. In the Olympus district, at any rate, the Axis have started searching villages and burning to the ground those where they find arms, together with all stores of food. The Athens press recently reported that 2,000 guerrillas (Andartes) had been captured in the Parnassus district, but the fact appears to be that the guerrillas captured over 500 Italians between there and the Adriatic at the end of May. Further north, in the neighbourhood of Kastoria, the engagements reported between Greek guerrillas and Bulgarians recall the Macedonia of Abdul Hamid.

Axis spokesmen may claim that wages in Greece have been raised 50 per cent. but, even if true, this is as nothing compared with the rise in prices. Though food supplies have been increased, mainly by the International Red Cross and to a much lesser extent by the Axis, serious under-nourishment still prevails.

The Turkish press constantly expresses the opinion that Germany has now no hope of winning the war. This, no doubt, is also the view of the Turkish Government, but, nevertheless, that Government shows no anxiety to turn its policy of neutrality into one of more active co-operation with the Allies. For one thing, it seems to flatter itself that the Allies need its help so badly that it will be able to bide its time and then make its own terms. For another, it probably is still nervous lest co-operation with the Allies should precipitate a German attack. Thirdly, Angora may reckon that, even if the Turkish army were to intervene successfully in the Balkans, it would almost inevitably clash with the Soviet forces—a thing which the Turkish Government wishes at all costs to avoid. In the debate in the Grand National Assembly on the Government's proposal to put a new tax on farm produce a Deputy voiced the comfortable view that Turkey, who was courted, and furnished with munitions, by both sides, held the key to the situation in her own hands and could afford to economise by demobilising part of her army. This the Prime Minister refuted very firmly, insisting that the security of the nation would grow with its strength. President İnönü followed much the same line at the congress of the Republican People's Party on the 8th June when he declared that the Government was determined to be ready for all eventualities and that, if and when the need arose, Turkey would come into the war with all her resources. Clearly, Turkey will be much stronger when she has had time to train her forces in the use of the material which she has been obtaining from us and the Germans, and she may also calculate that Russia and Germany will by then be somewhat weaker. At any rate, Turkish statesmen have lately been implying that Turkey will only intervene if attacked.

## ERRATUM.

*Political Intelligence Summary* No. 191, 2nd June, 1943; page 14, paragraph 7, line 3,

For "meeting" read "mutiny."

## THE MIDDLE EAST.

At his audience with the King on the 31st May Nahas Pasha submitted for the Royal approval certain changes in the Cabinet, which resulted in the replacement of the Ministers of Finance and Social Affairs. From our point of view, these changes are to the good. The Minister of Finance was obstructive in the matter of supplies, and the Minister of Social Affairs unpleasantly xenophobic. Other posts have been found for these two Ministers, whose places have been taken by Amin Osman Pasha, K.B.E., as Minister of Finance, and Fuad Serag-al-Din Pasha as Minister of the Interior and Acting Minister of Social Affairs. Amin Osman, who is strongly pro-British, is a well-informed, intelligent and independent-minded Egyptian. As Secretary-General of the Egyptian Trade delegation, he played an important and successful part in the negotiations that led up to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance of 1936. He has for some time occupied the position of confidential assistant and adviser to Nahas, and as intermediary between him and the Embassy has fulfilled a delicate and difficult function with ability and tact. The King approved the proposed changes, which were in due