

of rationing, repression of the black market and price control, must continue for the present. A certain number of growers and dealers in foodstuffs had failed in their duty and against them the penalties provided by the law would be strictly applied. The Minister of Justice had asked prosecutors to give priority to cases involving foodstuffs.

FRANCE.

The Provisional Government has now also been recognised by the Governments of China and Roumania as well as of several Latin American States (see "Latin America"). The recognition by the three Great Powers has elicited further comment, notably by General de Gaulle in a press conference on the 25th October (see below), and by the Prime Minister in his speech in the House of Commons on the 27th October. General de Gaulle said merely that the Government was naturally pleased that it was now to be called by its name. Mr. Churchill explained the reason for not granting recognition sooner. This, he said, was very simple. The British and United States Governments had a very special responsibility for making sure that the French Government, "emerging in part from their military action, would be acceptable to France as a whole and would not appear to be imposed from without." He had himself for some weeks been satisfied that the present Government commanded "the full assent of the vast majority of the French people," and that it was the only Government "which could possibly discharge the very heavy burdens which are being cast upon it." He had made it clear in his speech of the 2nd August (see *Summary* No. 253) that France could by no means be excluded from the discussions of the principal Allies dealing with the problems of the Rhine and of Germany. Recognition could therefore be regarded as "heralding a period in which she will resume her rightful and historic rôle upon the world's stage." The Prime Minister's statement was welcomed in a Paris broadcast as dispelling the cloud created by the verbal reservations in declarations of the 24th October by President Roosevelt and Mr. Stettinius which suggest that there were as yet no plans to bring France into discussions on post-war security. A statement by the diplomatic correspondent of the *Agence Française de Presse*, published by several papers on the 27th October, had, however, pointed out that "in the opinion of well-informed circles in Paris these reservations refer exclusively to the Council of Security, establishment of which was discussed at Dumbarton Oaks, but which cannot meet until the end of the war . . . Even so, from the psychological point of view, the reservations made on the very day after the recognition of the Provisional Government disclose the continued existence of inhibitions which still remain to be overcome in the world before France is admitted to her proper place on a footing of equality." In Mr. Duff Cooper's opinion delay now in according to France the full benefits to which she considers she has a right is bound to cause resentment.

In his press conference of the 25th October General de Gaulle touched on many aspects of French affairs. He said that the French troops which entered Germany would undertake a military occupation of the territory they took from the enemy, but that there had so far been no talks with the Allies about the political conditions of such an occupation. He once again stressed France's desire to play a larger part in the war, but said that, if new French divisions were to be equipped, it would be necessary for the Allies to supply arms until France could herself resume manufacture. Since the battle of France the French had not received enough to equip "une grande unité." However, the magnitude of the tasks confronting the Allies in that battle to a certain extent explained why more arms had not been received. He pointed out that, although the F.F.I. were showing great courage in containing the 70,000 Germans on the Atlantic coast, they were ill-equipped and that other and more powerful forces would be needed to overcome German resistance. He also mentioned that the Government was recruiting an expeditionary force for Indo-China comprising colonial troops and volunteers. Referring to the idea of a *bloc* of Western European nations, he said that he did not think this would be necessary, but that the proximity of these States indicated the desirability of some co-ordination of their relations from the point of view of security. (For his references to the Levant, see under "Middle East.")

According to press reports, the Commission of twenty parliamentarians set up to select the 60 Deputies and Senators who are to sit in the Consultative Assembly has so far been able to find only fifty-five suitable candidates. Seventeen of the sixty seats were reserved for what is described as the 4th category, a group of Right-wing parties, but only twelve candidates have been deemed to

have adequate Resistance records. It remains to be seen whether M. Jeanneney will arrange for the five vacant places to be filled before the Assembly meets on the 7th November.

On the 27th October the Council of Ministers adopted an ordinance establishing a Provisional Municipal Council of Paris and Departmental Assembly of the Seine to function until local elections next February. Although the twenty-eight members of the Paris Committee of Liberation, who have hitherto exercised the functions of both Assemblies, are to sit on both *ex officio*, M. Tollet, the president of the committee, has criticised the decision and asked why it should be necessary to replace something provisional by something also provisional.

On the 29th October the press published a communiqué of the Ministry of the Interior announcing the Government's decision to disarm independent groups, such as the Patriotic Militia, which were in some districts continuing to make requisitions and arrests in their self-imposed task of fighting the Fifth Column and the black market. The Government paid tribute to their services during the insurrectionary period, but declared that that period was now ended and that it was for the Government and its representatives alone to exercise administrative and police powers. All reports indicated that the action of independent armed groups was causing increasing anxiety and alarm among the rural population. Many of the members could make an effective contribution to defence by undergoing regular military training under a competent authority, and the arms in the possession of the groups would equip new units of an army which was in sore need of arms. This important decision of the Government was contested by the *Conseil National de la Résistance* (C.N.R.), which issued a statement of disapproval and sent a delegation to see General de Gaulle. The General is reported to have maintained the Government's position, emphasising the urgency of a solution both from the point of view of public order and of France's international position. At the same time he expressed the Government's desire for the co-operation of the C.N.R. According to the latest reports the C.N.R. has issued a further statement expressing its own wish to co-operate, its desire to be consulted beforehand in any questions affecting the Resistance movements, and its hope that "patriotic forces" can be given legal status.

According to a report emanating from the F.F.I. of the Dordogne, Admiral Platon, former Vichy Minister of Colonies, was arrested on the 21st July in the Gironde and executed on the 16th August. There are also unconfirmed reports of the execution in the Gironde of Darquier de Pellepoix, former Vichy Commissioner-General for Jewish Affairs. In Paris Stéphane Lauzanne, for more than forty years editor of the *Matin*, has been convicted of intelligence with the enemy and condemned to twenty years' solitary imprisonment and loss of all his possessions. Louis Renault, the president of the Renault company, who was arrested on the 23rd September, died in hospital on the 25th October, a few days before his trial was due to begin. The press reports that M. Pierre Lefauchaux has been appointed provisional administrator of the Renault Company pending the formation of a "*Régie nationale*." He will be assisted by a provisional consultative committee of workmen, clerical staff, foremen and engineers.

(See also under "Spain.")

SWITZERLAND.

Swiss comment on the Russian refusal to attend the Civil Aviation Conference at Chicago stresses the astonishment caused by this decision in British and United States circles. Government circles in Washington are quoted as regarding it as incomprehensible that Switzerland and Portugal should be put by the Russians on the same footing as Spain, and British circles at Montreal are quoted as declaring that the issuing of an invitation to neutral countries which did not recognise the U.S.S.R. *de jure* was only the ostensible reason for the Russian decision.

SPAIN.

During the past week the Spanish *maquis* has been a good deal more active in the columns of the London press than along the French frontier. As if the English Liberal sympathisers suddenly realised that by pitching it high they were only playing Franco's game, lively reports of successful raids into Spain

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