

Meanwhile, the big Soviet advance which had begun on the 31st October made quick progress and by the 4th November Soviet forces had reached the outskirts of Pest. Hampered by weather, however, they did not enter the city and by the 6th November the Germans began to claim a "stabilisation" of the front in this sector. Further north, the Germans and Hungarians withdrew across the Tisza west of Nyiregyháza; but from this point northward the line showed little change.

Refugees are reported to be streaming westward from Budapest, but there are no signs that its defenders mean to abandon it until forced to do so, and no decision has apparently yet been taken on the compulsory evacuation of the civilian population. The attitude of the workers is still uncertain. A general mobilisation order for Budapest was issued and then cancelled, presumably out of fear of the reliability of the men called up, and there is a reliable report of one revolt, which was, however, started prematurely and soon repressed; the Moscow correspondent of *The Times*, on the 7th November, suggested that if the Soviet forces entered Budapest, they would have to control "an unreliable, reckless and probably hostile population." There are reports that Germany is moving material from Budapest war factories into the Reich.

Roumania.

The change of government in Roumania is at long last an accomplished fact. Two members of the former Government remain, the Prime Minister, Sanatescu, who combines with that office the portfolio of Minister of War, and Patrascanu, the leader of the Communist party, who becomes Minister of Justice. Somewhat surprisingly neither Dinu Bratianu, Maniu, nor Petrescu, the leader of the Social Democrats, are included. There has been a "general post" of offices. Some are combined in new ways, and some entirely new ones appear, such as the Minister of Co-operation and the Ministry of Minorities. The Liberals have four portfolios, the National Peasants six, and the Communist groups between them, seven. The Communist strength in the Government is therefore out of all proportion to their strength in the country. Niculescu-Buzesti's place as Foreign Minister is taken by Constantin Visoianu. He will be remembered as having been associated with Barbu Stirbey in the earliest Armistice negotiations. The pro-Nazi element has entirely disappeared.

A certain amount of trouble has arisen over carrying out the terms of the armistice. The Soviet High Commission accuses the Roumanian Government of evading or disregarding a number of the provisions. In particular Roumania has neglected to make the payments agreed upon to enable the High Commission to function in the country, they have done little or nothing towards fulfilling the indemnity obligations, and have attempted to hold up any action by raising the question of the rate at which goods are to be valued, and they have done little in the way of restoring loot from Russia. There is no doubt about there being reasonable cause for complaint. Attempts have been made to conceal loot by repainting and removing marks of origin from machinery. And Roumania has installed a new tramway system at Constanta and a bus service at Craiova, the vehicles and machinery for which were looted wholesale from Odessa. The Roumanians, on the other hand, accuse the Soviet High Command of non-fulfilment of the Article which provides for the restoration of Roumanian civil administration. This complaint also is well founded; both Moldavia and Northern Transylvania are still being administered by the Soviet Military Command. The Russians have made a clever counter to this charge. When the order was made for the disarming of the political party guards, the Communist party evaded the order with the connivance of local Soviet officials. When the High Commission was requested to enforce its own order and disarm the Communist guards, the Commissioner replied that the High Commission could not interfere with Roumania's internal affairs! It is evident that according to the Soviet interpretation of the armistice terms, they provide for a great deal more interference with Roumanian affairs than the Roumanians expected. And neither side has shown any disposition to be accommodating.

The Soviet authorities have moved trains into the yards of the Româno-Americana, Astra and Steaua Româna Oil Companies, and have set prisoners-of-war to work loading material for removal to Russia. In reply to representations, the Soviet High Commissioner claimed that this material was German and was intended for use at Baku when the fields there had been occupied. He undertook to examine the matter and return anything which was found to have been improperly removed, but the loading continued, and after a further request that loading should cease pending enquiries, and the trains already despatched

brought back, lighting was installed so that work could be carried on by night, and loading went on at an accelerated rate. Between 12,000 and 13,000 tons of material has been removed. A great deal of this appears to be drilling apparatus, which is invaluable for getting damaged wells into working order. The Soviet Government, to whom the matter has now been referred, admit that both the British and Americans should have been consulted, and profess that they have no desire to interfere with the activities of the Roumanian Oil Companies, by the removal of some "surplus" stocks.

Yugoslavia.

In eastern Yugoslavia, the Germans now hold in Macedonia only some areas in the centre and in the neighbourhood of Skoplje, in Serbia the route along the Ibar to Kraljevo and thence to Bosnia, in the Sandjak Sjenica and Novi Pazar, in Montenegro an area round Podgorica and Kotor. They are concentrating troops in Kosovo, Metohija and Montenegro, for an attempt at escape. Meanwhile partisan forces control all the ports of Dalmatia from Zara to the Gulf of Kotor. They have advanced inland towards Mostar and may prevent a German retreat through Hercegovina.

In the north, the Soviet and partisan westward advance has reached Sremska Mitrovica.

Tito appeared publicly in Belgrade to review partisan units on the 27th October. He was not accompanied by Dr. Shubashitch. He made a speech, thanking all who had helped in the expulsion of the enemy, declaring the partisans' readiness to accept the sincere collaboration of all, but warning any dissidents that the partisans would not forgo the fruits of victory. Nor, he said, would they be treated as pawns; for they had earned the right to be treated as equals by the Allies. *Politika*, the organ of Dr. Ribnikar, Vice-President of the National Liberation Committee, has re-appeared. In an article of the 29th October, it said that the new Yugoslavia had nothing in common with the old. All connexions with the past had been broken. The new Yugoslavia had been established by the decisions of A.V.N.O.J. (the partisan assembly) last year. Civil authority over Belgrade has been given to a committee, with Mihajlo Ratkovitch, a carpenter, as president.

Tito and Shubashitch had several meetings, in the presence of members of the N.L. Committee, and drew up, on the 1st November, a draft agreement for submission to the Yugoslav Government and to King Peter. This provides for three Regents, to act for the King in Yugoslavia, pending a decision on the form of the State. The Regents would appoint a Government of twenty-eight Ministers, consisting of all the members of the Shubashitch Government and all the members of the N.L. Committee with Tito as Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Commander-in-Chief. The task of the United Government would be to conduct a plebiscite on the form of the State. Meanwhile A.V.N.O.J. would remain the legislative authority in Yugoslavia.

In answer to the Yugoslav Ambassador in London, who wrote that the Yugoslav population in the areas annexed by Italy in 1920 and 1924 (*i.e.*, Venezia Giulia), would deeply resent being again, even if only temporarily, placed under Italian rule, His Majesty's Government have replied that it is the intention of the Supreme Allied Commander to place the areas indicated under Allied Military Government until their disposition has been determined by negotiation between the Governments concerned.

Greece.

Except for small individual groups, no German troops remain on the Greek mainland. British troops have landed in the Salonica area; the town of Salonica is being administered by E.L.A.S. (For the Bulgarian evacuation of Thrace, see under "Bulgaria.")

The outstanding problems in Greece remain the guerrilla situation and the currency question, and on their speedy solution depends the future not only of the Papandreou Government but of public order and security throughout Greece. Outside Athens E.L.A.S. behave as they please, and neither the E.A.M. Ministers nor General Saraphis have any control over them. M. Papandreou has taken various steps to ensure order; the E.A.M./E.L.A.S. National Militia will cease to exist at the end of November; till then it is placed under Government orders; the gendarmerie is to be purged and reorganised on a broader basis as a National Guard; volunteers who joined either the Middle East forces or the guerrillas are to be discharged; regular army officers will be absorbed into the National