

involve what the *Washington Post* called "international administration of the world's airways." There have been reports in the press that a British-American meeting on this subject is being planned.

The Food Conference has steadied down and is making better progress. It may fairly be claimed that the contributions of the United Kingdom delegation, as well as those of Australia and Canada, have helped to bring this about. The delegation's proposals, especially that for constituting buffer pools for the main commodities, have had a good press. The Conference is now in the Committee stage, and it is reported that harmony reigns. The announcement that Soviet Russia will participate in the organisation which it is proposed to set up to continue the work of the Conference has given great satisfaction.

A well-known columnist has recently stated that "Lend-Lease has been the most sensational success of the whole war." Certainly anyone who reads the general survey of what had been done up to the end of April, issued by the Lend-Lease Administrator, Mr. Stettinius, on the 22nd May, and a similar Report submitted to Congress by the President and released to the Press on the 26th May, must be impressed by the enormous extent of the operations in both directions which have taken place under the Act of 1941. During the 26-month period the value of Lend-Lease contributions of all sorts and to all destinations from the United States was reckoned at over £2,750 million: and Mr. Stettinius was proposing to spend about £2,100 million (reduced from £2,500 million) in the coming year. Among the many striking figures contained in these reports, those of aid to the U.S.S.R. were particularly interesting: they showed that the value of actual shipments during the twelve months to April 1943 was ten times that of the previous six months: more munitions have now been sent to Russia than to Britain. Both Mr. Stettinius and the President gave full and detailed accounts of the vast and varied supplies and services which are being furnished to the United States by many of the recipients of Lend-Lease aid, more especially the United Kingdom, India, Australia and New Zealand (Canada does not receive Lend-Lease); and tribute is paid to the help given on similar terms by this country to the Soviet Union. Whether or not it was true, as was said at the time, that the conception of Lend-Lease sprang fully-armed from the mind of the President like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, at any rate what then seemed a revolutionary idea has proved effective in action on a scale which no one then foresaw.

In sending his report to Congress, Mr. Roosevelt laid stress on a new aspect of Lend-Lease, viz., the part it may play in bringing newly-liberated territories directly into the war effort, both militarily and economically. "Our Lend-Lease operations in North and West Africa have demonstrated how a freed people can help in defeat of the Axis. . . . The new French armies are equipped with Lend-Lease weapons. . . . the liberated peoples are producing strategic and critical materials for war construction." He stressed also the moral effect of the fulfilment of promises to bring food and medical supplies into the areas now set free.

Great as they are, Lend-Lease expenditures are only about 12 per cent. of the total war expenditure to date of the United States. It is not surprising that it should be rumoured in Washington that the representatives there of the few remaining neutral or non-belligerent countries, watching the soaring figures of production, are telling their Governments that the United States and its Allies are now invincible.

The complexities of the wages and prices problem are still unresolved, nor has Congress yet agreed on the new measures of taxation which might help to solve them by a drastic reduction of excess purchasing power. The coal-miners will get a substantial increase, though no agreement has yet been reached; the strike threat remains and, indeed, began to be effective, at least in part, on the 1st June. A million railway workers have received an increase of 8 cents an hour from the special panel which deals with railway labour questions. Meanwhile, the President has set up a new organisation, the Office of War Mobilisation, to be in charge of the whole of the civilian side of the war effort, with power to give instructions to all Federal agencies and departments in this field. These sweeping powers are entrusted to Mr. James Byrnes, assisted by an advisory committee which includes Mr. Stimson, Colonel Knox, Mr. Harry Hopkins, Mr. Nelson, and one less-known name, Judge Vinson, an expert in matters of public finance and a former Congressman, who succeeds Mr. Byrnes as head of the Office of Economic Stabilisation. The whole committee will meet from time to time with the President himself, thus representing something not unlike a "War Cabinet," save that it will not deal with strategic or operational questions. This new plan is, in theory at least, a striking, almost a sensational, development

in the management of the war effort. It has been generally welcomed, but not without reminders that it might have been done much earlier; in view of past disappointments commentators are inclined to wait and see how far it succeeds in co-ordinating the action of those agencies and departments whose conflicting claims have impeded action at the centre. Mr. Byrnes inspires general confidence, though labour has not altogether liked his actions as head of O.E.S. The membership of the committee has not been criticised, though it is remarkable that Mr. Paul McNutt, head of the War Man-power Commission, is not included. The new plan fulfils a long-standing demand from the Truman Committee of the Senate, whose investigations of the national organisation for war have been of unique value on account of their generally constructive and non-partisan character.

#### LATIN AMERICA.

Press reactions in Latin America to the dissolution of the Comintern follow lines that might have been expected. Communism in this area has never been a political force of the first order, and the Communist parties have acquired no significant following except in Mexico, Chile and Cuba (where President Batista has recently accorded legal status to the Communist-controlled Confederation of Labour). But the fear of Communism is deeply ingrained among the ruling classes and has long been exploited by Axis propaganda. The dissolution of the Comintern has, therefore, afforded widespread satisfaction, and should have a salutary effect. The Press has been quick to point out that it deals a severe blow to the Anti-Comintern Pact, that it eliminates an organ which has constantly caused tension and mistrust, and that it makes for closer relations between the U.S.S.R. and the other Allied nations. It has not failed to add that the measure may be only temporary. It is significant that in Brazil, by reason of official instructions, comment has not been extensive and has, in the Government press, been characterised by a cautious reserve. It remains to be seen whether the feeling in favour of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Latin American States and the U.S.S.R. (see *Summary* No. 187) will now be intensified. Sr. Guani, the Uruguayan Foreign Minister, has stated his intention, according to Press reports, of proposing joint action to this end.

The dissolution of the Comintern may perhaps assist in an evolution in Argentine foreign policy, of which some possible signs were discussed in last week's *Summary*. Further evidence, for what it is worth, is afforded by the acceptance on the part of Sr. Patrón Costas, the Government Presidential candidate, of an invitation to speak at a British Chamber of Commerce luncheon on the 10th June. Meanwhile, Sr. Carcano, the Argentine Ambassador in London, who, in a recent visit to the Foreign Office, deplored the present state of Anglo-Argentine relations and the attitude of the British press towards Argentina, has been told that a general improvement cannot be hoped for so long as Argentina remains in full relations with our enemies. It will, no doubt, be a consolation to President Castillo to receive, as a broadcast reports that he has received, the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour from Pétain.

Statements by the Bolivian President to the effect that Bolivia's "just aspiration" to a Pacific port is "permanent" and "unshakeable" (see *Summary* No. 188) continue to provoke indignation and uneasiness in Chile; and there is no doubt that Bolivia is trying to mobilise support for her claims. There is, perhaps, an impression in Bolivia that Chile is on the down- rather than the up-grade in South America. Whatever the truth of this view in the long-run, it is evident that at the moment the situation in Chile is far from happy. President Ríos, after prolonged hesitations as to whether to break with the Axis or no, is now firm in his decision to follow a United Nations policy. His visit to the United States takes place shortly, and in his absence his duties will be performed by Sr. Morales Beltrami, the Minister of the Interior. The latter, however, is by no means popular; and there are signs that opposition is growing. The issue is not an issue of foreign but of internal policy. The cost-of-living index in Santiago has risen from 184.1 in 1938 to 329.7 in October 1942, and this has inevitably had repercussions on the state of mind of the humbler classes. Meanwhile, the Conservatives and Liberals, who have constituted the Right-Wing Opposition ever since 1938, have shown themselves increasingly hostile to the trends of internal policy; and there are fears that they may be hankering after a *coup d'Etat* in conjunction with ex-President Alessandri and the army.