

being called upon to make gifts of their surpluses and reserves for the purpose. *Tass* reported on the 1st April that "thousands of tractors, combine harvesters and ploughs, as well as large quantities of seed, had arrived for the spring sowing" in the liberated districts of the Kuban, North Caucasus, Voronezh, Stalingrad and Smolensk regions; and the claim was even made in a *Tass* message of the 25th April that "this year the Don collective farms will produce as much as they did in recent years."

It cannot, however, be assumed that performance will come up to promise and it would be wiser to expect that the most liberated areas will be able to do will be to produce enough for their own populations and that they will not be in a position, as formerly was the case with the Kuban and Voronezh, to export to other parts. As regards potatoes and vegetables, *Tass* announced on the 29th May that the amount sown is "considerably greater" this year than in 1942.

In general, if there should be a serious deterioration of the food situation, it is probably still the case that transport and distribution will have been the "bottleneck."

On the 26th May Mr. Joseph Davies was received by Marshal Stalin and was handed a sealed envelope containing a reply to Mr. Roosevelt's letter. Mr. Davies refused to comment on it and, indeed, declared that he was ignorant of its contents: he has since left Moscow for the United States by air.

On the 28th May an agreement was signed in Moscow between the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia concerning the grant, to the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic by the Government of the U.S.S.R., of money, materials and services necessary for the maintenance of the Czechoslovak Brigade on the territory of the U.S.S.R. for the duration of the war. The actual signatories were the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, M. A. E. Korneichuk, and the Czechoslovak Ambassador in Moscow, M. Fierlinger.

The moves in Cairo towards the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S.S.R. and Egypt (see under "Middle East") have been reflected in Soviet home propaganda and it is probable that the Soviet peoples are being prepared for a successful issue of the negotiations. On the 29th May Moscow Radio announced that, although no diplomatic relations existed between the two countries, "the Soviet Union entered and is entering into the life of Egypt by its successes in the national war and by its literature." Cairo reflects the interest of the Egyptian population in the Soviet Union." Reference was made in the broadcast to a change in the attitude of neutral Egypt which had led to the disappearance of German literature, &c., from the shop windows and to support for Mrs. Churchill's "Help for Russia" Fund.

Mr. J. Balfour, C.M.G., at present His Majesty's Minister at Lisbon, has been appointed to be Minister at His Majesty's Embassy at Moscow.

SCANDINAVIA.

The situation created by the labour conscription in Norway shows signs of an increase in tension. The number of Norwegian refugees now in Sweden has been officially stated to amount to some 16,000; during the last six months they are said to have been arriving in numbers of between 100 and 400 a week. The Swedish paper *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* reported on the 27th May the successful flight of an entire community of some 200 persons, with their cattle and other belongings, from the Trysil district in Eastern Hedemark. Meantime the Germans are redoubling their efforts to prevent such escapes. Apart from the seizure, previously reported, of the relatives of fugitives as hostages, and the threat and in some cases the execution of the death penalty for such attempts, a further stringent restriction of railway travel was announced on the 25th May, to come into force from the 1st June. Appeals have also been made over the radio to fugitives already in Sweden to return to Norway.

The preoccupation of the authorities with this question seems to provide further evidence of a genuine demand for Norwegian labour, though it may also be due to the fear that the numbers now in Sweden might provide a valuable reinforcement to an invading force established in Norway, and also to a desire to prevent military information from finding its way to the Allies.

Conditions approaching a state of emergency are reported from Drammen, in consequence of the discovery that the wires connected with mines under the town bridge had been severed. In Rjukan large quantities of ammunition and explosives were discovered on the 25th May. In Trondheim, too, the situation is

reported to be critical, owing to the resistant attitude of the students in the Technical High School, many of whom are stated to have been arrested. *Stockholms Tidningen* reports an attempt to conscript these students for service on the eastern front, owing to the deficiency of volunteers; this report should, however, be received with reserve in default of confirmation.

The tendency of recent discussions between His Majesty's Government and Sweden seems to give good ground for hoping that the German transit traffic concession may before long be rescinded. A hint of such a development was made by Prince Wilhelm of Sweden in a speech in celebration of Norway's national day—the 17th May. Speaking of the growing debt to Norway incurred by the bartering of temporal for moral advantages, he expressed the hope that circumstances might soon free his country from the burden of this steadily mounting debt.

The investigation has now been concluded into the alleged existence, at a Swedish landing-ground, of orders giving preferential treatment to German aircraft, by permitting them to proceed after landing, while withholding a similar privilege from the planes of other nations (see *Weekly Summary* No. 183). The finding justified the charge, but attaches the responsibility to the misinterpretation of his instructions by a captain commanding the force guarding the landing-ground. It is admitted that the orders were improper, but there seems to be a doubt whether they were ever, in fact, carried out.

The Swedish Labour paper *Arbetaren*, on the 26th May, raised the question of desertions from the Swedish to the German forces, citing in particular the case of a naval sub-lieutenant of Nazi sympathies, named Rosmark, who deserted from a Swedish submarine and served for some time in the German forces. He was sentenced by court-martial on his return merely to a few days' detention, and was soon afterwards promoted to flag-lieutenant. The facts appear to be admitted, though the authorities deny knowledge of this officer's political views, and attribute the episode to his craving for adventure.

The Danes are stated by their Nazi opponents to have developed a new method of displaying their sympathies, by wearing knitted caps designed with the Royal Air Force tricolor circles. There appears still to be a large amount of popular sympathy with acts of sabotage, and more fires of a suspicious character have recently been reported. There is some fear, however, in intellectual circles, that any reprisals provoked by this policy may induce a reaction in favour of the comfort and immunity from molestation secured by Scavenius. Much seems to depend on the objects selected for sabotage, which, it is felt, should be confined to places directly supplying war materials to Germany.

At present, there are no signs of the German authorities abandoning their conciliatory attitude, which Dr. Best has carried so far as to have engaged in friendly interviews with Dr. Chievitz and Dr. La Cour, in spite of their known association with anti-German activities.

There is reason to believe that the recent speech of Linkomies in Finland was a placatory gesture necessitated by a firm refusal of recent German demands. These are said to have included an agreement not to conclude a separate peace, and a demand for more active co-operation against the Soviet Union. Field-Marshal Mannerheim is stated to have urged the uncompromising rejection of the first of these proposals, in a recent conference at military headquarters.

FRANCE.

General de Galle, taking with him as his representatives MM. Massigli and Philip, finally reached Algiers on the 30th May. He was met at the airfield by General Giraud, who was accompanied by General Catroux, while representatives of Mr. Macmillan, Mr. Murphy and M. Peyrouton also attended. General Giraud, in a brief statement to the press, emphasised that it was "in an atmosphere free from all partisanship and with the sole desire for the complete unity of our forces" that he was glad to welcome General de Gaulle. It was a time "not for speeches but for action."

General de Gaulle, addressing the press in the evening, with MM. Philip and Massigli, while stressing that the immediate aim of the National Committee had been to achieve the unity of the French Empire in the war, insisted that the "Central French Authority" to be set up must have the attributes if not the name of a Government; that it must comprise only men worthy to give an example in leadership; it must be based on a genuine French sovereignty everywhere in the Empire; and it must be in harmony with the feeling of the French masses. He did not think elections in the Empire were feasible in war-time because it was too scattered and because of its situation (as in Algeria) *vis-à-vis*