

An article in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of the 22nd May, describes in detail the process of the "aryanisation" of Jewish property and enterprises in Slovakia and criticises those who show indulgence and laxness. This is a familiar story, but it is of interest to note that the writer estimates that almost 70,000 Jews have been deported since March 1942, reducing the number of Jews in the country to about 20,000, *i.e.*, from 3.4 per cent. to 0.8 per cent. of the total population.

It is reported in the British press that Dr. Beneš arrived back in England from the United States on the 11th June.

POLAND.

The Polish Government in London has received from the Political Peasant Movement in Poland a manifesto declaring that the peasants are ready, at a sign from the Government, to start the final fight for freedom. In this connexion it is worth while recalling that, from the beginning of the occupation down to April of this year, the Germans are believed to have burnt down and entirely destroyed no less than 356 Polish villages, very many, if not all, of the inhabitants of which were killed in the process. The number of Polish villages which have been the scene of mass actions against the inhabitants is far larger and amounts to nearly 1,200: in these villages, too, very many of the inhabitants, women and children as well as men, have been killed.

On the 8th June the Polish National Council passed a resolution reiterating its conviction that it is to the interest of both Poland and Czechoslovakia to arrive at an understanding correcting the past mistakes committed on both sides at various times and establishing the bases of a close brotherly collaboration for the future. The Council declared that it would support the efforts of the Polish Government, which, in spite of the existing difficulties, was doing everything to arrive at a permanent understanding and federation between Poland and Czechoslovakia, not excluding other Central European States which might wish to associate themselves with the understanding. In this resolution there is a laudable absence of any allusion to Polish grievances, real or imaginary, against Czechoslovakia.

The first place on the list of Allied vessels which have shot down the record number of enemy aeroplanes is occupied jointly by a British vessel and by the Polish destroyer *Slazak*.

SOVIET UNION.

There has been no change during the past week in the situation on the Eastern front, both sides continuing their bombing of communications and important centres behind the lines; the Germans raided Volkhov on the 8th June, Yaroslavl on the night of the 9th-10th June, Yelets on the 12th June and Saratov on both the 12th and the 13th June; whilst the air forces of the Red Army, apart from paying great attention daily to railway trains and installations and motor transport, bombed Orel again on the 13th June.

The Spanish campaign for the restriction of bombing has evoked a torrent of ridicule from Moscow. Zaslavsky, in an article broadcast on the 13th June entitled "Pious Devils in Spain," said that, as was well known, the Spaniards were the most sensitive people in the world. "When they hear so much as a screech they faint from fear. Their delicate nerves cannot bear the shock of loud noises." The proverb said: "When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be," and Franco was pious now. "His teeth had fallen out." But "recall his evil glee when German bombs were dropping on the peaceful citizens of London, Coventry, Warsaw and Belgrade, and on our Soviet cities . . . This new anxiety of the Spanish Fascist speaks of the approaching hour of retribution, not only for the arch-criminals themselves but for their associates and abettors. The Germans have already exposed their growing weakness and are yelling in Spanish. The hour is not far off when they will yell and beg for mercy in German. But they will get no mercy." This article by Zaslavsky may be taken as a commentary on and confirmation of the Prime Minister's statement in the House of Commons that, in spite of the loud and lamentable outcries of the enemy, so far as the British Government and the Governments of the Dominions and also the Governments of the United States and of the Russian Soviet Republics were concerned, nothing would turn them from their endeavour and intention to

accomplish the complete destruction of their foes by bombing from the air, in addition to other means.

The third anniversary of Italy's entrance into the war, and the capture by the Allies of Pantellaria, inspired Zaslavsky and others to similar ridicule of Italy and of the plight she is in. As for the other accomplices of Berlin, there has been scarcely any mention of them of late in Soviet propaganda, but M. Molotov, in the course of an interview with His Majesty's Ambassador a few days ago, made an important statement of the views of the U.S.S.R. regarding the satellite States. He said that the Soviet Government stood for their preservation and their independence, but that relations with them should be based on the following principles: (a) Unconditional surrender; (b) Territories occupied by them to be returned; (c) War damage committed by them to be indemnified; and (d) Punishment of those responsible for the war.

The first anniversary of the Soviet-American Agreement provided yet another occasion for proclaiming the desire of the U.S.S.R. for post-war co-operation with the Allies. M. Kalinin, on the 11th June, sent a message to President Roosevelt in which, after describing the agreement as having "opened the way to a further strengthening of the friendly relations between the peoples of the two countries," he expressed his deep conviction that it would continue to gain strength and would ensure "close co-operation after the war with the people of the other freedom-loving countries." M. Molotov, too, in his message to Mr. Cordell Hull, used the words: "From these joint battles and on the basis of our common victory there will emerge the co-operation of the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain after the war in the interest of all freedom-loving peoples." *Pravda*, in a leading article devoted to the anniversary, struck exactly the same note, and *Izvestiya* described the Anglo-Soviet Treaty and the Soviet-American Agreement as "corner-stones on which will rest the edifice of peace erected in harmonious unity by the forces of the countries of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition." It is worth noting that all these public declarations of a desire for co-operation with the Allies after the war are being published in the Soviet press and broadcast on the Soviet radio; which is of importance, since thereby a people which has been brought up for 25 years on a doctrine of self-sufficiency and suspicion of capitalist Powers is being deliberately accustomed to a reversal of policy. Press correspondents in Moscow, indeed, report a significant change in attitude towards post-war reconstruction and post-war inter-Allied relations. In their judgment, until quite recently all discussion of post-war plans was looked upon as premature and distasteful, whereas now, reconstruction and Allied participation in it are subjects on which emphasis is laid, and *Pravda* has published the full text of the Draft Agreement on the "Relief and Rehabilitation Administration of the United Nations," which, it announced, had been worked out with the participation of representatives of the Soviet Government, and had been approved by the latter. It will be interesting to see what reaction, if any, there will be to *The Times* article of the 15th June, on the prospects of economic collaboration.

A full version of the Prime Minister's speech in the House of Commons on the 8th June was published in the Soviet press, and the broadcasting of the version lasted for over half an hour.

It was announced on the 10th June that at its last meeting on the 8th June, the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International confirmed that the proposal for the dissolution of the Communist International had been approved by 32 sections, and that not one of the existing sections of the Communist Party had sent in any objection to it. In view of this the Presidium declared that the proposal had been approved by all sections able to send in any objection, and that it considered that, as from the 10th June, 1943, the Executive Committee, its Presidium and Secretariat, as well as the International Control Commission, had been dissolved.

Moscow radio announced on the 13th June the termination of subscriptions to the Second State War Loan. In seven days 20,323,032,000 roubles had been subscribed, *i.e.*, there had been an over-subscription of 8,323,032,000 roubles. In April 1942, the First State War Loan raised 12,860,831,000 roubles in ten days.

SCANDINAVIA.

The atmosphere of Norway is heavily charged with rumours and fears of impending Allied invasion. There seems some reason to believe that these are being deliberately played up by the home front as a contribution to nerve warfare.