

Atlantic Charter which says that the signatories desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely-expressed wishes of the peoples concerned, is taken by many papers to apply to Italy, presumably in view of her status of co-belligerency, although the Foreign Secretary stated on the 17th February, 1944, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, that this clause did not apply to enemy countries.

Signor Togliatti, the leader of the Communist Party, is busy making speeches as near the firing line as possible explaining that the Communist Party is the only party capable of ruling the industrial north. The one party which should and could take up the defence of the middle way, the Christian Democrats, continued to look on. Sir N. Charles, however, reports the awakening of public opinion which goes beyond party rivalries, and which, though it is often manifested in criticism of the Allies, is, nevertheless, a healthy sign.

All parties, however, are agreed that Italy has expiated her past, that she should take a fuller part in the liberation of Italy and that the question of Italian prisoners of war should be solved in a manner more satisfactory to her. The question of help in transporting her own produce from one area to another where it is more needed continues to be raised but the 1,700 lorries promised by President Roosevelt will be of considerable help when they arrive.

Reaction in the press to Dumbarton Oaks is based mainly on its relation to Italy's future status. *Il Popolo* (Christian Democrat), fears that this new international organisation will keep alive the distinction between the victors and the vanquished, while *Avanti* (Socialist) and the *Osservatore Romano* (Vatican), say that the whole policy of this proposed organisation is to suppress force with force and that there is no indication of any idealism such as inspired Mr. Woodrow Wilson's proposals.

The anniversary of Italy's declaration of war on Germany is seized on by almost all papers as an opportunity to urge Italy's claim to Allied status. *Unità* (Communist), however, says that if Italy had declared war on Germany on the 25th July instead of waiting until the 13th October she would not now find herself in such an inferior position.

The Italian Government has announced a cost-of-living bonus to all workers employed in private industry. This measure has been unanimously approved by the press, although it is regarded as having been unduly delayed. Left Wing papers consider this delay was due to the Allied Control Commission. Signor Togliatti, after visiting Florence, where the Committee of Liberation was exceptionally well organised, argues that the President of the local Committee of Liberation should become *ipso facto* Prefect of the district after it has been liberated. Signor Togliatti is confident that the Allies will find similar well-organised Committees as they progress northwards.

Further riots have been reported from Palermo. Signor Aldisio, the High Commissioner, is conducting an enquiry and ten leaders of the Separationist movement have already been arrested. The Socialist paper *Avanti* and Communist paper *Unità* place the blame for these riots on the Separationists, who seem to be bent on making as much trouble as possible.

Swiss papers report intensive defence preparations in the north, especially in Milan and Como. Some of these reports suggest that the prime movers in urging these preparations are the Fascists rather than the Germans, and Mussolini is said to have urgently insisted with Hitler that Northern Italy should be vigorously defended. Be that as it may, Milan, to which the Party Headquarters has recently been transferred, is being strongly fortified, and inhabitants are being evacuated from the neighbourhood of all buildings housing commands or administrative offices. The transfer of machinery to Germany continues, and has provoked further strikes in Milan. Supplies of raw materials are also being removed or withheld, and according to a Swiss report the German military authorities have warned the Italian authorities in Genoa that all factories will be closed by the end of October, the workers deported to Germany and plants either removed or destroyed. There also seems to be a general move to transfer the Fascist Republican Ministries further north.

Exhortations to join the Security Companies for local defence are being put out, and the recent German measures instituting the "Volkssturm" are said to have been given wide publicity in North Italy, where a similar mobilisation is being suggested.

Partisan activity continues strong, especially in the Brescia region and north of Turin, and also immediately behind the fighting line, where patriots have done valuable work in cutting German supply lines. Fascist propaganda has made capital out of the recapture of Domodossola on the 15th October. Domodossola

had been in partisan hands for a month, and the local anti-Fascists had set up an Administrative *Giunta* there. Reprisals are now being threatened by the Fascists against the partisan and pro-partisan population of the Val d'Ossola.

The North Italian rice crop is said to be the best for 40 years, but lack of fertilisers may well have affected the wheat crop, and there is also a sugar shortage.

#### SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE.

##### Hungary.

Some obscurity still envelops the whereabouts of Admiral Horthy, and controversy plays round his behaviour. The Germans would probably have wished to secure, as usual, his authority to endorse retrospectively their actions; but this was rendered impossible, firstly, by their own enraged retort to his message of the 15th October, in which they had accused him personally of being the prime mover in the whole "conspiracy" against them; partly by the attitude of Szálasi, who at all costs wants Horthy discredited and displaced. Nevertheless, after their first outburst, the Germans began to hedge, representing Horthy rather as the misled victim of a gang of conspirators, and on the 21st October announced that they had removed him and his family, at his own request, to Germany, in order to ensure his safety. They may yet attempt to invoke his authority from this refuge, or prison.

Meanwhile, the new Government has been hurriedly establishing a complete Party dictatorship. The Arrow-Cross Party, as "embodying the will of the nation," is in supreme charge and its members co-operate with the official authorities (administration, police, &c.), and, if necessary, issue to them orders which they are bound to obey. Arrow-Cross men are being rapidly placed in the responsible or lucrative posts throughout Hungary.

Some of the new Ministers have made inaugural speeches. The Foreign Minister expressed devotion to the New European Order, led by Hitler. He also saluted "National" Croatia, Serbia, Slovakia and Roumania (awaiting rebirth under Horia Sima), together with Mussolini, Franco, Doriot, Vlasov, Quisling and others. The British Empire, in its present shape, "was superfluous and represented a serious debit factor," but he had hard words for Mosley. The Minister of the Interior threatened new drastic measures against the Jews, without regard to baptism or to foreign protection. He appealed, however, to the workers and promised ex-members of the Social Democrat, Communist and other parties that their pasts should be forgotten if they "proved their patriotism now." Jews have been confined entirely to their quarters; but it is stated that until the end of the war they are to be kept in Hungary in labour camps, treatment of them depending on the severity of the Allied air raids. After the war they are to be deported.

There is no reliable information on the attitude of the Hungarian people to these events. Government appeals and proclamations suggest that there has been unrest, perhaps serious, on the railways, and in the factories, but foreign correspondents reported conditions in Budapest to have returned to something like normal by the 17th October. It is the German armed forces, obviously, which keep Szálasi in power; but in estimating his survival chances, a distinction must be drawn. The personal rule of Szálasi and his friends and the party rule of the Arrow-Cross are certainly intensely unpopular everywhere outside their own ranks; but the policy of resistance to Russia at Germany's side is more popular, and if Germany decrees that it is Szálasi who shall conduct this policy, a proportion of Right-wing Hungarians will obey, *faute de mieux*. But the Szálasi régime is very unlike that of the M.E.P., or even of the Imrédist. It is composed of socially extremist elements, many of them very close to Communism and for that matter, much more genuinely Hungarian than the Imrédist or even the M.E.P. A man like Szöllösy or Csia will find it much easier, when the moment arrives, to walk over the dividing line into Communism than a man like Szászoy Reményi-Schneller.

The main point is obviously the attitude of the army, and in particular of the higher officers. Szálasi has demanded that all officers should take the oath to him. It cannot yet be said how many of them regard recent events as absolving them from their oath to Horthy. The Government claims that the example of the G.O.C., First Army, and his Chief of Staff in going over to the Russians was not followed by any other officers, but it is clear that the army must be deeply divided, and the sudden advance of the Red Army across the Carpathian passes, where they had been held for many months, suggests at least a partial disintegration of the Hungarian defence in this area. Orders have also had to be issued